



16th century map of the Spice Islands

ORTELIUS, Abraham.  
Indiae Orientalis, Insularumque Adiacentium Typus.

Antwerp: Jan Baptist Vrients, 1608-12, Italian text edition. Coloured. 350 x 500mm.

£2,900

An early map of the East Indies, detailing India, China and Japan, Indochina and Indonesia. The Spice Islands are shown out of proportion, highlighting their importance. Top right, near an unrecognisable depiction of Japan, is the west coast of America; bottom right is a huge 'New Guinea'; and bottom centre is the enigmatic 'Beach, pars continentis Australis'. The map has a decorative strapwork title, a banner containing a description of the Moluccas, and vignettes of mermaids and sea monsters attacking a galleon. The map was published in the 'Theatrum Orbis Terrarum', regarded as the first atlas in the modern sense of the word, with the maps designed to fit the book.

VAN DEN BROECKE: 166; WALTER: 11d.

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