

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

3-decanter Victorian silver-plated tantalus

Daniel & Arter

Sold



REF: 8214

Height: 255 mm (10.04")

Width: 390 mm (15.35")

Depth: 145 mm (5.71")

Description

Classic three-decanter lockable antique tantalus set, with silver-plated mounts and fittings. The English oak frame is fitted with a patented "secure double lever" lock and key to keep the contents safe from uninvited tasters.

The glass decanters and stoppers are hand cut in a hobnail and diamond pattern. The bodies are fully cut; not half cut or pressed glass versions; and the base of each features a crisply cut starburst pattern. This all adds up to making this a superior tantalus piece.

The concept of lockable decanters where the contents could be viewed but not opened or poured unless the case was opened by a key and was named after the Greek mythological mortal, Tantalus. Legend has it that Tantalus stole ambrosia and nectar from the gods and was punished for his lack of self-control by being made to stand in a lake with low hanging fruit trees above him. Whenever he tried to grab the fruit the branches would lift beyond his reach and when he bent to drink the water the lake would recede from him. This punishment of temptation is where the word tantalise comes from and the tantalus is often believed to have been designed to prevent household staff from stealing or sampling the decanter's contents.