

Design Resource

Pavithra Mothiram - Payyanur, Kerala

The Sacred Ring Making

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

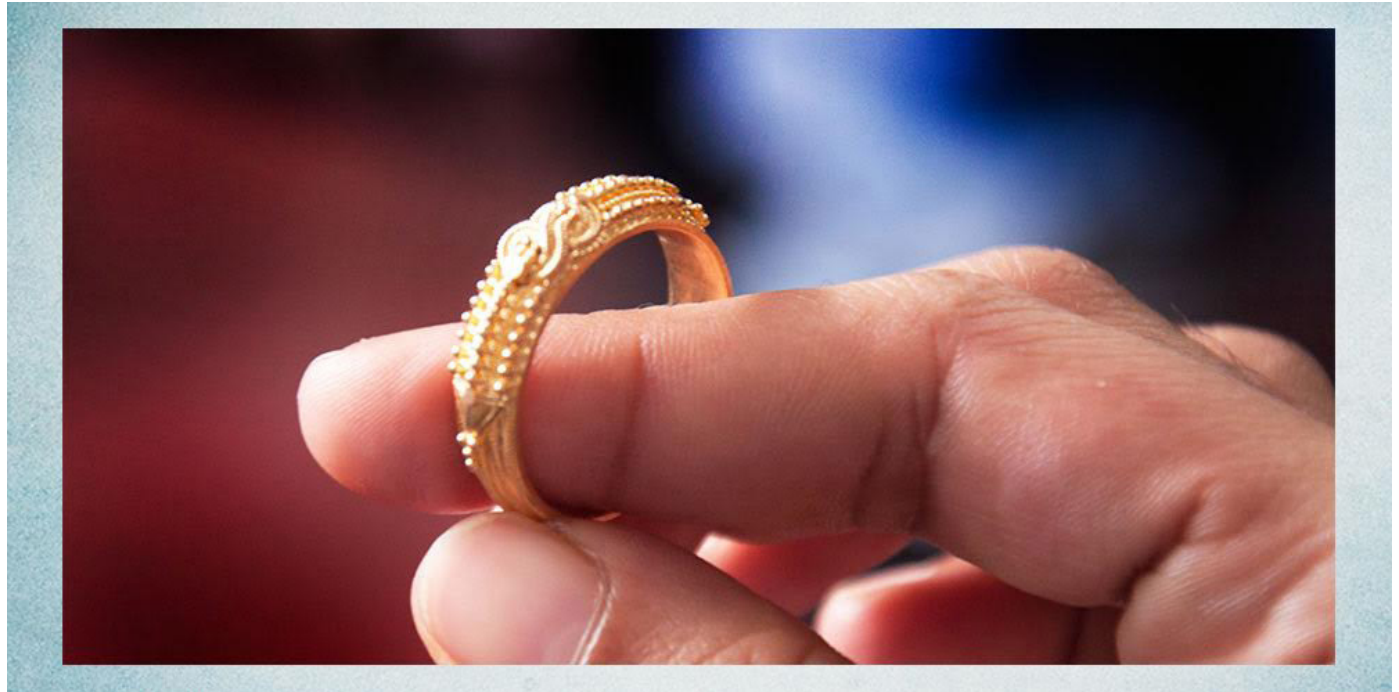
Amulya S.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/pavithra-mothiram-payyanur-kerala-0>

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Introduction

Jewelry is like a history teller for India. From the time the country is originated jewelry is taken an enormous part in living. From grass, stones to gems each jewelry got a story to say. Jewelry has been an acknowledgement for human life in various aspects of life like in spirituality, religious, ritual, cultural, astrologically, celebrational, occasional, ornamental, adornments, reputational, embellishment of oneself and many more. As we all know India is a diverse country in culture, likewise making of a jewelry differs from one place to another. Identification of an individual can be made with the help of the jewelry worn because each place has its own unique style and form.

Jewelry is bifurcated in many categories like finger rings, nose rings, ear rings, anklets, bangles, necklaces and various types of ornaments to enhance oneself. Each category has its own importance of being worn with a scientific reason. Gold has been most essential metal in jewelry making from long time. Gold is used so that the sustainability of the ornament is more, which likely replaces few ritual ornaments like pavithra mothiram from Darbha (grass) to gold.

