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Iznik Dish

Ottoman Turkey, ca. 1580

Fritware painted with white slip and polychrome decoration under a clear glaze

31.2 cm diameter

A shallow Iznik dish with flanged rim, decorated with a cobalt blue strip and overlapping white prunus blossoms. The well is decorated on a ground of white slip with red carnations blooming from a tuft of grass. The snapped stems of the carnations represent a move towards naturalism, typically observed from ca. 1565 to ca. 1585.¹ Above that, two large blue flowering palms, in the form of feathery saz leaves, frame a bouquet of red prunus blossoms. Both the flowering palm and the bouquet motifs emerged in ca. 1565, this latter reflecting contemporary trends in Ottoman embroidery.²

A dish with a similar central bouquet of prunus blossoms, flanked by hyacinths rather than saz leaves, is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (no. [952-1898](#)), and dated to the second half of the 16th century. Other dishes with large flower palms are in the Musée Ariana, Geneva (no. [AR 12192](#)), dated to ca. 1575, and the Musée de la Renaissance, Château Écouen (no. [E.CI.8390](#)), dated to ca. 1590.

[1] Atasoy, Nurhan, and Julian Raby. *Iznik: The Pottery of Ottoman Turkey*. 2nd ed. London: Alexandrian Press, 1989. p. 121.

[2] Hitzel, Frédéric, and Mireille Jacotin. *Iznik : L'aventure d'une collection*. Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2005, p. 147, p. 221.