



The East Corner Company, Inc
Chinese Antiques and Fine Arts

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MING STYLE FURNITURE CUSTOMIZATION

East Corner recently completed several modern reproduction of classical Ming Style furniture. These pieces were hand constructed using the exact joinery and techniques performed by Ming dynasty (1368 – 1644) craftsmen.

We maintain comprehensive references of classical Ming Style furniture, including drawings and measurements of many fine examples. We have a wide network of workshops who make every piece of furniture in the classical Chinese way and we display some examples in our gallery. Please stop by 44 Carmine Street for more information if you have any customization needs.

The Ming dynasty is known for its elegant furniture design, carrying an age-old classicism with a sense of balance, order and harmony that appeals to the most modern of minimalists. As a society dominated by literati and merchants, Ming dynasty set the finest examples of furniture making in Chinese history. Made in either hardwood or softwood, Ming Style furniture is so elegant that it transcends time and trend.

For other services that East Corner provides, please visit our website: www.eastcornercompany.com

Extra long Ming-style display table

Built with three solid boards, complete joinery work, fine beading lines in front, reddish rosewood with Chinese old mahogany finish
9'8" L x 1'6" D x 3" H **Sold**



Most classical Ming-style long table with flat top and recessed legs

Pingtouan

Made of Huanghuali wood ("Yellow Flower Pear wood") - an extremely rare rosewood with unparalleled density, hardness, attractive grain pattern and pleasant wood fragrance, all joinery work, no finish but artificial patina
76.5" W x 20.5" D x 34" H

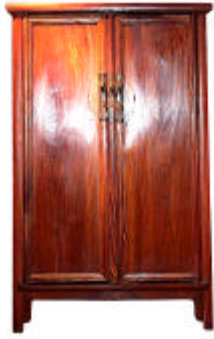
PIECE OF THE MONTH

Rare scholar's round-cornered cabinet, *Miantiaogui*

This sample tells exactly Ming-style scholar's cabinet usually made during the late Ming Dynasty through early Qing Dynasty (16th – early 18th century). For inexplicable reason this type of round-corner cabinets are also called in northern areas *Miantiaogui* (noodle cabinet). The top frame of the cabinet slightly protruding on three sides is called *Guimao* (cabinet's hat). The legs of such a cabinet were usually designed in a splayed way, being a little narrow on the upper part and wider at the lower level. This was supposed to help the door close up automatically in case the user



Similar cabinet excavated from Ming (1368-1644) tomb, Shanghai Museum



forgot to do it - it was considered a serious way to prevent the holding inside cabinet from humidification. The doors and the central stile are removable. Internally there are generally one or two shelves built on the stretcher on side panels, some may have some drawers. This sample has two drawers incorporated with the shelf. The door panels are solid pieces with symmetrical grain pattern, so are the side panels. This scholar's cabinet was used to hold papers, boxes, books and other stationery.

Qing Dynasty, early 18th century. Found in Anhui Province, restored in Shanghai.

Jumu, southern elmwood.

Size: 33.5" W x 17" D x 54" H

CLASSICAL CHINESE FURNITURE MAKING – WOODS #2

Zitan - Many ancient books mentioned about zitan wood. In these books, zitan wood is said to come from various places that are mostly in Indochina, as well as from the Chinese provinces of Yunnan, Guangdong and Guangxi.

Zitan wood belongs to the *Pterocarpus* genus, which itself is a member of the Leguminosae family. Within this genus there are about fifteen species, most of which grow in the tropics. Zitan wood used in cabinetmaking is rarely found in large pieces and is in fact much closer to rosewood (*Pterocarpus indicus*). From very ancient times, the Chinese have considered zitan the most precious wood therefore fewer furniture pieces were made from it than other woods including huanghuali. Zitan wood is the hardest and heaviest of all hardwoods. Most examples are purplish-black, but some pieces are as black as lacquer, so that the grain is virtually invisible.



Ming-style southern official's hat armchair with high back
Zitan wood
22.5" W, 18.25" D, 20.25" H
(seat), 43" H (overall) **sold**

SIGNIFICANCE OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL AUSPICIOUS PATTERNS #2



Cicada

With the elegance behind clumsy, the beauty in plainness and the characteristic decorative style, Chinese traditional auspicious patterns have been very popular in folk decorative arts for thousands of years and have brought spiritual delight to people in their hope for better life. Widely used, they play an important role in carving, embroidery, painting, etc. Their rich connotation, fine ideal and unique forms become the symbol of Chinese ancient culture.

Cicada is an important symbol in Taoism. Cast off from its premature form – a pupa, cicada appears to live twice and finally improves and transcends itself, physically and mentally. It drinks dew, living in a way extremely simple and clean. It may be described as the symbol of the soul that disengages itself from the body at death and the medium through which the voice of the departed is conveyed to the living. Cicada is also a significant symbol in the history of Divination. It was probable that the cicada, an insect possessing the exceptional gift of making itself heard with a distinguished sound, was appealing to the fortune-teller as an effective medium of conveying his message.

In the jade animal category, cicada is one of the most important archaic types. It exists throughout the Chinese jade history. During the Neolithic Periods such as Liangzhu Culture (25th –35th century BC), jade cicadas appeared to be a tongue-like pendant, quite abstract and simple with sometimes exaggeratedly shaped eyes.

Han dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD) was the most important period for jade cicada when it was often put in the mouth of a deceased. The carving was concise without extra

decoration. Several cuttings could shape out a very simple but elegant cicada. The Han cicada had a flat and a slightly big body, convex eyes and long wings with sharp points. The perforation on the head was mostly in an ox-nostril form.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1644), jade cicada was well developed into various ornamental patterns for people's life. The carving was delicate and the best materials were selected. Similar to other creatures in jade carvings, the cicada at that time was no more than an amulet.



Cicada, white nephrite,
13th / 14th century, 2" L



Cicada, celadon nephrite. 18th / 19th century, 2 1/8" L

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Please visit our gallery or website for additional information