

Carpet In Iran

(2012)

Abstract

Iranian carpets (it is more known as Persian carpets) are very much famous among the oriental carpets all around the world. The finest Iranian carpets are usually Iranian carpets made by Iranians. These carpets reveal the Iranians' mastery of their traditional art in selecting materials, knotting and dying techniques and creating patterns and designs.

Iranian Carpets / rugs reveal a link between the producers and their wishes, beliefs and needs. They also reflect the living conditions and cultural status of the artist, as well as the regions climatic conditions, botanical resources and geographical conditions.

Iranian carpet designs, patterns and motifs have been derived and inspired from nature, history and myths. In fact, the roots of carpet making must be sought in nomadic life from which it found its way to the villages and cities. Nomads use the wool of livestock and the dyes made from a variety of plants or mineral resources

Carpets not only have everyday usage, but are also regarded as objects of art. The Iranians nomads make beautiful carpets / rugs to cover and decorate floors and other parts of their tents. They also weave kilims, blankets, saddles, tent ribbons, etc.

Through making thousands or millions of knots by dyed threads with or without an already drawn design on a sheet of paper, a beautifully designed carpet is completed. Nomads create motifs and patterns without any such drawings and by simply referring to their imaginations and all they have learned from their ancestors. Only city carpet makers use drawings to create designs.

Designs of Iranian Carpets

The overall design of an Iranian carpet / rug consists of a background design and that of the margins. The margins make a frame around the main body of the carpet and usually have three sections: inner, outer and main sections. The size and pattern of the carpet determine the main margin's design

Carpet designs may be broadly categorized into two types, 1) revolving; and 2) broken. The revolving carpet designs are made of curved lines that are drawn on checkered paper prior to knotting. The broken ones comprise simple straight lines, which need not be drawn on paper prior to knotting. The latter category is of greater interest to rural and nomadic artists.

Various Iranian Carpet Designs

The most famous Iranian carpet designs are the following ones: Prayer Niche, Vase, Framed, Tree, Shah Abbas, Arabesque, European Flower, Striped, four Seasons, and Hunting Field. Of course, many of them have other variations.

Prayer Niche (Mehraby)

This design has been inspired by arches as well as prayer niches of mosques, but some other decorative elements like columns, flowers and leaves have been later added to it. The variations of these designs are named after the name of the added elements.

Vase (Goldany)

This design consists of various types and sizes of flower vases, which are sometimes full of flowers, and fill the main part of the carpets. Sometimes a number of symmetrical or otherwise arranged vases are made to decorate the entire carpet. It started to be made since Safavid period.

Tree (Derakhty)

This design includes magnificent trees, specially cedars and weeping willows, seen on the carpets of royal courts, while simpler trees are seen in those made by villagers and nomadic tribes.

Shah Abbas

This design is based on a floral pattern, which has been popular since Safavid period although the sacred pomegranate blossoms of Zoroastrians are its source of inspiration. Its abstract floral designs combined with Arabesque designs comprise the main pattern and the margin of these carpets.

Arabesque (Eslimy)

This design consists of plant-like curved patterns and has got a long history in ancient Iran's decorative arts. The Persian word for Arabesque (Eslimy) has probably been derived from the word Eslimy meaning bud. One of the most famous types of this pattern found in abundance in the Bijar carpet. In this form, the ending part of each branch is divided into two parts that resemble the jaws of a dragon.

Four Seasons

This is one of the most interesting carpet designs used since last few centuries. It consists of four pictures, each depicting one season of the year. These beautiful carpets used to be made only in Tabriz and Heris. Today they are made in other parts of Iran as well.

Carpet Modern period

Although carpet production is now mostly mechanized, traditional hand woven carpets are still widely found all around the world, and usually have higher prices than their machine woven counterparts due to them being an artistic presentation. Iran exported \$517 million worth of hand woven carpets in 2002. There are an estimated population of 1.2 million weavers in Iran producing carpets for local markets as well as export. In recent times Iranian carpets have come under fierce competition from other countries producing fakes of the original Iranian designs as well as genuine cheaper substitutes. Most of the problems facing this traditional art is due to absence of patenting and branding the products as well as reduced quality of raw materials in the local market and the consistent loss of original design patterns. The absence of modern R&D, is causing rapid decline in the size as well as market value of this art.

Materials

Wool is the most common material for carpets but cotton is frequently used for the foundation of city and workshop carpets. Silk carpets date back to at least the sixteenth century in Sabzavar and the Seventeenth century in Kashan and Yezd.^[citation needed] Silk carpets are less common than wool carpets since silk is more expensive and less durable; they tend to increase in value with age. Due to their rarity, value and lack of durability, silk carpets are often displayed on the wall like tapestries rather than being used as floor coverings.

Tabriz, capital of azarbaijan,has for centuries enjoyed a great reputation as an important weaving centre in Iran. in this city carpet weaving has had a long record. The dimentions vary from the smallest up to the biggest sizes. For many long years, Tabriz carpets, with their interesting designs, durability, fineness, and pleasant colours have always been sought after in Iran and abroad. Tabriz is the second largest city in Iran, situated in the north. The carpets from Tabriz are of high quality and come in a great variety of sizes. The pattern could be floral, vases, trees, hunting scenes or teardrop medallions. The most famous design is called "Mahi". The pile is of wool or wool/silk, while the warp cotton or silk. Antique carpets from Tabriz are extremely valuable and can be found only in museums or in exclusive private collections.

Kashan

The carpets woven in Kashan are among the best in Iran in terms of knitting. The designs of these carpets are quite visible. The carpets have short pile and usually a medallion design at the center and medallions at their four corners. They are made of silk and wool. Silk is provided from the northern Caspian regions and the wool used in some carpets is imported from England.

Isfahan

The carpets of Isfahan mostly bear the Shah Abbas designs consisting of medallions and Shah Abbasi flowers

Almost a hundred and fifty years ago carpet weaving started in the few limited workshops of Tehran.

The creative and interesting design of Tehran carpets with their harmonious, pleasant and attractive colours usually are not familiar to everyone, yet one can easily distinguish the origin of the exquisite handicraft.

One of the main reasons for the importance of the art and industry of carpet weaving in Tehran is the presence of numerous workshops and factories for washing, spinning and dyeing the first rate quality and standardised wool in the city and its outskirts. Moreover, the establishment of the National Carpet Company and its endeavour to achieve and improve the quality of carpets in Iran, the Carpet Museum, and finally the big bazaar where the most profitable carpet transactions take place influences to a great deal the importance of Tehran as being the centre of the art and industry of carpet weaving in Iran.