

Thimble Collectors Club Thimbles

Fenton <--> Fukagawa

Thimble Collectors Club

Honey Bees

FENTON CHINA, England

Across the vast spectrum of the whole animal kingdom – from fish to animals and from birds to insects – the honey bee reigns supreme as the worker: the busiest, most industrious and most productive of all creatures. Wherever there are flowers blooming, the honey bee can be found in its handsome striped livery, buzzing purposefully from bloom to bloom. At each one, it stops to collect the pollen from the flower's centre, brushing it off its body into special collecting baskets on its back legs. These full, it flies back to the hive where the pollen is converted into honey. Every worker in the colony has a job to do, so that all day long there is constant buzzing to and fro. No wonder the phrase 'a hive of industry' has entered our language – a tribute to this busy insect's unstinting summer activity.

The club commissioned the fine botanical illustrator Angela Beard to produce this enchanting picture. The thimble has been crafted by the Fenton China Company, a family concern established in 1975 in Stoke-on-Trent. The founders, in partnership with their four children, take pride in producing fine bone china gifts and collectors' items of exceptional artistry.

Beside the Seaside FLEUR, France

This thimble has been carefully crafted in a unique shell shape. The design, which features a colourful group of seashore life, evokes childhood memories of hours spent 'beachcombing' on sunny summer strands and searching in clear, salty rock pools. If we were lucky, we would find crabs, shrimps and shellfish of all kinds, discarded shells in rainbow colours to fill our buckets, and feathery weed and brilliant pebbles with which to decorate our sandcastles, before all became submerged again beneath the turning tide.

The little company of Fleur was founded in 1890 in the famous Limoges region of France by a small band of artists and craftsmen who produced high-quality, beautifully designed porcelain giftware for the typical French markets. For many years nearly all Fleur's products were kept within France, with only a few select pieces being sent out of the country. Fleur is therefore a little-known company outside France, and its products are all the more interesting and unusual for that reason.

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Grapevine FLORENCIA, Chile

A sense of sunshine and mellow fruitfulness clings to the grapevine encircling this lovely thimble. Its green-turning-to-russet, perfectly sculptured leaves, its luxurious fruit, a deep, rich purple with a dusting of velvety bloom, and its slender, casually curling tendrils, are unique to this most evocative of plants. The grapevine flourishes only in warmth – be it on a sun-soaked, terraced slope of a mountain, against the baked bricks of a crumbling, south-facing wall, or under the glass roof of an ageing conservatory. And so it is, that it inevitably stirs memories of all-pervading warmth and sunshine. This is a plant with a romantic history – grapevines have been grown in Britain since the time of the Romans, and it was undoubtedly the early Spanish settlers who popularised the cultivation of vineyards in Chile.

This is our first porcelain thimble from Chile, and comes to you from the house of Florencia. Founded in Santiago after the Second World War, the company was initially owned by the renowned Rosenthal Group from Germany. The emphasis is still placed on the word *Qualitätsporzellan*, which is incorporated into the company's logo – proof of the pride taken in its German origins.

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Grapes Thimble



PORCELANAS FLORENCIA - Chile, S.A.

Sweet, savory grapes are a staple of holiday observances and festive occasions the world over. Porcelanas Florencia has chosen this symbol of prosperity to encircle their unique, domed-shaped thimble.

Porcelanas Florencia was founded shortly after WWII by the Rosenthal Group of Germany and some family trusts in Florence, Italy. The firm was originally called Rosenthal China Chile, then Thomas China, before finally settling on its present name. The factory is the leading producer of fine quality porcelain in Chile. Located on the outskirts of Santiago de Chile, the firm employs 270 workers in its spacious modern facility, and produces table-top porcelain for the home.

The "Grapes" thimble, is the first porcelain thimble to ever be produced in Chile. It was developed by Porcelanas Florencia expressly for members of the Thimble Collectors Club.

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Daisy Chain FRANCESCA CHINA, England

The wild daisy, with its cheerful, many-petalled head and bright yellow eye, speaks to us of blue summer skies, mossy green lawns and the song of a blackbird from a nearby hedge. The daisy is as much a part of the English countryside as oak trees and water meadows, and it is one of the first flowers we learn to name during our first toddling steps into the big wide world. Who has not carefully threaded a simple daisy chain to string around the neck or to crown childish locks? And, later, who has not pulled off the petals one by one, murmuring 'He loves me, he loves me not'? So popular is this little flower that gardeners have grown many larger varieties with which we can adorn our flowerbeds to remind us of the innocence of youth.

Francesca China is based in Stoke-on-Trent, traditional home of English pottery, and is particularly renowned for its range of thimbles which feature notable historical characters, from poets to prime ministers. The thimble it has created for the Thimble Collectors Club typifies the fine standards of craftsmanship with which it has made its name, and is sure to become a favourite with collectors everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Best Friends

FREIBERGER PORZELLAN, Germany

Early morning in a dew-fresh meadow, and a furry baby rabbit, nose a-quiver, approaches a chirpy little fledgling. Whose territory is it? The inquisitive young pair do not mind: the countryside is here for all to enjoy, and when you are young, everything is new and delightful! Naturalistically painted in soft colours, reminiscent of springtime and new young life, this latest addition to your thimble collection has been moulded in an attractive hexagonal shape, and finished with a single golden band.

