



Handicraft *c*
from Morocco

A R T A N D M A T T E R



vision2015 ... at one with the handicraft profession

Vision 2015 was launched to encourage the ever growing inventiveness of Moroccan artisans.

It was thought out by the public authorities in charge of handicraft together with private parties (handicraft chambers for one-person artisan and the federation of handicraft businesses for the collective companies).

The state, through the handicraft department, is an enabler and strategy-developer whilst la Maison de l'Artisan acts as an expert responsible for promoting the whole range of handicrafts in morocco. Its mission is twofold: to support the marketing campaign of handicraft products and to consolidate the brand image of the "Moroccan handicraft"

Unprecedented, clearly-defined and supported by a concrete action plan spread over time, "vision 2015" is a strategy for developing the Moroccan handicraft sector over the next decade. It ultimately aims at generation employment through the sustainable development of the sector, now spilt up into six industrial clusters: decoration, jewelry, household furniture, clothing, architecture, and organic products.

The objective is quite sizeable: to generate 117,500 new employments and to increase the volume of exports to 7 billion DH by 2015, thereby doubling the sector's turnover while improving the income as well as the living and working conditions of artisans.

"Vision 2015" is about unleashing and bringing to fruition the fabulous potential of the art of living and in handicraft of morocco.

SUMMARY

Matter, soul,
Symbiosis, inspiration
And the work of art takes shape and
Uncovers itself...

It is the never-ending passion between
Art and matter.

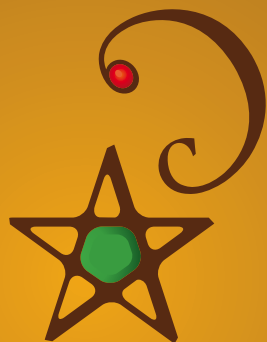
Passion handed down by an age-old tradition
Sustained by influences and trends fostering the aspira-
tion of artisans
Artisans shaping matter with body and soul.

Designers giving a soul to the matter that they shape
And body to the works of art they create.

Matter is infinitesimal, they sublimate it.
Art like a renaissance of matter,
The coming out of beauty.

Handicraft of Morocco,
Art and matter.

- 1 - DECORATION
- 2 - JEWELRY
- 3 - FURNITURE
- 4 - CLOTHING
- 5 - ARCHITECTURE
- 6 - ORGANIC PRODUCTS





Decoration

The art of weaving

Whether it is a work of art or an element of comfort, the carpet is intimately linked to the Moroccan interior. Its patterns and colors enhance and illuminate, which are relatively dark owing to small openings on the outside to protect from heat and cold. Technically speaking, carpets fall into two categories: knotted and woven.



Knotted carpet : the ultimate quality and beauty of their patterns and colors are steeped in poetry and are a true reflection of tier high artistic value.

Woven carpets : the handira (kilim) or handbel has a lighter texture and uses thinner less sophisticated wool.

The art of weaving is one of the most ancient traditions of Moroccan tribes and cities.

Rural carpets : the nature-inspired colors and patterns of these carpets are part of the significance and symbolism of the rural carpet. They are the fruit of the creative imagination of the Berber women of the atlas and a reflection of their soul and word. As a diary, they express their day-to-day life and emotions.

Its high colored wool and fine shapes (lozenges, triangles, rectangles, chevron and plaits), become an integral part of the background and turn into blankets or mattresses according to personal preferences. They may even be used as decoration for floor and walls.

Urban carpets : the finesse of dots and harmony of colors reflect the authenticity of the carpets from Rabat, Fez and Mediouna renowned for their knots made on high-warp looms.

The matter of our soul

Once it has been washed, cleaned, laundered, worsted and processed into threads. The wool is now better suited to the various patterns.

