

MESMERIZING BEAUTY OF BLUE POTTERY

The word itself creates the environment of exotic. Blue pottery is commonly recognized as a traditional craft of the pink city, afor “The Jaipur”, though it is Turko Persian in origin. As this name is comes from the attractful cobalt blue dye which is used to colour the pottery. There are many Eurasian types of pottery which comes in blue and white and totally related to design, shapes and style to Islamic pottery and as same as Chinese pottery. Blue is the colour of luxurious and so as with Blue pottery. Though Indian Pottery are highly quality assured and highly decorated, relatively low prestige wares.

HISTORY WHICH GAVE THE BIRTH TO THIS STUNNING EVERGREEN BEAUTY OF BLUE POTTERY

The use of blue glaze on pottery is an imported technique first developed by Mongol artisans who combined Chinese glazing technology with Persian decorative arts. This technique traveled east to India with early Turkic conquests in the 14th century. During its infancy, it was used to make tiles to decorate mosques, tombs and palaces in Central Asia. Later, following their conquests and arrival in India, the Mughals began using them in India. Gradually the blue glaze technique grew beyond an architectural accessory to Indian potters. From there, the technique traveled to the plains of Delhi and in the 17th century went to Jaipur.

Other accounts of the craft state that blue pottery came to Jaipur in the early 19th century under the ruler Sawai Ram Singh II (1835 – 1880). The Jaipur king had sent local artisans to Delhi to be trained in the craft. Some specimens of older ceramic work can be seen in the Rambagh Palace, where the fountains are lined with blue tiles. However, by the 1950s, blue pottery had all but vanished from Jaipur, when it was re-introduced through the efforts of the muralist and painter Kripal Singh Shekhawat, with the support of patrons such as Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya and Rajmata Gayatri Devi.

HISTORY: THE JAIPUR BLUE POTTERY

Jaipur is the city of artistic view where people from different countries came just to see the true colorful world of Rajasthan and that is Jaipur. Jaipur blue pottery, made out of a similar frit material to Egyptian faience, is glazed and low-fired. No

clay is used: the 'dough' for the pottery is prepared by mixing quartz stone powder, powdered glass, Multani Mitti (Fuller's Earth), borax, gum and water. Another source cites Katira Gond powder (a gum), and saaji (soda bicarbonate) as ingredients.

Generally, the pottery design is in the way of bunch of flower motifs with some leaves seems like there is a thing which catches the eye. Being fired at very low temperature makes them fragile. The range of items is primarily decorative, such as ashtrays, vases, coasters, small bowls and boxes for trinkets. The colour palette is restricted to blue derived from the cobalt oxide, green from the copper oxide and white, though other non-conventional colour, such as yellow and brown are sometimes included.

The Jaipur belt of Rajasthan is rich in the artistic stones, quartz which is one of the main items required in this craft and Jaipur become the hub of blue pottery.

Jaipur, the “Pink City” of Rajasthan is known for its rich culture and Blue pottery art. As you step into old city of Jaipur, you can see beautiful azure all around. Blue pottery, ever so elegant and always fragile, is a craft Pink City is celebrated for.

Jaipur is indeed a city of wonders as it is the land of the royal Rajputs and there are ample of monuments and architectures to be discovered here. But apart from just tourism shopping is the things for which more than half of the tourists visit Jaipur and the main attraction of the city is the traditional handicrafts of Rajasthan which is popular to city by city and they all are equally popular and the tourist can buy them according to their choice. It is very common that the state of Rajasthan is already known for its handicrafts and many other art works which are popular and when we talk of Jaipur them there are many things which are quite famous in the city and among them the Jaipuri Leheriya sarees, Jaipur quilts and especially the ‘Blue Pottery’ which are distinct and known as one of the most popular and traditional art of Jaipur.

USES OF POTTERY

Well, if you want to be limited to pottery, which is defined as “ceramic ware, especially earthenware and stoneware.”

Pottery is used as a containment vehicle, a transport vehicle, and/or a delivery vehicle, and/or vehicle for personal expression, sometimes all at the same time

A mug, for instance, contains a liquid as it is being transported from one space to another, and delivers the liquid to a person's mouth. The shape, color and decoration of a mug gives it the character by which someone could identify with their mug as their personal expression.

