

Tea Cups with Butterfly Handles

THE ANNA SAFLEY HOUSTON COLLECTION



These charming cups were popular in the late 18th and early 19th centuries when English porcelain imitated Chinese exports with motifs like birds, butterflies, and flowers. As part of tea or breakfast services, these cups were intended for display or special occasions.

Mrs. Hazel Littleton purchased many butterfly handle teacups from the antique shop that Anna Safley Houston operated here in Chattanooga. After Mrs. Littleton's death, her collection was donated to the Houston Museum.



Houston Museum
of Decorative Arts

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Anna Safley Houston, pioneering businesswoman and antiques collector, curated a remarkable collection of over 15,000 items, spanning glassware, pottery, textiles, furniture, and much more.



Breakfast cup and saucer, porcelain, late 19th century or early 20th century, light blue glaze with matching blue saucer. Hand painted decoration with gilt accented white butterfly handle and mustache bar.

Breakfast cup and saucer, porcelain, late 19th or 20th century, rust glazed exterior with saucer. Hand painted flowers and foliage.



Breakfast cup and saucer, porcelain, late 19th or early 20th century. Pink glazed exterior with matching saucer. The cup has a transfer and enameled scene of rabbit with eggs.