

Design Resource

Terracotta Craft of Orissa

The Art of Crafting Clay

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Mr. Antony William
NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://dsource.in/resource/terracotta-craft-orissa>

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



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Introduction

Terracotta has been a major craft of India and different places in it have been hubs of terracotta works for centuries. The ancient potter artists of India have produced a prolific amount of figurines and other such masterpieces over the centuries. The potter artists of India had to cater to the needs and requirements of the society. The thematic scope and range of the terracotta art and products are vast and fascinating. The terracotta figurines outnumber stone sculptures in the past.



An exquisitely carved Buddha made out of Terracotta.

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3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Links
6. Contact Details

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2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Links
6. Contact Details



A Potter gives final touches to the terracotta statue created by him.



The kiln for baking the clay products after sun drying them.



The Potter prepares the pot in a potter's wheel by rotating n shaping it with his hands.

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

Tools and Raw Materials

- **Kumharka Charkha** - Potter's wheel.
- **Chakhayat** - Wooden stick to rotate the wheel.
- **Kamachi** - Hollow cylindrical tube.
- **Maria** - Hammer.
- **Seetpatia** - Wooden slab on which the clay is beaten.



Clay to be used in the pottery making.



Kumharka charkha: Potter's wheel.

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Making Process

Steps of Making Process:

Preparation of clay: The local clay is mixed with other raw materials and sun dried so that no moisture remains before the start of the process of product making.

Turning of the potter's wheel: The clay mixed with ash and sand is first kneaded with hand and made into a lump. The clay is then kept on the wheel and it is rotated manually giving it the desired shape with light strokes and molding it with hand.

The shaped pot is then pulled off the wheel with the help of a string and baked in a potter's kiln at high temperatures. It is after this process that the clay turns into Terracotta.

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

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



A potter separates stones and other impurities from the clay to be used in the pottery making.

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



The potter starts shaping the pot by placing a lump of clay on the potter's wheel.



The pot is half shaped when the potter starts examining it carefully.

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



The pot is carefully given the desired shape with accuracy and delicacy.



The potter carries his work with dexterity and perseverance.

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



The pot is slowly reaching the stage of completion with close examination by the potter.



The pots are then placed in the kiln and the final product is ready to be sold in the market.



The pots are afterwards kept in the sun to dry before placing them in the kiln for baking.

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Products

Orissa has a long history of cultural heritage going back to the 4th century BC. Orissa has made its mark in every field of craft in the past and continues to do so even now. From appliqué to stone carving, from bell metal to silver filigree Orissa has been able to make a name for its artistic excellence in almost every field of craft. The potters of Orissa are kept busy supplying articles for daily use in temples and homes. The artisans of Orissa make statues, toys, utensils and many such items to meet the local demands during festivals.

Orissa has a claim on many of the world renowned masterpieces made out of terracotta. This work is mostly done by the tribal people. They use special clay and designs in an excellent manner to come out with products such as plates, roof tiles, tea cups, jars and many others. Artists prepare products and highlight them with color but they mostly leave the items with their natural terracotta color. Animal figurines of horses, elephants and bulls are also elegantly molded in very natural, strong forms. Potters of Orissa still make earthen pots to be used in many ritualistic ceremonies. They are made in various forms and designs. The products range from household ones to the artistic ones like pots, pitchers, diyas, cups, incense burners, jewellery sets, bangles, masks, toys, candle stands and many more.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
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5. Links
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Various pots of different shapes and sizes at a display.



The potter gives the final finishing to a freshly made pot before sun drying.

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A display of the terracotta pottery products after they have been completed.



The diya left for drying after they have been shaped using dyes.

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Links

- [Craft Design in India](#)
- [Online Infomation Centre for Crafts](#)
- [Handmade in India](#)
- [Crafts Council of India](#)
- [Craft Mark](#)

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2. Tools and Raw Materials
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Contact Details

This documentation was done by **Professor Bibhudutta Baral** and Mr. Antony William at **NID, Bengaluru**.

You can get in touch with Professor Bibhudutta Baral at **[bibhudutta\[at\]nid.edu](mailto:bibhudutta[at]nid.edu)**.

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2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Links
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