Here is the short list of ceramic ware or pottery, have a look!

Sinks, commodes.

Plates: platters, dinner, salad, bread, dessert, saucer.

Cups, mugs, steins, whiskey cups, tea.

Bowls: soup, salad, pasta, serving, batter, casserole, sugar, tasting, condiment, yarn, planters, egg cookers.

Canisters: cookie jars, sugar, flour, coffee, rice, tea, pasta, kitchen compost, etc.

Vases, creamers, bread box, butter dish, salt & pepper shakers, garden plaques, soap dishes, soap and lotion dispensers, toothbrush holders, back scratchers, incense holders, hair combs, wall pockets, luminaries, scented wax holders, buttons, trivets, napkin rings, "pour over coffee" funnels, ring holder, cake toppers, plant markers, fan/light pulls, house address plaques, cell phone speakers, cell phone charger stands, growlers, necklaces, earrings, beads, juicers, mortar and pestles, sponge holders, spoon rests, wineglass markers, serving trays, candle holders, jewelry boxes, paper towel holder, holiday ornaments, thimbles, figurines, bells, spice jars, flame ware pans (requires special clay, super high heat, and a great product insurance plan), wine aerators, whistles, door plates, pie shell, cheese bells, lamps, water fountains, clocks, sculptures, piggy banks, murals for wall or floor, face jugs, tea pots, chalice sets, mobiles, chess sets, hand mirror frames, bath tissue holder, book ends, music boxes, drums and other musical instruments, toast caddies, punch bowl sets, pitchers, garlic keepers, brown sugar keepers, shaving skuttles, tanginess', etc.

Pottery is generally formed by using one of the following ways: On the wheel by hand, on the wheel by jolly and jigger, hand built, extruded, press molded, mold poured and 3D printed. The only thing that seems to limit the uses of pottery, is one's mind.

A LONG WAY PROCESS OF "BLUE POTTERY"

The making of **blue pottery** involves various **steps** and it's a long **process**.

- **READY THE DOUGH FIRST:** Firstly the dough is prepared with raw materials like quartz powder (available in Jaipur and in powdered form), cullet (the small chunks of glass are washed first and are grinded later to make glass powder. It is sieved to avoid bigger particles.), saji, katira Gond, and multani mitti are mixed together properly to a non-sticky dough and kept for few hours before using.
- **MOLD MAKING:** As formation of molds is from plaster of Paris. Molds are made of desired shapes and sizes, and then dried. To avoid breakings and due to limitations of the use of dough, it is casted in molds. One or two molds are used while making certain products, like for a vase - the castings are attached to each other with little dough and water. The molds if maintained properly can be used for more numbers of times.
- **PRODUCT CASTING:** To make the product there is a need of dough which is flattened to a round roti like shape of approximate 1cm thickness with a flattening tool. To mold the dough it should be nicely tucked. The extra edge of dough that comes out of mold is cut using a knife. Mold is turned upside down and it is slowly removed. The product is left for drying for 1-2 days along with burnt wood dust in itself. Once the product dries the burnt wood dust is removed. As by the help of small broom excess dust is brushed off from the product. Products like vases are provided with base to give them stability. The base is attached to the product with some amount of dough and sprinkled with water to make it leather hard. Once the product is completely done it is left for drying for 1-2 days because blue pottery needs some dry air for soaking.
- **SMOOTHENING IS MUCH NEEDED:** The rough edge of the product is smoothened by rubbing it on stone gently. After this, the product is rubbed with the sandpaper to remove grains and to make surface of product even. The finished product now has to be painted before which it undergoes another smoothening process. The product is coated with, dough mixed with water to fill the pores and later the product is dried and rubbed with sandpaper again. The same step is repeated for one more coat. After second round of smoothening the products are dipped in mixture of quartz powder, powdered

glass, Maida (edible flour) and water. It is evenly coated and kept for drying. Once the product is dried it is rubbed with sandpaper evenly and made ready for painting.

