

Excellent Cook badge, by MTKh, late 1940s.

Brass, enamels; 45.8 x 35.6 mm. An early post-war issue by the MTKh (Moscow Artists Cooperative) factory, this is the second version of the so-called "First Unified" type according to the Airapetyan's classification. Features high domed center medallion and well-defined scrolls of the top ornament forming a downward pointing triangle in the middle. The construction of the field kitchen, shape of the letters and some other details are slightly different from the previous "First Unified" issue by the same factory. Based on our observations, this is the scarcer of the two MTKh variations.

In excellent condition, outstanding for any badge of "WW2 combat proficiency" series and absolutely superb for the relatively scarce Excellent Cook badge. The enamel is essentially perfect throughout and shows beautiful luster; there are only some tiny contact marks in the center barely noticeable to the unaided eye - no flaking, significant scratches or rubbing. The details of the artwork are perfect and crisp, and very good amount of the original gilt finish is still clearly visible in recessed areas of the field kitchen and wreath. Even the fragile dark grey finish along the edge of the shield is fully present - a very unusual case! The screw post is full length, over 12 mm, and comes with original screw plate marked "MTKh Enamels Factory". Overall, this is truly a superb example of the Excellent Cook badge by MTKh - practically impossible to upgrade.

/Airapetyan, Breast Badges of the Red Army, 1941-1945 , p. 125, fig. 4/

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