
PAGODA RED



ORNATE GILT INCENSE BOX

\$2,480

c. 1850 • China • Pigment, Northern Elmwood, Lacquer • Collection #CMCL034

W: 11.5" D: 11.5" H: 14.5"

This dazzling display of intricate carvings and gilt lacquer is a 19th-century box used for dispersing smoke from burning incense. Incense made from dried aromatic plants and essential oils would be burned within the home to cleanse interiors and honor ancestors during ritual prayer. Resembling an ornate table shrine, the box is highly decorated with pierced side panels and an elaborate footed base.

Likely depicting scenes from a classic Chinese novel, the sides are carved with natural landscapes dense with architectural elements and figures in motion. Continued...



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The box is raised by a tiered base decorated with meandering scrollwork, archaistic dragons, and a low lattice railing. The removable lid is marked by a golden coin, a symbol of prosperity and good fortune. Viewed in the round, this fantastic incense box is quite the sight to behold when plumes of smoke spill out from all sides.

