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Georgian Sterling Silver Tea Tongs By Thomas Wallis I, London, Circa 1760 (sugar, Scissor Form)



320 EUR

Signature : Thomas WALLIS I

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Sterling silver

Length : 12,6 cm

Width : 5,1 cm

Description

A superb pair of scissor-form sugar tongs in sterling silver, crafted in LONDON between 1759 and 1786 by the silversmith THOMAS WALLIS I, during the reign of GEORGE III (1760-1820). This refined model features a delicately pierced design, animated with scrolls, curves and shell motifs, characteristic of the English Rococo taste. The S-shaped arms are joined by a circular box hinge. The terminals are shaped as trilobed scallop shells, intended for lifting pieces of sugar. A fine engraved monogram EP is inscribed on the hinge. The marks include: o The lion passant, indicating sterling silver (.925) o The maker's mark: T W in Roman capitals within a rectangular punch, for THOMAS WALLIS I o A swan import mark, struck later in France,

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certifying the silver standard of a foreign piece. Dimensions: Length: 12.6 cm Width: 5.1 cm Weight: 36 grams An elegant accessory from the 18th-century English tea service, these tongs embody the discreet luxury and ornamental finesse of the Georgian aesthetic. Sugar Tongs in Georgian England In 18th-century England, tea drinking became a refined and highly ritualised social custom. Sugar was sold in compact loaves, broken into lumps and served using sugar tongs, also called tea tongs or sugar nips. From the 1720s onwards, these implements adopted a scissor form, often richly ornamented, and found on the most refined tables. Mid-century examples are distinguished by their pierced arms, trilobed shell terminals, and decorative vocabularies blending Rococo curves, scrolls and balanced symmetries. Around 1770, the scissor form gradually gave way to the more practical bow-type tongs, made of a single sprung arched piece, simpler in design. Today, sugar tongs remain emblematic of Georgian tableware and the aristocratic refinement of the tea ritual under George II and George III.