

Mansion Rotation & Display Updates Information: Breakfast Room

October 23, 2026

On Monday, October 26, our Collections team will be installing a new, special mansion rotation for the breakfast room. This rotation will be on display until Monday, January 4, 2027.

To better equip volunteers in answering questions and promoting the breakfast room display, this document is provided in advance of the rotation. It includes the text visitors will see in the mansion. Minor edits may be made to the label text featured in this document. Thumbnail images included here are not featured on the labels unless otherwise noted.

Breakfast Room

Dining with Catherine the Great

Catherine the Great, empress of Russia from 1762 to 1796, paid meticulous attention to state ceremonial events. She used specialized porcelain and silver services as an essential part of the dining ritual at imperial residences and as a key ideological tool to project imperial power and the image of herself as an enlightened leader. While the objects assembled on this table may never have been set together in the past, this arrangement represents a service in the style of those at Catherine the Great's court.

Celebrating the recent acquisition of a royal silver entrée dish and cover from the empress's Permschen Service, this tablescape showcases the late eighteenth-century Russian taste for Neoclassical decorative arts. The covered dish in the center was ordered from Christian Drentwett in the 1780s for the governor's residence in the newly established governorate of Perm, a product of the empress's provincial reforms. It features a conforming cover with an acanthus- and foliate-clasped berried handle. The commission of such sumptuous silver services was not merely a courtly luxury; it also served as a potent symbol of the empress's power and of Russia's global influence.

The new silver piece is paired here with porcelain pieces from the Order of Saint Andrew Service, one of Marjorie Post's favorites. Founded by Peter the Great in 1699 to honor noble loyalty and service, the Order of Saint Andrew was Russia's highest order, named after the patron saint of Russian monarchs. Other objects from this service can be viewed in the Russian porcelain room.



Entrée dish and cover from the Permschen Service for Empress Catherine the Great

Christian Drentwett II (German, 1729–1801), silversmith

Augsburg, ca. 1779–81

Silver

Museum purchase, 2026 (2026.7.1–2)



Pair of Candlesticks

Fabergé (Russian, 1842–1918)

St. Petersburg, 1887–1898

Silver

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (12.156.1–2)



Plate from the Service of the Order of St. Andrew the First-Called, One of Twenty-four

Gardner Porcelain Manufactory (Russian, 1766–1892)

Verbilki, Russia, 1770-ca. 1790

Porcelain

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (25.9)



Leaf Dish from the Service of the Order of St. Andrew the First-Called, One of Twenty-four

Gardner Porcelain Manufactory (Russian, 1766–1892)

Verbilki, Russia, 18th century

Porcelain

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (25.12.1, 25.12.3)



Knife from the Service of the Order of St. Andrew the First-Called, One of Six

Gardner Porcelain Manufactory (Russian, 1766–1892)

Verbilki, Russia, 18th century

Porcelain, silver gilt

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (25.427)



Flatware from the Service of Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich

François-Dominique Naudin (French, 1778–1841), silversmith

Martin-Guillaume Biennais (French, 1764–1843), silversmith

Paris, ca. 1819

Silver gilt

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (12.289)



Tumbler

Mikhail Klushin (Silversmith)

1745

Silver

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (12.13)



Footed Beaker with Profile Portrait of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna

Vasilii Nikitin (Attributed to)

Moscow, Russia, 1740-1761

Silver, parcel gilt

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (12.12)



Tumblers

Moscow, 1782

Silver

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (12.44–45)



Glassware

France, 1700s

Glass

Gift of Eleanor Close Barzin, 1975 (23.312)



Tablecloth and napkins embroidered with imperial crown

Probably Russia, ca. 1900

Cotton

Tablecloth: on loan from Kathy Durdin

Napkins: museum purchase, 2022 (2022.2.31)