

Design Resource

## Terracotta Wall Hangings - Panaji, Goa

Native Handicrafts of Goa

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and  
Harsha Kulkarni

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/terracotta-wall-hangings-panaji-go>

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## Introduction

Goa is one of the India's most popular tourist destination and also well-known for its variety of handicrafts. It is situated at Konkarn region to the western part of India and surrounded by the Maharashtra state to the north and also connects with Karnataka to east and south. Goa attracts huge numbers of international and domestic tourists every year mainly for its Exotic beaches, Wild life sanctuaries, Spice plantations, Plentiful of foodstuffs, Discos, Nightclubs, Casinos, etc. It has a flavor for all right from a party lover to nature lover.

Goa was a part of Mauryan Empire around third century BC. Later Kolhapur Satvahanas and Chalukyas of Badami took over the authority. Gradually other dynasties followed until the Vijayanagar Empire established itself for almost a century. Later the historical era ended with the arrival of Bahmani Sultans of Gulbarga. After that the dynasty was in the hands of Adil Shahis of Bijapur. Years later Portuguese came as a merchants and defeated the presiding Bijapur sultan Yousuf Adil Shah then conquered Goa and existed about 450 years in Velha Goa or old Goa and thereafter it was occupied by British Empire until it was annexed by India in 1961.

This historic city still exhibits the cultural influence of the Portuguese. Now the civilized state has prudent and hardworking people. Goa is also known as multi-lingual state, the two major languages are Marathi and Konkani. The national language of India, Hindi is well understood and also the most commonly spoken language English is used widely. Goa flourishes with well-known churches and temples and a symphonic co-existence triumphs between people of various faith today, it is also one of the India's maximum per-capita incomes by establishing the basis of its economy with fishing, tourism, farming and iron-ore mining.

Goa is one of the smallest state in India which covers an area about 3702 square kilometers. It has a hot and humid climate most of the year as it is located near the Arabian Sea. Goa receives annual rainfall from June and last till September. The climate is very favorable from the late October and has a short winter season which lasts between mid-December to February.

Goa state has been divided into two districts that is North Goa and South Goa. Panaji is the capital city of Goa. Earlier it was pronounced as Panjim by Portuguese and later it turn into Panaji. It fascinates tourists by its eminent structures like "Immaculate Conception Church", "Basilica of Bom Jesus", Se Cathedral, Bird Sanctuary, popular beaches and many other places to get around. There is also very convenient mode of transportation in and around Goa, One of the most popular mode is renting a motorcycle and explore many things. Taxis, Local bus service, Auto rickshaws and cabs are available conveniently.

Tourists are not fulfilled unless they take remembrance of their memorable vacation by wandering around the traditional markets of Goa towns and villages. The outstanding native handicrafts of Goa are most popular souvenir items which include Shell work, Crochet, Brassware, Paper- Mache, attractive Terracotta and pottery works and many more.

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Terracotta home decors are seen in wide practice in Goa and the raw materials are generally obtained locally. In many states of India, Terracotta products have a lot of Importance and is practiced from many generations. This traditional crafts produced by the potters are with artistic perfection and realistic finish.

Terracotta is an art that is made from natural clay, which gives reddish brown in color by its characteristic. It is one of the simplest process for creating decorative items with much lower material costs. Wall Hangings which are made from Terracotta is the magnificent art work that are specially used to design and decorate walls which fascinates the visitors. Some of the special products are custom designed and prepared. This art is practiced for more than two decades in the Artisan family and are successful by introducing contemporary designs in the products.



Panaji the northern district of Goa is well known for its terracotta works.



The most striking artistic shell work done on the mirror.



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One of the attractive sculpted figurine of clay.



Artisan demonstrating the making process of the clay work.



Refined clay is made to the desired shape that need to be fired.

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## Tools and Raw Materials

Some of the simple and basic tools and raw materials that are available locally are used by the Artisans to create attractive designs.

The tools are listed below:

- **Clay:** It is the basic raw material used in making products and are available locally.
- **Furnace:** This is permanently built by the Artisan itself using bricks and mud to bake the finished clay products.
- **Sharp Tools:** Blades and knives are used to create the patterns and for decorating the products.
- **Brushes:** It is used to apply water while combining two different parts of the articles and also variety of brushes are used to paint the final products.
- **Wooden Piece:** It is used as a fuel which are obtained locally.



Clay lid that is used to cover the clay works during the time of baking.



Red fire is used for the furnace.

