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Polychrome Majolica Pharmacy Jar Marked "sal Nitro," Central Italy, 16th Century



3 500 EUR

Period : 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Ceramic

Diameter : 12 cm

Height : 22 cm

Description

An important polychrome majolica apothecary jar from central Italy, dating to the 16th century and intended for the storage of Sal Nitro (saltpeter), a substance widely used in ancient apothecaries for medicinal and pharmaceutical preparations. The vessel features the traditional cylindrical shape with a slight central tapering and an outward-flaring rim. The decoration is characterized by an elegant central cartouche bearing the inscription "SAL NITRO," framed by Renaissance architectural motifs in shades of yellow and green. The entire surface is embellished with a refined ornamental repertoire of plant racemes, stylized leaves, and volutes painted in cobalt blue on a white background, typical of 16th-century majolica production in central Italy. The quality of the decoration and the

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understated nature of the ornamental design are reminiscent of pieces produced for the most important Renaissance apothecaries, where albarelli served both as storage vessels and as symbols of prestige within historic pharmacies.