Pavithra mothiram is a traditional ring worn while performing the rituals. Pavithra means pure and mothiram means ring and that is how the name occurred, it is a yogic influence of purifying the mind and body which leads to physical and mental health. Previously paithra mothiram was made out of Darbha (grass). Darbha is a sacred holy plant which helps in absorbing the ill-radiations around and generates positive energy. The more number of Darbha leaves used in making of ring increases the sustainable power of the person. To make pavithra mothiram ring out of darbha grass and disposing it after the usage was regretful, hence the artisan was instructed to make the ring out of purified gold. The gold ring is sent for the consecration in temple and then given to the person who will perform the traditional ritual. It is said that the person who makes and wears the ring is supposed to maintain the spiritual discipline, like not consuming non-vegetarian food and to be teetotalers. Since in most of the Tantric and Vedic rituals like in theyajnas, pujas and homas are performed in the right hand, the ring is worn to the ring finger of the right hand.

The traditional pavithra mothiram, darbha grass ring is rehabilitated into permanent gold and silver ring for the first time in Payyanur, Kerala. Devotees of Payyanur Sri Subrahmanya Swami temple are over whelmed with the spiritual benefit gained by wearing the auspicious ring made out of gold and silver. Sri Subrahmanya Swami temple, Payyanur, was renovated and re-installed the Vighraha (Idol) in the year 1838 which is when an tantric shared the idea and possibilities of making the pavithra mothiram ring in gold to a goldsmith, Sri Kelappan Perunthattan of Chowatta Valappil family. The Artisan successfully made the ring with all the tantric ritual and guidance made by the tantri with all vibrant and spiritual powers. Hence making of the pavithra ring became the tradition and convention of the Chowatta Valappil family in Payyanur, Kerala. Further generations have carried out this tradition of making Pavithra Mothiram successfully and gaining more popularity by sons and grandson Mr Kunhambu Sarap.

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Mr C V Jayachandran son of Mr Kunhambu is presently practicing this wonderful tradition of craftsmanship and sustains the quality of work. Thekkeniyedathu Tharanellur Pathmanabhan Unni Namboodiripad, Tantri of Sree Subhramanya Swami Temple, Payyanur, Kerala certifies that the Pavithra Mothiram is a sacred ring authenticated to be made only by Chowatta Valappi family.



Traditional Gold ring called as Pavithra mothiram is a sacred ring worn while performing rituals.

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Artisan blowing fire through the lit lamp with the help of a mini soldering torch pipe on the small pieces of gold.



Copy of a newspaper article providing the details about the ring and its history.



The knot made on the ring is known as pavithra knot of three main deities of Hindu religion Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva.

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Workshop of the goldsmith where they make the gold ring.

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Traditional Gold ring called as Pavithra mothiram.

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Tools and Raw Materials

Following are the tools and raw materials required for pavithra mothiram of kerala:

- **Gold Bar:** 916 gold bar is an essential raw material to make the ring.
- **Rice Husk:** It is used like a tight cushion for the small burning furnace made for heating the metal (gold).
- **Coconut Shell:** Shell cleaned and cut it into small curved plate, which is used for rolling the golden pieces into balls.
- **Concentrated Sulphuric Acid:** It is used for shimmering the gold.
- **Polish Paper:** It is used for polishing and refining the ring.
- **Needlepoint Polishing Tool:** Tool used in polishing the ring.
- **Soap Nut:** A natural cleanser which is used in cleaning the ring.
- **Water:** It is used for washing and cooling of the heated gold metal.
- **Traditional Lamp:** It is used for igniting the fire.
- **Circular Metal Stand:** A holder like, where artisan places the lamp at an appropriate required height.
- **Fiber Cloth:** Fire resistance silica fiber cloth used as a holder for the minute pieces of the metal while heating it.
- **Brass Metal Brush:** A brush used to wash out the dust from the ring.
- **Pipes in Various Size:** It is required for blowing of the air to direct the fire.
- **Tweezers and Tongs:** An essential tool for picking and holding the ring
- **Cutting Pliers and Cutting Nippers:** It is used for cutting of the gold wires.
- **Gold Wires:** It is used for the formation of other design forms like minute balls and spiraled wire.

