



Iznik Dish with Cypress Tree

Ottoman Turkey, Second half of the 16th century

Fritware with underglaze polychrome decoration

29cm diameter, 4cm deep

Stock no.: A5801

A polychrome rimless Iznik dish, with a plain cavetto and well decorated with prunus blossoms, red carnations, and saz leaves arranged around a cypress tree. The rimless form with blank cavetto was popularised in the mid-16th century. The cypress may also be used to date the dish. It first appeared as a motif in Ottoman wall-painting in the 15th century, and in Iznik pottery in the 1520s. However, it only became popular in the second half of the 16th century with the adoption of relief red.¹

There are several similar dishes in public collections. A dish in the Musée Ariana, Geneva (inv. [AR 12192](#)) has a similar pattern of flowers arranged around a cypress tree, and a smaller, though similarly decorated cavetto and rim. The dish is date c.1575. A dish in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (accession no. [66.4.8](#)) is dated to c. 1575-1580. Bar the addition of hyacinths and tulips, the composition of the dish is rather similar, focusing on four red carnations and a cypress tree.

¹ Petsopoulos, Yanni (ed.) *Iznik: The Pottery of Ottoman Turkey*. London: Alexandria Press, 1989. 235.