



Early sea chart of the Middle East

LINSCHOTEN, Jan Huygen van.

Deliniantur in hac tabula, Orae maritimae Abexiae freti Mecani: al. Maris Rubri: Arabiae, Ormi, Persiae..

Amsterdam, c.1596. Coloured. 390 x 540mm.

£5,500

A highly decorative map, engraved by Henricus van Langren for Linschoten's Itinerario, a manual for sailing to the East Indies, based on Linschoten's own experiences. It displays all the features that made this period the golden age of decorative cartography: the titles, in Latin and Dutch, are within a strapwork cartouche, also including the scales; across the Indian Ocean is a large, finely-engraved compass rose, surmounted by a fruit garland; sea-monsters and galleons fill the seas, while a lion, elephant and camel appear in Arabia, and just south of Delhi are a pair of unicorns. The map shows Cyprus top left, Bokhara and Samarkand top right, Sumatra bottom right and Ethiopia bottom left, with Delhi, Bahrain and Kabul named. All are synonymous with the famed riches of the East, the inspiration for the Itinerario.

TIBBETS: 46.

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