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- **Knife:** It helps in cutting and elimination of the extra gold.
- **Hammers:** Various kinds of hammer used in the process of ring making like Chisel head hammer used for flattening of the gold bar.
- **Filer:** It is used in smoothing and leveling the ring.
- **Shaping Gauge or Swage Blocks:** It is used in shaping the ring.
- **Ring Sizer Stick:** It helps in acquiring the required diameter of the ring.
- **Anvil or Jewelry Bench Block:** Stake anvil made from railroad rail is used like a base while hammering the gold metal.
- **Crabs Eye Plant Seeds:** A natural glue producer, which is used in sticking the small gold embellishments onto the ring.
- **Magnifiers:** It is worn by the artisan, which helps in having a better view of the small embellishments while working.
- **Pot:** It is used like a furnace holder, where it is filled with the rice husk.
- **Coal:** A heat conductor used for heating the gold metal.
- **Mini Soldering Torch Pipe:** It is used for blowing a thin stream of air which helps in directing the fire towards the required place.



Ring sizer is used to obtain the required radius of the ring.

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Pot filled with rice husk is used as a base cushion on which coal is kept has a furnace to heat the gold.



Different sizes of gauges are used to acquire required thickness of gold wire and shape or design.



Gold is the main material used to make the sacred ring.



Soap nut is soaked in the water, which is used as a cleanser in washing the ring that brings out the lustrous form.

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Water is used to make the soap nut solution to wash the ring.

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A heat conductor used for heating the gold metal.



Tool called as tong is used to pick or hold gold articles in the furnace.



Hammer is used to beat and shape the gold to required shape.

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Cutting nippers are used to cut the gold wires or strips.

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Different size of cutting plyers are used in pulling or twisting the gold wires.



Needle with one end pointed and other end flat is used to mix the gum and small gold particles.

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Eye magnifier used by the artisan to view small pieces of gold embellishment while working.



Coconut shell carved into a small plate is used to roll the gold string pieces into small balls.



Mini soldering torch pipe is used to blow fire through a lamp into the required direction on the gold article pieces.



Metal pipe is used to blow and ignite the coal in the furnace.

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Brass metal wire brush is used to wash and brush the ring.



Anvil also called as jewelry bench block is a thick iron piece made of railroad metal used as a base to hammer and shape the gold.



Small pieces of gold are kept on fire resistant silica fiber and heated.



Needle point polishing tool is used to polish the ring.

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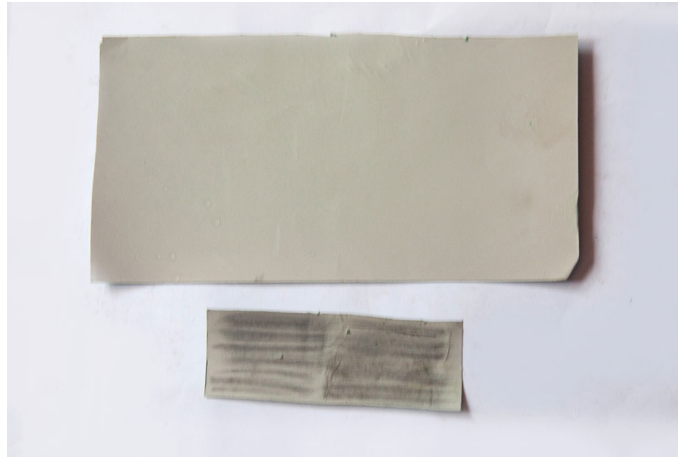
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Polish paper is used for polishing and refining the ring with the help of the Needle point polishing tool.



Traditional lamp is used to light the fire for heating.



Gold articles are dipped in diluted sulphuric acid after heating to clean and remove all impurities.



Crab eye plant seed produces natural glue which is used to paste gold embellishments on the ring.

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Swage blocks are used to shape the breadth of gold piece to make the ring.



Knife is used to cut chip off the additional parts of the metal.



Tweezers are used to hold minute gold embellishments.



Mallet is used to hammer and apply light pressure on delicate areas of the gold articles to desired shape.