- **PAINT AND DESIGNS:** As design and art gives the inner enhancement and when we talk about Jaipur painting aahhh, there is no words. So when smoothing is done after that the step is to do some flowery designs which makes pottery complete. Artisans follow or sometimes come up with their own designs. All products are painted by hand. First the outlines are drawn with the fine brush or custom-made artist brush. If the product is circular shape then the outline is easy to give, product is just placed on potter's wheel and by touching the tip of brush to the product a neat line could be drawn. After the outlines, colors are filled in the spaces and that complete designs.
- **COLOURS COMPLETES EVERYTHING:** We know that colour brings joy and happiness and when design on the pottery is complete there is need of filling the colour. Generally on the blue pottery there is a use of white and blue colour which are magnificently attractive. The colors that are used are oxides and Ferro metal. The oxides will be available in the market. It is mixed with edible gum, which acts as a binding agent. Once done with outlines, it is then filled with colors.
- **PREPARATION OF GLAZE:** A special glaze is prepared using different raw material like powdered glass, borax, zinc oxide, potassium nitrate, and boric acid. These raw materials are heated at a high temperature; melting point is reduced by borax. When everything is done, mixture is put to cold water to cool and it splits to splinters. Splinters are collected and then grounded. The grounded frit is mixed with water to form glaze, the coat of product should not be too thick or thin, and it should be evenly coated. Too thick will give matte finish and when it is too thin it will leave the pores exposed. The products are dipped in glaze and left for drying. Once it is dried its ready to get in furnace.
- **FRUNACE TO DRY:** The products are kept inside a furnace to dry. The products are properly stacked inside so that it doesn't touch each other. The kiln is closed from top and heating is done from below using wood and charcoal, and an even circulation of heat within the kiln is maintained by

leaving the center core open for heat to move freely. The firing takes place for 4-5 hours and the firing has to be controlled to be gradual because changes in temperature might cause cracks in products. The kiln is left for cooling for 2-3 days and then products are taken out. The products are separated from the cracked ones, the final ones are cleansed and packed for the market.

Here are certain things that eventually become the identities of certain places. Like for instance when you think of Mathura, the first thing that strikes your mind is “pedhe”, similarly, when you think about Kashmir you think about houseboats. So is the case with Jaipur! As I heard someone talk about Jaipur, the first thing that came to my mind was blue pottery! Those of you who have been to Jaipur would definitely agree with my reaction. The exquisite blue pottery that attracts visitors from all around the world has been acknowledged as the conventional art of Jaipur. But have you ever wondered how did this fine art come into existence in Jaipur? Here are certain things that eventually become the identities of certain places. Like for instance when you think of Mathura, the first thing that strikes your mind is “pedhe”, similarly, when you think about Kashmir you think about houseboats. So is the case with Jaipur! As I heard someone talk about Jaipur, the first thing that came to my mind was blue pottery! Those of you who have been to Jaipur would definitely agree with my reaction. The exquisite blue pottery that attracts visitors from all around the world has been acknowledged as the conventional art of Jaipur. But have you ever wondered how did this fine art come into existence in Jaipur?

SOME POINTS TO HIGHLIGHT

- The handicrafts sector occupies an important place in the Rajasthan economy as it contributes significantly to employment generation and export earnings. The economic importance of the sector also lies in its high employment potential, low capital investment, high-value addition, and continuously increasing demand both in the domestic and overseas markets.

- A major cluster, Gramin Blue Art Pottery Samiti Kotjewar near Jaipur is actively involved in this craft. These clusters are subdivided into 11 other individual units which employ about 250 artisans.
- There are 250 artisans associated with the Jaipur blue art pottery Samiti who are producing the craft working from their homes. It is not industrial production, yet we have a big stock for retailers. We also provide export services to any corner of the world.
- Though we use traditional designs for the products, we are also innovating in terms of modern utility products.

THE ART OF JAIPUR BLUE POTTERY

The Blue Pottery of Jaipur is literally famous in the whole nation and even in the world too. The artwork is called as blue pottery because the potteries are blue in color which is done with blue dye colors and they are combined with eye catching golden and silver designs and the style of art is actually derived from the Turko-Persian style. The blue color which is used to color the potteries is actually a color which is made by an Egyptian technique using the Indian raw materials such as Multani Mitti or Fuller's Earth borax, Katira Gond or a kind of gum, normal gum, saaji which is the local name for sodium bicarbonate and water. Besides the coloring the potteries are made up of a frit material which is an Egyptian faience which is done under low fire and followed by glazing it as there is no clay is used to make these potteries. To make the dough for the potteries quartz stone powder and powdered glass is used instead of normal clay. There are many other colors such as cobalt blue, green, yellow and brown also added shifting from the blue monochrome and they are made with copper oxide, cobalt oxide and many others are also used to make some other non-conventional colors.

