

In a Simpler Style

Washington's Plateau and the Presidential Table

One-hour house tour, followed by a 45-minute, illustrated curator's lecture.



George Washington knew his actions and correspondence would shape not just the politics but the tastes of a new United States. As President in New York and Philadelphia and upon retirement to Mount Vernon in 1797, he kept this influence in mind in selecting furnishings for his household, some of the best of which now reside at Tudor Place.

This curator's lecture explores a selection of fine French porcelain, English glassware, and a rare American-made mahogany plateau—or set of mirrored trays—that adorned the Washingtons' dining rooms. In selecting a refined but simple Sèvres dinner service and using a seven-piece plateau of wood rather than the gold or silver preferred in Europe, Washington popularized a new and distinctly American vernacular in domestic design.

Join Curator Erin Kuykendall to learn about the plateau's recent conservation and the insights it yielded. Microscopic analysis

found the presence of Eastern White Pine, for instance, pointing to an American provenance. In construction as well as design, the Washingtons' favored pieces provide an intimate understanding of how restrained neoclassical motifs expressed the democratic ethos of the first President, his wife's descendants at Tudor Place, and other prominent Americans of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Tour with lecture: \$20.00 per person.

For information and to book your tour, contact Visitor Services Director Jeralynn Graham: jgraham@tudorplace.org, ph: (202) 965-0400, ext. 115.