



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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[Naples] Quale & di Quanta Importanza, e Bellezza sia la Nobile Cita di Napole in Italia Ancora che sia Nota a Tutto il Mondo Nondimeno à comodita & sodisfattione de nobili et Virtuosi Ingegni Si è fatto questo suo uero Ritratto, con li suoi Moli, Porte, chiesie . . . M.D.LXVI.

Stock#: 38803
Map Maker: Lafreri

Date: 1566
Place: Rome
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 31.5 x 22 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

A magnificent large-format 16th Century bird's-eye view of Naples by Antonio Lafreri, certainly the era's finest and most detailed printed view of the city.

This finely-engraved bird's-eye view of Naples is the most detailed rendering of the city from the 16th Century. Every building block and street within the walled city is depicted with exacting precision, while the dramatic surrounding topography is captured with great élan. Every major edifice and fortification is expressed pictorially and the seas are distinguished through stipple, plied with numerous sailing vessels. A key at the bottom of the map identifies 74 key sites of interest, including churches, forts, palaces, public buildings and street names.

Naples was at the time the third largest city in Europe, with a population of over 250,000 (after Istanbul and Paris). It was a major port and trading hub that linked the eastern Mediterranean with Western Europe. Since 1502, the city and the surrounding Kingdom of Naples had been controlled by Spain and ruled by Madrid-appointed viceroys that governed the city as omnipotent dictators.

The present view is considered to be extremely important with respect to illustrating the historical development of Naples and urban planning in Europe during the period. Don Pedro Álvarez de Toledo y Zúñiga, the Marquis of Villafranca del Bierzo (1484-1553), who served as the Viceroy of Naples from 1532 to 1552, initiated a design that completely redeveloped the city. Prior to Toledo's vice-regency, Naples was a squalid metropolis of tightly packed medieval streets, especially prone to plague and fire. Moreover, the



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city's defenses were woefully inadequate, leaving it vulnerable to even relatively modest invading forces.

Toledo instituted a massive physical overhaul of the city that took over a generation, finally being completed in 1560. As depicted on the map, Toledo had massive walls built not only around the landward side of the city but also along the waterfront to protect the city from a naval assault. The wall begins in the northwest at the Castel San Martino (noted as no.11 on the map's key, now known as Castel Sant'Elmo), a citadel located near the top center of the image designed by the Valencian military engineer Pedro Luis Escrivá and built between 1537 and 1547. The wall continues east through several gates until it reaches the northernmost point at San Giovanni a Carbonara (no.28), a Gothic church that was founded by the Augustinians in 1343. Continuing south is the island of Megaride with the Castel dell'Ovo ('Egg Castle', no.12), which was named by the Ancient Roman poet Virgil. Legend had it that Virgil placed a magical egg in the foundation of the castle and that should the egg ever be broken, the castle would collapse and great misfortune would reign down on Naples. Between the Castel dell'Ovo and the Castel Nuovo, the Via Toledo (no.67) stretches from the water north to the wall of the city, linking the old town to the "new" city.

Toledo also constructed the 'Quartieri Spagnoli' (Spanish Quarters), an area featuring a perfectly square grid of streets with tall buildings (shown on the map, between the harbor and the hill of Castel San Martino). In sharp contrast to the old medieval outline of the rest of the city, the Quarters were considered to be an innovative pioneering development of urban planning. He also built the grand Vice-regal Palace ('Palazzo de Vecere, noted as no.48), still today one the most prominent landmarks of the city. Toledo also widened main streets and greatly improved sanitation standards. By the end of Toledo's rebuilding process, Naples was by far the largest and most heavily fortified city in the Spanish Empire. However, in order to pay for these improvements, Toledo raised taxes to unprecedented levels, making him highly unpopular with the town's citizenry.

Toledo also tried to institute a regime of social reforms that proved less successful than his engineering feats. Upon his arrival, Toledo found the city to be rife with both petty and violent street crime. While he initially lowered the crime rate by summarily executing accused offenders in vast numbers, eventually the criminal elements went underground, finding more ingenious ways to subvert the viceroy's authority. Moreover, while the city was almost entirely Roman Catholic, the extremely conservative Toledo was alarmed by the citizenry's generally libertine attitude towards religious orthodoxy. His attempts to institute the Spanish Inquisition made so unpopular that, in 1522, Emperor Charles V had no choice but to quietly remove him from his post.



