

Melchior podstakannik in Art-Nouveau style, circa 1930s-50s, by unknown maker.

Stands approx. 90 mm tall to the tip of the handle, 80 mm wide at the bottom rim. The artwork is in the art-nouveau style, with a round Escutcheon centerpiece and a high relief floral ornament framing it. Characteristically for the style, the artwork is light and "airy", leaving quite a bit of blank background, thus unobtrusively accenting the artwork itself. Similarly, the handle features a leafy ornament covering only the top and bottom of the handle, with "blank" space in the middle.

The bottom rim features two stamps. One says "Мельх" which stands for "Melchior", a "nickel silver" alloy traditionally used in Russia for the most expensive art castings. (It is primarily an alloy of nickel and copper, but its appearance is so convincingly silver that it is usually described by collectors as "nickel silver"). The separate stamp "2c" is a quality control stamp identifying this podstakannik as 2nd grade of quality. The short and very vague stamp to the left of "2c" is perhaps the maker's mark but, unfortunately, it is illegible.

In very good to excellent condition. The patina seen in our photos adds character but can be easily removed by polishing or, better yet, by the old Russian folk recipe for cleaning Melchior. All you need to do is boil some eggs and then dunk the podstakannik in that water. Please note that it only works with Melchior and does not work with silver. The bottom rim has suffered a bump but it not too detractive and does not impact the balance of the podstakannik.

Please note: If you try to come up with a replacement glass liner, it should be made of tempered glass even though we urge you not to use this to drink from! We offer this strictly as a historic artifact (and dramatic stage prop for your dining room or study). We provide no warranty of its suitability for actually drinking hot beverages like tea or coffee. All we know is that it should look great sitting on a tray next to your antique family samovar.

Enjoy!

Item# 39898

**\$60.00**

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