

# K O V E L ' S



George Jones of England made this cobalt-blue strawberry server with creamer and sugar bowl. The Victorian majolica set sold for \$3,640 at Michael Strawser's Majolica Auctions, based in Indiana. ©2006 by Cowles Syndicate Inc.

## MAJOLICA STRAWBERRY SERVER SET BY RALPH AND TERRY KOVEL

Fresh fruits and vegetables were very special seasonal foods until growers learned how to ship fresh produce by train in the early 1900s. The average person living in the northern United States ate strawberries for only a few weeks each spring, when they were in season locally. Because strawberries were so seldom available, they were a special treat and were served like a luxury food. Strawberry servers and strawberry dishes were available in silver, pottery and porcelain. The server was shaped like a shal-

low basket with a handle. A small, attached tray on each side held a sugar bowl and a creamer. The set might also have included a berry spoon, to be used to dish out the berries, and a sugar spoon. Strawberry dishes are not found very often. Silver-plated examples from late-Victorian times sell for about \$250. Colorful majolica sets are more fragile and sell for thousands of dollars. The basket without the creamer and sugar is sometimes sold as a server, and it also brings high prices.