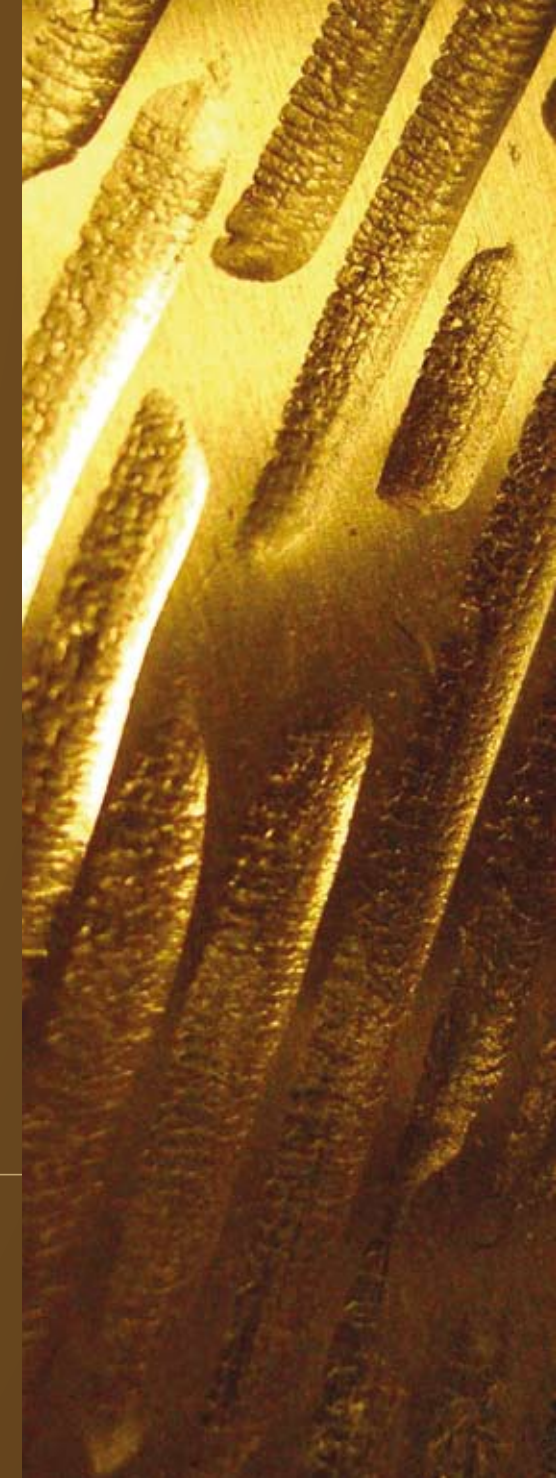


The art of leather work

There is no better testimony to Morocco's contribution in the leather craftsmanship than the every origin of its name: "maroquinerie". Poufs, desk pads, and blotters, saddles, console tables, and sheathed drawer chests...are the incarnation of the soul of Moroccan leather craftsmen, custodians of a legendary know-how.

The shimmering, tantalizing colors of cubic or cylindrical self or multicolored poufs illuminate the interiors of Moroccan sitting and living rooms. When smelling and caressing these leather-made items, one cannot but feel the passion of the leather worker and the thousands of needle stitches inspired by an acute sense of tradition. Definitely unfashionable and essential in every house, that is how the pouf is considered.

Likewise, more and more console tables and drawer chests are leather-covered, thus adding to the coziness and livability of interiors both in Morocco and elsewhere.



The matter of our souls

The skins of sheep, goat, cow and sometimes dromedary are all fine skins further refined by leather workers. A surprising combination of sturdiness and softness conveys a noble character to the Moroccan art of leather.

The matter of our souls

The subtleties of silver, bronze, or copper have inspired our brass workers with unvarying techniques and never-ending creativity.

The art of metal

Chandeliers, jamours, and doors are sumptuous, mysterious and luminous...reflections of the art of bronze and copper used more and more to adorn houses and buildings. Brass-ware adds to the elegance of the Moroccan architecture and competes with iron working. It is also present in every life in more familiar objects such as light fixtures, trays, tea pots, kettles... shingly vying with each other.

More and more master artisans in Fez and Marrakech are shaping and chiseling copper with wonderful ornamental apertures after the fashion of goldsmiths.