Named after the view from its windows – the three famous towers of Freiberg, which appear on its backstamp – the Freiberg porcelain works was founded near Dresden in 1906 as part of the great Kahla family of ceramics houses. After the unification of East and West Germany, Freiberg was given a new lease of life by local craftsmen – highly skilled men and women who, through hard work and love of their craft, have already earned high praise for their beautifully designed, fine-quality tableware and decorative small gift items. This enchanting little thimble, made specially for the Thimble Collectors Club, is a lovely example of their delicate workmanship, and is sure to endear itself to all our members.

TCCFC270

The maker's name is different between the UK and US certificates

Thimble Collectors Club

Delft Windmill Thimble



FREIBERG PORZELLAN - Germany

The northern breeze, a sea-borne fog carried along its wake, powers the giant fans of the windmill. This strikingly visual scene is brought to life and displayed on this unusually shaped thimble from Freiberg Porzellan.

Located in the former East Germany, Freiberg was founded in 1906 by the huge Kahla conglomerate of porcelain factories. Following the fall of Communism, the factory was taken over by a small group of local craftsmen. This group of highly skilled artisans have continued Freiberg's long tradition of crafting beautiful and treasured dinnerware and gift items.

This thimble, with its underglazed artwork and unique "spiral-top" design is a fine example of world-renowned German artistry. We are proud to offer this thimble exclusively to members of the Thimble Collectors Club.

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Rose Thimble



FREIBERG PORZELLAN - Germany

An elegant bouquet of delicate roses in pastel shades of pink and yellow accents this uniquely-shaped thimble from Freiberg Porzellan in the former East Germany.

Named for its location overlooking the three famous towers of Freiberg, the factory was founded in 1906 by the huge Kahla conglomerate of porcelain factories. After the fall of Communist East Germany, Freiberg was taken over by local craftsmen. These skilled artisans have already begun to create a name for themselves through the creation of their beautiful dinnerware and gift items.

This thimble, with its distinctive octagonal shape, is accented on top by an interesting coil design, on the sides by the graceful rose motif, and on the bottom by a striking band of 22kt gold. It is a beautiful addition to your thimble collection, and is available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club.

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Butterfly Thimble



FUKAGAWA PORCELAIN - Japan

The beauty of Nature, a recurring theme of Japanese art, is exquisitely reflected on this lovely thimble. Distinctively styled, it captures the magnificent coloration and delicate grace of a butterfly.

Izumi stone, a clay found only on the slopes of a mountain in Arita, on the island of Kyushu, Japan, gives Fukagawa porcelain its startling, pristine whiteness. The family tradition of porcelain-making dates back nearly 350 years.

Since it was first exported in 1900, Fukagawa has become known and appreciated throughout the world. The firm has been selected as the purveyor of porcelain to the Imperial Household, and has won numerous first prizes and gold medals. Its hallmark, which includes a representation of Mt. Fuji, expresses pride in the quality and excellence of Japanese craftsmanship.

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Iris Thimble



FUKAGAWA - Japan

The decorative motif of a pale Iris blossom amid long, slender leaves typifies the delicacy, restraint and grace of traditional Japanese art. This exquisite hand-painted thimble is from Fukagawa, one of Japan's most respected porcelain houses.

Fukagawa is located in Arita, not far from the slopes of Mount Izumi, where in 1617, the first porcelain clay in the islands of Japan was discovered. Known as Izumi stone, the hard white porcelain produced from this clay is considered by local artisans to be superior to any other. Fukagawa uses Izumi stone. The family-owned firm, established in the late 1800's, incorporated some small Arita workshops whose origins date from the discovery of the clay. Since 1913, when Fukagawa was first patronized by Japan's Imperial Family, the word "Imperial" appears on all its wares.

The starkly white porcelain, brilliant finishing glaze and understated decorative art attest to the perfection attained by Fukagawa's expert artisans. The "Iris Thimble" is available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club.

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Phoenix Thimble



FUKAGAWA PORCELAIN - Japan

One of the four mythical creatures sacred to the Japanese, the phoenix graces this thimble of snow-white porcelain from Fukagawa. A legendary bird which resembles both the eagle and the pheasant — the phoenix is the "emperor of birds" and a symbol of the sun in both China and Japan.

The rich blue hues of the phoenix motif contrast dramatically with the pristine whiteness which is characteristic of porcelain made from the white stone clay discovered on Mount Izumi near Arita, Japan, in 1616. The center of traditional Japanese porcelain-making for over three and a half centuries, Arita was chosen as the site for its porcelain factory by the Fukagawa family in the 1880's.

Combining visual beauty with great strength and resilience, Fukagawa porcelain has been used in the Imperial Household of Japan since 1913. It has won worldwide admiration not only for its exception quality, but also for its simplicity and delicacy, both in form and decoration.