



Why did Chenghua Doucai Chicken Cup become famous?

Emperor Chenghua had great concern for the production at the Jingdezhen Imperial Kiln Factory, and his love and appreciation brought many legends and stories to the kiln. Among them, the most famous is the legend of the Chenghua Doucai chicken cup.

It is said that during the reign of Emperor Chenghua, he had a great fondness for tea and had high requirements for tea ware. He desired a unique cup that could embody the nobility and uniqueness of the imperial court. Therefore, he ordered the Jingdezhen Imperial Kiln Factory to produce a special cup that combined the shape of a chicken drumstick with polychrome decoration, creating an exquisite and unique tea cup.

After receiving this task, the craftsmen at the Imperial Kiln Factory began their arduous efforts. After numerous attempts and research, they finally succeeded in creating the Chenghua Doucai chicken cup. This cup was made using high-temperature firing and special polychrome painting techniques, resulting in vibrant and rich colors with delicate and magnificent patterns. The cup's shape resembled a chicken with spread wings, vividly conveying a sense of vitality.

Upon learning that the Imperial Kiln Factory had successfully produced this cup, Emperor Chenghua was overjoyed and personally appraised the cup. He praised its beauty and exquisite craftsmanship, and as a result, he bestowed a special name upon this cup — the Chenghua Doucai chicken cup. From then on, the Chenghua Doucai chicken cup became a precious item in the

palace, greatly loved by the emperor and nobility.

This story became a legend of the Jingdezhen Imperial Kiln Factory, showcasing Emperor Chenghua's promotion and attention to the ceramic industry in Jingdezhen. The Chenghua Doucai chicken cup also became a classic work of Jingdezhen ceramics, representing the top craftsmanship and exquisite techniques of the Imperial Kiln Factory. Even today, the Chenghua Doucai chicken cup is still regarded as a precious heritage of Jingdezhen ceramics, greatly cherished and collected by people.

Emperor Xianzong Zhu JianShen's reign title during the Ming Dynasty. This emperor was highly concerned about the production at the Jingdezhen Imperial Kiln Factory and was an art-loving emperor skilled in painting. He had a special fondness for small and exquisite handicrafts. Emperor Chenghua's aesthetic taste and personal preferences directly influenced the porcelain production at the Imperial Kiln.

Under his advocacy, the Chenghua official kiln began producing exquisite porcelain. The polychrome porcelain with its elegant and delicate decorations became treasures of the Ming Dynasty's official kilns. People have always referred to this porcelain as "Chenghua Doucai," considering it a precious collectible. There are records from ancient times that say, "At Emperor Wanli's banquet, there were a pair of Chenghua Doucai wine cups valued at 100,000 guan." In the 1997 Sotheby's auction in Hong Kong, a Chenghua Doucai chicken cup was sold for an astounding price of 29.17 million Hong Kong dollars! It truly is an unbelievable price!