



Antique Saraband, Circa 1900

Ref: 30120

Size: 8' 9" x 18' 7"

Content: Wool

Collection: Antique

Hand-knotted in Persia

Antique Saraband Carpet, 8'9 x 18'7, Arak region, western Persia, circa. 1900

Antique Saraband carpets were produced in the Arak region of central western Persia, the same area where the famed Mahal or Sultanabad carpets were woven. Sarabands, however, could not be more different than Sultanabads. While the latter tend toward bold, graphic floral designs adapted from classical Persian carpets, Sarabands generally display reserved, precisely rendered geometric designs like those in the Senneh Persian carpets produced further north, and whose floral aspect only emerges upon closer inspection. Many Sarabands also display a robust, large-scale weave analogous to Sultanabad carpets. This one however belongs to a special class of Saraband known as 'Mir Saraband,' distinguished by its fine, precise weave using symmetrical knotted pile.

The field consists of an elongated hexagonal design with three diamond-shaped medallions in soft blue and orange connected by delicate finials. The medallions seem to float upon a fine mesh of tiny paisley or 'boteh' motifs, whose arrangement in staggered rows of alternating orientation endows the field with a subtly animated quality. The botehs are so closely arranged that the dramatic black ground color of the field hardly shows through between them. It appears more as a kind of dark honeycomb pattern enclosing the botehs. The internal, minutely detailed coloration of the botehs in soft reds, orange, gold, pale blue, and ivory only emerges upon closer examination. The four triangular corner-pieces framing the hexagonal field echo the field structure, but with the botehs now set against a warm golden ground to produce the honeycomb effect. The transition between the field and corner-pieces is nicely defined by a zig-zagged edge accented in soft green.

The delicacy of the field design is framed effectively by multiple small-scale borders working together to match the fine detail of the field. The somewhat larger central angular vine-scroll border on an ivory ground is flanked to either side by smaller geometric borders set against soft red and black grounds. The beauty of this extraordinary carpet lies ultimately in the interplay between the warm but rich coloration and the delicate finesse of the design, all within the grand, monumental scale of the carpet despite its miniscule, precise detail. It is therefore exceptional even among the best Mir-Sarabands.