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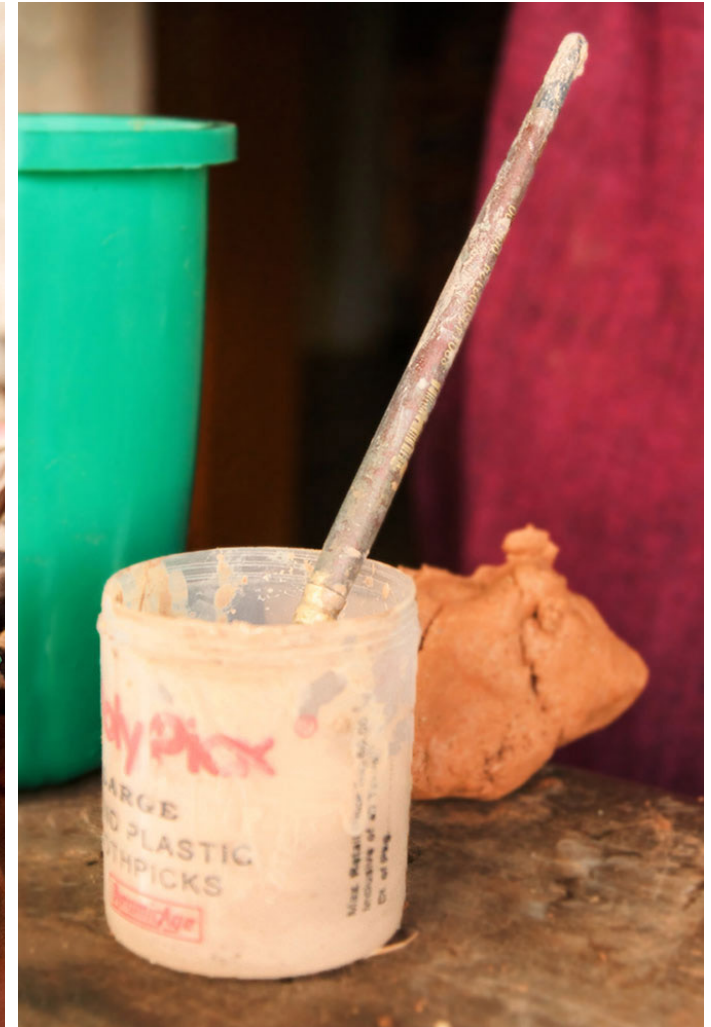
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Water is used for kneading the clay to make terracotta work.



A plastic bowl and brush is used for storing the clay paste.



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Hacksaw is used for carving the designs on the wet clay.



Furnace is used for baking the terracotta work.



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The special kind of red clay is obtained to make the terracotta work.



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## Making Process

The raw materials are brought from the nearby place which is obtained locally. Initial stage is to refine the clay by removing the dust particles from the clay. The clay is mixed with water in a basket and filtered it using a very fine fishing net, where the impurities and pebbles in the clay will be removed. Later when the clay is dried, it is soaked in water. Finally the dough is pressed or kneaded continuously for a long time to remove the air and to enhance the elasticity. The prepared dough is then used for making products and also it is covered and stored to preserve the moisture.

The parts of the article are prepared, shaped separately and then combined later. Artisan first creates a basic shape of the product and then patterns are made on it using sharp edged metal piece. Artisan creates different parts of coconut tree like trunk, leaves, and shells separately and then it is fixed together. For making leaves, first the small piece of clay is rolled, bent and flattened slowly so that the clay should not develop any cracks. The pattern on the tree and leaves are then made and smoothening of the surface is done by smearing pinch of water.

To combine two surfaces of clay, indentations are made on each surface and water is applied on the place where each clay area joins together and then pressed. Like the same manner other types of wall hangings and decorative items are made. After completion the article is kept for drying under the sun. Later it is taken to furnace for baking process.

This baking process is done to enhance the strength and quality of the products. Here the small articles like decorative items are baked in the furnace. The art pieces are carefully placed in the furnace and it is covered with clay tile pieces to absorb the heat. Wooden pieces are used as fuel in baking process and gradually heat level is increased and temperature is maintained, so that the articles are baked properly.

Depending on the articles and the artisan's choice of color and strength, the baking process takes place. Small articles are baked for approximately one and half hour and bigger ones takes more than two hours. Later the products are taken out from the furnace carefully and allowed to cool for some time. Under baked and over baked products are not worth in the market.

Finally the products are embellished with beautiful colors if required or else the varnish is applied to give a shiny look to the final products.

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Flow Chart:

Clay is mixed with water in a basket and filtered with fishing net, where the pebbles and other impurities are removed.

The dough is kneaded continuously for a long time to remove air and to enhance the elasticity.

At first the basic shape of the product is prepared manually and then patterns are made on it using sharp tool.

The different parts of the articles are prepared and shaped separately and later it is fixed together.

To fix the articles, indentations are made on each surface of the clay and water is applied where the area is joined and then it is pressed.

The article is kept for drying under sun and later it is taken for baking process.

The articles are baked in order to enhance the strength and quality of the products.

After baking the products are allowed to cool and are embellished with beautiful colors if required.

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Red clay is obtained from the field and sieved through the net till the fine mixture of clay is obtained.



Then it is mixed with water and kneaded thoroughly in legs.

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Later clay is modelled.



The chosen design is carved in the hacksaw blade on the clay model.

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All the parts of the model are then joined with the clay slips.



To give the smooth finishing for the model, the clay paste is applied on it with the help of the brush.



Then the model is checked thoroughly and set in proper shape.



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Clay model which is finalized with the shape is ready for baking.



The model is then kept in furnace for baking.



The close-up of the terracotta work that is baked.

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## Products

In Goa, Terracotta products have unique modern pieces and Now-a-days Artisans are very much interested and involved in creating innovative pieces such as wall hangings, lampshades, floral designs, and figures of saints, Gods and Goddesses, animals, ashtrays, flower garden pots, penholders and many more home decors which attracts the tourists. The products are made still more striking by decorating it with sea shell articles.

These are made still more striking products by decorating it with sea shell articles which are abundantly available in Goa.



The hut.

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Artisan displays her terracotta work along with the shell works made by her.



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Sculpted clay model of couple.



Modeled face in clay.



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Intricately carved elephant chariot is one of the best terracotta work.

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## Video



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## Contact Details

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