



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## A Plan of the City of St. Petersburg

**Stock#:** 39902  
**Map Maker:** Kitchin  
**Date:** 1784  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 9 x 12 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

Fine early plan of St. Petersburg, published in London.

This fine plan shows St. Petersburg after the initial phases of its construction had been completed. In 1703, the site, at the head of the Gulf of Finland, was selected by Czar Peter the Great to be the place on which a new capital city for the Russian Empire was to be built. Peter pressed a massive labor force of serfs to build the city, and no expense was spared. Leading architects and artisans from across Europe were offered large salaries to dedicate themselves to the task. The overall project came to be overseen by the French landscape architect, Jean-Baptiste Alexandre Le Blonde, who had previously served Louis XIV, who was ably assisted by the Swiss architect, Domenico Trezzini.

As shown much of the city was layed out on Vasilyevsky Island, that lay within the mouth of the Neva River. As shown, the island was bisected by a series of streets that follow a rational grid, which in places were to contain massive squares. On the south bank was the Admiralty district and on an island on the north bank, above Vasilyevsky Island, was the St. Peter & Paul Fortress. One might remark that much of the city resembles a series of gardens, and this is, in good part, due to the fact that Le Blonde's signature passion was designing gardens.

In spite of the massive resources thrown at the project, the original Le Blonde-Trezzini Plan was altered as work progressed. Vasilyevsky Island was proven to be too low-lying and prone to flooding to permit the creation of the canals, nor was it viewed appropriate as the site of the main town. While the area would



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progressively be built-up as the 18th Century progressed, with streets largely following the lines of the proposed grid of canals, the main part of the city was built in the area which lay to the south of the Neva.

**Detailed Condition:**