

Made in Malaysia

I am not so much of a collector, more of a hoarder I would say!
This has led to me owning quite a collection of dinner and tea services over the years.

My first set was bought by my father when he was in the RAF on his National Service in Malaysia in the late 50s. Originally a gift for my grandmother. The china is very delicate, translucent white with a gold oriental pattern. It's always conjured up images of my father as a young man. Returning after two years abroad with a massive box of dinner plates, side plates, bowls and a tea service, packed in straw. I got very excited when a similar set appeared on The Antiques Roadshow. It turns out these sets were mass-produced for the service boys to send home to Mother. They have very little value. My grandmother gave me the china when I got engaged. She'd only used the tea service, two tea cups were missing. I was so proud of my first dinner service!

I then had an everyday service from Marks and Spencer's as a wedding present, 'Autumn Leaves' a more robust pottery style, you could buy just about everything to match in the early 80s, including curtains, which I still have folded in the cupboard. Distinctive green leaves and autumn berries, but an unfortunate noise when you scrape your knife across the plate.

When my maternal grandmother passed away I acquired two tea services from her. One has pretty blue and white forget-me-nots cups and saucers, the other is a 'Harlequin' design. Different pastel colours with gold rims. Very avant-garde in the 50s I believe.

My final acquisition which sits in a second glass cabinet in the hallway is a pretty pink and white dinner service. My late mother started collecting it for her silver wedding anniversary. It's a Royal Worcester set and there's quite a collection! Pink roses form garlands around the cups. For some reason Mum bought 12 coffee cups and saucers, besides the tea cups. I do use the set on high days and holidays,, but only because I decided I would put it in the dishwasher!

So if you've kept track of the numbers, how many cups and saucers do you think I own? I think it's over 50, but some are packed away, so I can't be certain.

I still believe tea tastes so much better from a bone china cup. On the rare occasions I host dinner parties, I enjoy using a fine dinner service with everything matching, on a polished wooden table with a silver candelabra. I think I was born in the wrong era...