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Making Process

Pavithra Mothiram is a traditional jewelry ring which requires three days to make. The strict sacrament rituals, techniques and disciplines like vegetarianism are followed while making the Pavithra ring. After the ring is done it is taken to the Sri Subrahmany Swami Temple, which resides in Payyanur, Kerala for consecration. Consecration is performed to the ring to gain spiritual vibration and energy. The ring is made with a concept behind which consists of pavithra katta means pure knot of Trimurthi in the middle, three main deities (Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva) in Hindu religion, besides it is saptarishi, seven rishis, then four Vedas Rigveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda, Samaveda and, surya (sun) and Chandra (moon). Hence including all the above the ring is very sacred and is evident of divine energy. Thus wearing this ring with sacred discipline is good for serenity and health.

The artisan firstly keeps things ready for the easy ongoing process. Rice husk is packed and filled in a pot, later coal is placed in middle of the rice husk in the pot. A bowl of water is kept next to the artisan for many purposes like washing and cooling of the ring. Artisan picks up a coal with the tong and light it with the help of a lamp. The lit coal is placed on the rest of the coal on the pot and then blown air through a narrow pipe which helps in igniting the rest of the coal. Then the 916 gold bar which looks like a golden bullet is taken and it is placed on the burning coal. Heating of the gold makes it soft and loosen the molecules which helps in shaping it. After the gold softens and the artisan places the gold bar on the swage block and hammers it to acquire the required size and shape of the ring. Once the heat of the gold is descended, the artisan burns the gold and the same process is continued till the expecting form is acquired. After the artisan acquires the basic size and the form. The golden bar is bent to a ring shape with help of the ring sizer stick and hammer. Later the two ends of the ring is merged with the help of the heat produced by the coal. The ring is thoroughly brushed with the brass brush with soapnut seed and water solution. The ring is given the luminosity with the polish paper and needlepoint polishing tool. Needlepoint polishing tool is rubbed over the polish paper to procure the polish, then the tool is rubbed over the ring. The ring base that is shank of the ring is ready.

The embellishment of the ring is divided into several parts. Thin gold wires are used in giving the minute details of the ring. There is a knot made out of the wire as a pavithra knot like mentioned above and stuck on the shoulder of the ring. Artisan wears the goldsmith magnifier glasses for the better view of the process and to ensure the craft. Later the gold wire is taken and cut into small pieces with the cutting nippers and it is placed on the fire resistance silica fiber cloth. The small pieces of gold are heated with the help of the lit lamp and mini soldering torch slightly bent pipe which is used to blow the fire towards the pieces. Heated small pieces are put in coconut shell with the help of tweezers and rubbed in circular manner to get small round golden balls. The rolled small round golden balls are mixed with the glue obtained by the crab's eye plant seeds. The balls are picked up with the tweezer tip and placed it accordingly to the both the sides of the pavithra knot. The balls are said to be saptarishi which is aligned in three rows correspondingly separated onto the surface of the ring. Each row consists seven balls. There is also a moon and sun depicted with minute gold details either sides of the knot.