The blue pottery of Jaipur can be recognized easily at any local market and no one can get them away by seeing its beautiful motifs which are done in blue and golden colors and they are seen more in birds and animal motifs such as horses and camels. These potteries can be bought in many forms such as flower vases, ashtrays, jars, cups, tea sets, small bowls, crockeries and many others. But they are fragile and should be really handled delicately.

IN RECENT YEARS SOME CHANGES OR MODERNISATION COMES IN THE AREA OF BLUE POTTERY

The craft has undergone changes in the composition of raw materials, its processing and patterns of designing as well as the use of the product. Initially, the

glaze coating used to have lead in its composition which, according to the craftsmen, used to give better results. Today, the craftsmen use lead - free glaze for coating the articles.

Also, the blue pottery items were initially done with floral or geometric designs. Today, the customers prefer fabric or abstract designs. As such, the dense, intricate designs are now under transition toward simple and straight fabric designs. Besides the composition and design patterns, there has been a major change in the usage. The articles which were initially used only as decorative items are now also used as functional ones. They are used as kitchen crockery, toothpaste and pen stands, etc. The reason behind this is the removal of lead from the glaze of blue pottery. Since lead is harmful for health, the articles could not be used as kitchenware. With the advent of lead - free articles, its use has spread to various new areas.

FACTS ABOUT BLUE POTTERY

Pottery and Civilization: Pottery has been around in almost every single civilization out there, with the oldest showing up about 24,000 years ago in Czechoslovakia. However, there are some reasons for this coming about, and it was made even better in the Mesopotamia area. The reason for pottery is because of the following:

- Practical Purposes
- Decorative purposes
- Creating efficient and symmetrical shapes

The wheel alone was enough to help bring pottery to a new level, and making it better than ever.

SOME RULES REGARDING CERAMICS: There are some properties of ceramics, and they are important since they involve processing.

The properties of this include the following:

- The porosity
- Strength
- Heat resistance
- All chemical properties associated with this

In the last stage of this, you'll be able to handle all of these different factors. What this means is, you can take identical raw materials that are shaped in an identical way, but due to the varying firing that you can do, you can actually give them completely different attributes.

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And so much more. Ceramics and pottery are both used in order to help benefit others, and you can get a lot out of this.

UNIQUE FOOD FOUND IN POTTERY: Dazzling thing about pottery is how unique you can get with this, and archeologists have even found ancient pottery that is in a preserved state, with strange content.

Much of the older pottery usually didn't have some plant matter sticking around, but there was an old plate found in Denmark that had more than just plant matter on it, and this 3000-year old pot showcased some clues to what people ate.

Some of the substance that was found included:

- Bovine fat
- Sugar
- Oil

Now in ancient cultures, this was a rare meal find, but there are still research factors being taken into consideration to figure out what this is. It was an attempt to melt cheese, and due to the smell that was there, it got chucked away.

POTTERY NEEDS HEAT: Pottery actually does need heat for it to be considered pottery. There are a few reasons for that, especially since it involves the composition of this.

The reasons are as follows:

- It's a natural material
- If you don't apply heat to dried pottery and it gets water on it, it'll become mud

- When heat is applied, it changes the bonds of the piece, causing the material to become waterproof and permanent

So yes, pottery and ceramics go hand in hand, and although Ceramics is the chemical changes, pottery needs that heat.

CONCLUSION

Pottery is a very old, and very interesting type of art, in that there is a lot of information that is there, and many people don't even realize the extent that this plays into our society. While we have moved more into the mass-producing side of things, there is also the fact that there is the chance that we can take a lesson from history, and learning about how ancient cultures and their pottery can ultimately help us.

Hopefully, these pottery facts helped you learn a bit more about how to perfect it, some cool techniques that you can try, and also a little bit about some of the most popular pottery items that are out there, and some cool things you can do with pottery as well.

“FOR EVERYONE ART IS A PASSION OF HAPPINESS, AND TO ENHANCE THE JOY WE MUST APPRECIATE THE ARTISTIC ENVIRONMENT OF OUR CITY, SO AS BLUE POTTERY”