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Nonetheless, in many respects, Toledo's physical improvement of the city made possible Naples' cultural flourishing during the 17th Century, a period which featured the likes of the artists Caravaggio, Salvator Rosa and Bernini and philosophers such as Bernardino Telesio, Giordano Bruno, Tommaso Campanella and Giambattista Vico. Many of Toledo's engineering achievement survive as important elements of today's Naples.

Antonio Lafreri: Trend-setting Publisher

Antoine Lafréry, better known as Antonio Lafreri (1512-77) was born in Besançon. His earliest work in Rome dates to about 1544. From his workshop on the Via del Parione, he produced many important publications. In 1553, he founded a company with his mentor, Antonio Salamanca, which would operate until 1562. Thereafter, from 1562 to Lafreri's death in 1577, he conducted business under his own name.

While the present map proves that Lafreri was quite capable of devising his own first rate maps, he was primarily a dealer and publisher, rather than an artisan in his own right. He carried a vast stock of maps and prints made by other printers from both Rome and Venice. He became known for producing IATO (Italian-Assembled-To-Order) atlases, each unique composite atlases featuring a selection of fine Italian maps, made to the tastes of individual clients. Pre-dating Abraham Ortelius, these 'Lafreri Atlases' and their contents, represent the birth of the modern atlas. Owing to the popular acclaim of these atlases, while the term was never used during this period, the Italian maps from this era are today often said to be of the 'Lafreri School'.

As noted by Ashley Baynton Williams:

The reason that Lafreri's name is now used as an umbrella term for the school is because he issued a catalogue of his stock in 1572, entitled 'Indice Delle Tavole Moderne Di Geografia Della Maggior Parte Del Mondo ...'. This catalogue is very similar, both in title and contents, to bound collections of maps with an engraved title Tavole Moderne Di Geografia De La Maggior Parte Del Mondo Di Diversi Autori. Accordingly bound collections with the engraved title were attributed to Lafreri, and thence his name became associated with the group as a whole. Some writers have attributed the title to Duchetti, but there seems no good reason to challenge Lafreri's role.

Having said that much of his cartographic output was derivative, it should be said that Lafreri



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was very active as a publisher and seller of broadsheet 'news-maps', maps illustrating important contemporary events. Of these, by far the most popular was the siege of Malta by the Turks in 1565, and Lafreri produced maps of the island, the fortifications of Valetta, and depicting various stages in the siege, including the Turkish retreat. Another popular subject was the battle of Lepanto, on October 7th 1571, in which the Turkish fleet was routed by a combined Venetian, Spanish and allied fleet. Just over a month after the battle, on November 14th, Lafreri published a detailed plan of the battle - a remarkably short space of time considering the intricacies of engraving such an image.

Lafreri was also the founder of a cartographic dynasty. His nephew Claudio Duchetti, born in France as Claude Duchet (d. 1585), who had worked closely with his uncle, inherited the business in 1577 upon Lafreri's death. Duchetti published many new editions of Lafreri's maps. When Duchetti passed, his main heir, Giovanni Orlandi, inherited his plates and continued publishing 'Lafreri School' maps until the early years of the 17th Century.

The present view was masterfully engraved by Etienne du Perac (1525-1604), also known by his Italian name Stefano Du Perac, whose monogram "SP" appears in the lower right of the map. Like Lafreri, Du Perac was a French émigré and he arrived in Rome around 1550. He worked variously as an architect, painter, engraver, and garden designer. From 1565 he was employed as an engraver by Lafreri and was responsible for many of the finest works emanating from the Lafreri workshop.

Lafreri's magisterial view of Naples was considered during its time to be the definitive view of the city and was highly influential. R.V. Tooley notes reduced single sheet versions of the map, published in 1579, 1585 and 1590.

The present Lafreri edition is very rare and we note only a single appearance at auction in the past 30 years (Sotheby's London, 1998, £8,280).

Detailed Condition:

2-sheet view, joined. Several fold splits, expertly repaired on verso. Very light soiling and toning along centerfold at top. A chip at top left, extending 1/4" into the image, has been expertly restored in facsimile. There are also expert and nearly invisible repairs to a small worm hole to the right of the centerfold (just below the western wall of the city) and to a 7" tear that extends from just below the Castel San Martino to the centerfold. The margins have been extended at left, right and bottom for framing.