



*de Gournay*

## MIRROR PLATE FINISHES

Mirrors, as we think of them today — giving a true and clear reflection — were invented in Venice during the 15th Century using the mercury-tin amalgam process. For over 400 years, this method remained a closely guarded secret, with glassmakers confined to the island of Murano, still renowned for expert glassmaking today.

The historic process began by flattening blown glass cylinders into rectangular sheets. By the late 17th Century, larger cast glass plates became possible, although early large mirrors were still often assembled from multiple smaller sections. Each plate was hand polished to remove imperfections before a thin layer of tin foil and liquid mercury was applied to create the reflective surface. The mirrors were then slowly tilted over several weeks to drain excess mercury before being trimmed to size.

The resulting mirror plates were thick, slightly uneven, and characterised by a soft grey tone with a subtle sparkle. Over time, the mercury-tin layer naturally deteriorated, creating the aged effects and romantic appearance now associated with antique mirrors.

For health and environmental reasons, the original mercury-tin process is no longer permitted, and surviving antique glass is limited. de Gournay therefore recreates a similar effect using its own specialist techniques and specially produced white glass.

## ANTIQUÉ MERCURY (AM)

de Gournay's plate option intended to capture the effect of an original mercury-tin mirror with characteristic considerable age and losses to the mirror surface. The mirror plate will work as a mirror but is decorative rather than functional and would not be suitable for use as a vanity mirror.





#### MERCURY PLATE (MP)

Enough age has been added to the mirror plate to remove the new appearance and to give a softer greyer tone but the plate still retains almost its whole mirror function and could be used as a vanity mirror.



## PLAIN PLATE (PM)

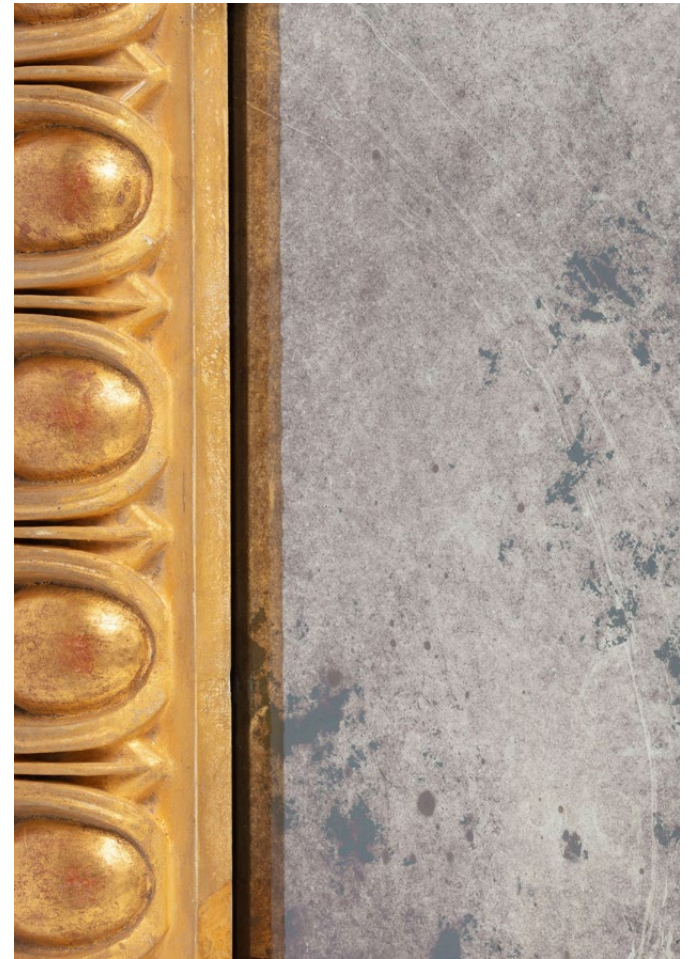
No antiquing but we have created our white glass to give a clearer, colder reflection in keeping with a mercury plate as opposed to the brown/green tone given with modern green glass mirrors.



Plain Plate (PM)



Mercury Plate (MP)



Antique Mercury Plate (AM)

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