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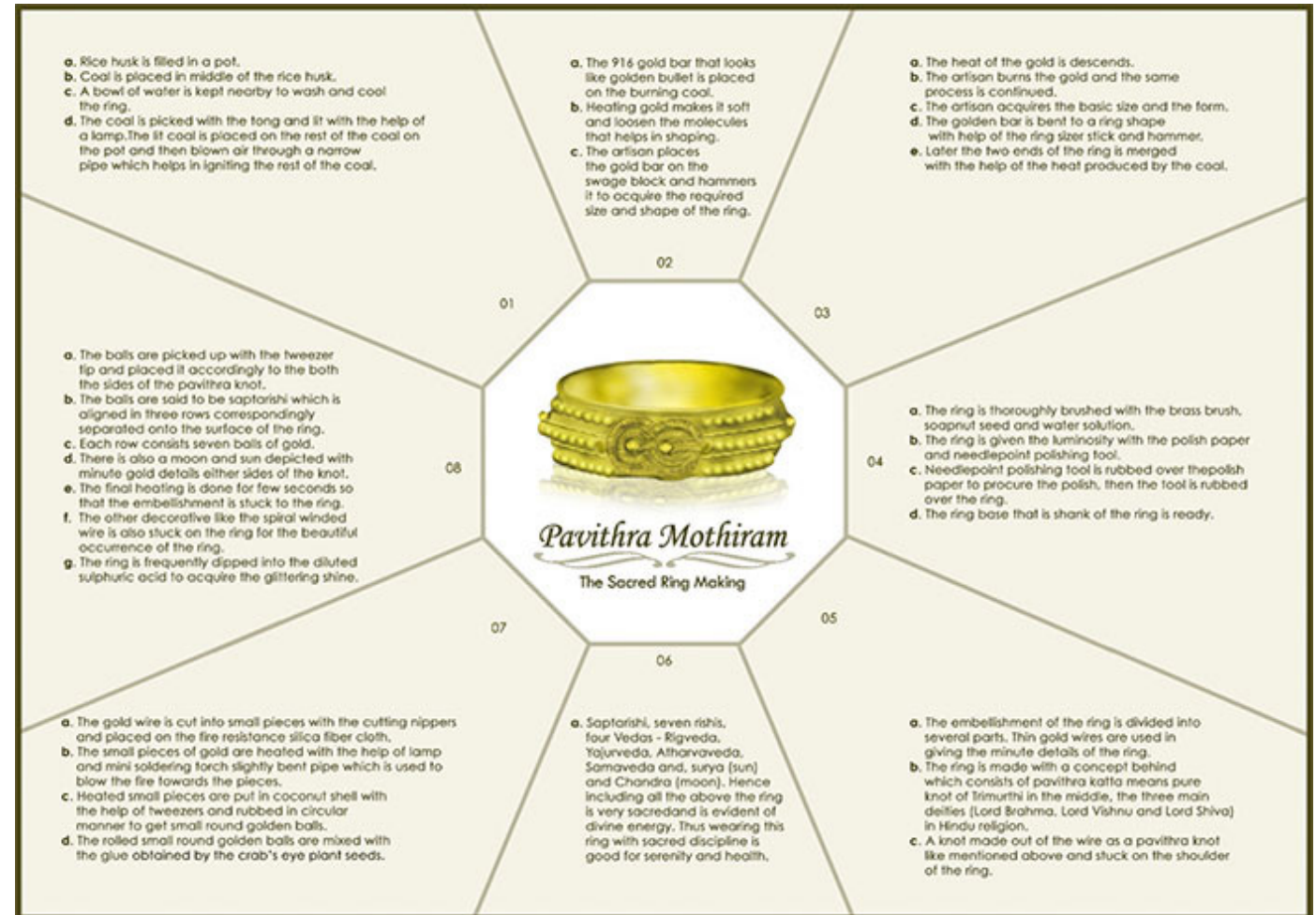
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Then the final heating is done for few seconds so that the embellishment is stuck to the ring. The other decorative like the spiral winded wire is also stuck on the ring for the beautiful occurrence of the ring. The ring is frequently dipped into the diluted sulphuric acid to acquire the glittering shine.

Flow Chart:



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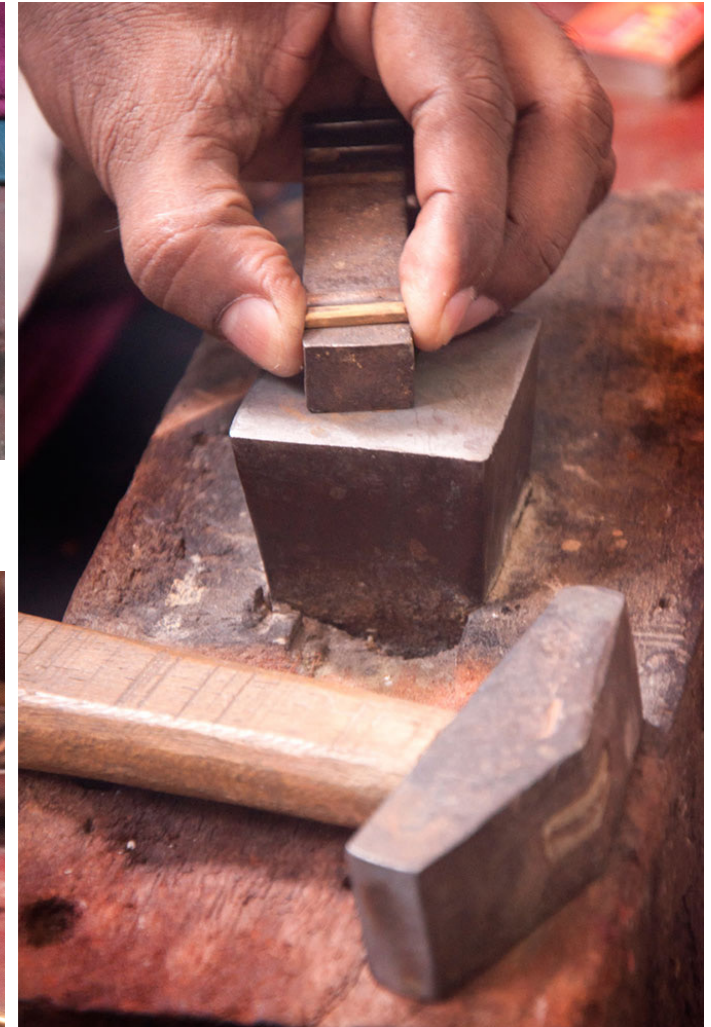
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Piece of gold bar is heated in the furnace.



Shaped gold bar is hammered to give the required length.



Using a swage gauge the bar is given a rectangular shape.

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Lengthened bar is kept in another gauge to flatten the gold bar.



The bar is flattened to the required thickness of gold strip.



The flattened strip is dipped into diluted sulphuric acid solution to wash and remove impurities.



Gold strip is then looped on a ring sizer stick and hammered using a mallet to acquire the required size of ring shape.

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Basic gold ring is ready for further embellishment.



Gold strings are hammered to straighten them.



Small pieces of the strings are cut using cutting nipper.



Traditional lamp is light to heat the pieces of gold.

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With the help of a soldering torch pipe the flame is blown through the lamp to heat the gold pieces.



Heated pieces are put in a coconut shell and rolled to make small golden balls.



These golden balls are used for embellishment.



Gum extracted from crab's eye plant seed is used to join and fix the embellishment pieces onto the ring.

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Golden balls are dipped and mixed with gum.



A golden ball is fixed on the required places of the ring.



Minute delicate work is made on the ring.



After embellishment the ring is once again heated to fix them firmly.

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Needle pointed polishing tool is rubbed on the polish paper.



The ring is rubbed with the polishing tool to bring out the glittering shine of the gold.



Soap nut is soaked in the water to prepare a solution.

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Ring is washed in the soap nut solution and brushed with brass metal wired brush to clean and remove all impurities.

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Products

Invention of Pavithra mohitram (sacred ring) is itself a spiritual accomplishment. Chowattavalappil family is one of the goldsmith families in Payyanur, Kerala. This family was entrusted on making the sacred ring in gold from the tantra of Sree Subrahmanya Swami Temple. They have been the renowned craftsmen of the sacred ring and bangles. Late Sri C. V. Kunhambu has taken immense efforts and knowledge to gain the popularity and he has passed it down to his sons. Mr C. V. Jayachandran is one of the sons who has proficient in making this ring.

The artisan takes orders from several people from various place to make the sacred ring. The ring is valued according to the metal used, size, weight and as per available gold rate on order date.



Pavithra mothiram literally means pure ring which is a yogic influence of purifying mind, body and soul.

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Pavithra mothiram is usually worn by priests and tantri who performs the rituals and poojas.



Simple plain gold ring yet to get embellished.



The pavithra knot on the ring is accompanied by seven golden beads on either side which signifies the saptharishis.

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NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/pavithra-mothiram-payyanur-kerala/video>

Video



Pavithram Mothiram - Payyanur, Kerala

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. **Video**
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

Pavithra Mothiram - Payyanur, Kerala

The Sacred Ring Making

by

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<http://www.dsource.in/resource/pavithra-mothiram-payyanur-kerala/contact-details>

Contact Details

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