



**A pair of Indian Koftgari (Gold-Overlay) steel candlesticks
£3,250.00**

A PAIR OF INDIAN KOFTGARI (GOLD-OVERLAY) STEEL CANDLESTICKS
NORTH INDIA OR DECCAN, 19TH CENTURY

Of elegant baluster form, each candlestick rising from a broad, gently domed circular base to a waisted and knopped stem supporting a cylindrical socket with everted rim; the entire surface richly decorated in fine gold koftgari overlay on a darkened steel ground, comprising dense scrolling arabesques, stylised foliate vines and interlacing tendrils arranged in continuous registers. The bases with particularly intricate all-over vegetal patterning, the stems articulated by bands of tighter geometric and vegetal ornament, and the sockets encircled by delicate borders of repeating motifs.

The precise and tightly controlled gold overlay, combined with the rhythmic symmetry of the decoration, reflects the high level of craftsmanship associated with courtly metalwork traditions of northern India and the Deccan during the 19th century.

These candlesticks exemplify the refined art of koftgari—the technique of hammering fine gold wire onto a prepared steel surface—traditionally associated with the decoration of arms and armour in the Indo-Persian world. By the 19th century, as the functional role of edged weapons diminished, master craftsmen increasingly applied this prestigious technique to luxury domestic objects, such as hookah bases, boxes, and candlesticks.

The present pair demonstrates many of the defining characteristics of high-quality koftgari work: a deep, velvety blackened ground providing strong contrast to the gold overlay; exceptionally dense and even surface coverage; and finely executed scrolling foliage derived from Mughal ornamental vocabulary. The balanced proportions and repeating ornamental zones suggest production within an established workshop tradition, likely in a major centre such as Hyderabad, Lucknow, or Lahore.

Comparable examples of koftgari-decorated candlesticks and related objects are preserved in museum collections and have appeared in the market, often associated with princely patronage and the flourishing export trade of the later 19th century.

Subtle wear to the gold overlay and the softened patina of the steel are consistent with age and use, enhancing the visual depth and authenticity of the surfaces.

Measurements:

Weight: 1,188gr

Diameter of base: 117mm

Diameter of top: 40mm

Height: 225mm

Material and Technique	Indian Koftgari (Gold-Overlay) steel
Origin	Other
Period	1950s
Condition	Excellent
Dimensions	Height: 225mm, Weight: 1,188gr
Diameter	Diameter of base: 117mm Diameter of top: 40mm

Antique ref: JC-INDI-07223