LEATHER

BRASSWARE

The art of woodwork

The art of wood work, in all its forms and in all times has succeeded in giving life and splendor to wood. Ornamental apertures, carving, wood turning, and paintings of all sorts penetrate deep into wood folds and reveal its secret.

Craved wood

In architecture and home furniture, floral inspiration (palms, anthemion, floral criss-crosses) and geometrical (rectilinear interleavings, chevron and star shapes) patterns merge and amalgamate in the wood, maintaining tradition and arousing our interest.



Painted wood

The zouaq (painting) adorns the wood, reveals its unique character and remains one of the main outstanding features of Moroccan architectural handicraft. Painting may well be the simplest way to decorate wood; it nevertheless highlights its sculpture and wreaths it in a special light, bearing testimony to the age-old mastery of color and tones.

The inlaid wood of Essaouira

Accomplished masters in the art of marquetry, Essaouira artisans delicately toy with thuja and its ramifications that are as subtle as musical quarter-tones.

Stringed instruments (the lute)

The art of stringed instruments making demonstrates unchallenged virtuosity of lute crafters, who through a trick of magic give sonority to wood. Building on a selection of extremely subtle tonalities, they create the "oud" (lute), the mandolin "rebab", the flute "nira", the cithara "kanoun", and the tambourine "t'bal"...a tribute to Arab Andalusian music and to popular songs.

The matter of our souls

The abundant and lush forests of Morocco, in particular those of the Atlas region, have been instrumental in the emergency of the art of woodwork... an art resulting from the subtle alliance of multiple species. Among these perfumed essences, cedar wood (Al arz), walnut, and thuja (al âraar) are the most highly valued.



The art of candles

Adorned with wood, metal, and henna, candles reflect a genuine handicraft and create fairy-tale atmospheres. Their many colors confer warmth and coziness to gardens and interiors alike.

In Fez and Salé, home to traditional candle making, one can really admire the colored and richly-decorated candles carried during the Salé Annual Candle Parade (Maoukib achoumoue) that are used to illuminate the Mausoleum on the occasion of the Mousseem of Moulay Driss.

The matter of our souls

Candle wax is ideally suited for any fantasies, colors, patterns, finishing touches, design and trends with a most stunning result candle lights flatter add to a cozy atmosphere.



Jewelery

The art of jewelry

In both urban and rural areas, the art of jewelry is one of the high point of handcraft, using gold and silver and reflecting the shine of gems.

Rural jewels

In past as in present days, stands of amber, coral, and fibulas ("Tinerzai" in Berber), festive adornments or hinged bracelets worn are offered on the occasion of engagements and add to the distinction of Berber women. Guardians of the legacy of a genuine know-how in handicraft, the cities of Tiznit, Laayoun, Guelmim and Essaouira have always been strongholds of silver and gem crafting.



Urban jewels

Just imagine the dazzle of emeralds, the shine of diamonds, the glow of garnet or the pureness of rubies curled up in the heart of a finely craved floral design! The chemistry of gold and light further enhanced by the undisputed talent of goldsmiths of Fez, Rabat and Tetouan produce jewels ever more precious and ever more sumptuous. The intuition and rich imagination of seasoned artisans has succeeded in restyling and modernizing the hand of Fatima (Khmissa) symbolizing protection source of inspiration.

The matter of our souls

In the hands of Moroccan master goldsmiths, precious metals (gold, silver) become textile fibers. Gold is turned into threads further woven, knotted or assembled to form cascades of pendant stones. In the kingdom of jewels, the neo-jewels introduce a bit of fantasy...soft and fresh colors of these items and modern natural materials such as thread and braiding; they uphold the liberty of taste and the inventiveness of creators.

Costume jewelry

Another fact of the art of jewelry and not the least important is that of costume jewelry. Key rings, page markers, necklaces... These fashion-oriented creations more cosmopolitan with innovative materials are sensational and highly appreciated. Authentic and dynamic new art that captures the eye of even the most beautiful and discriminating women in Morocco and elsewhere.





Furniture

Sculpture, painting, small wood articles, ornamental metal works...are all part of the art of furnishing

The art of wrought iron

This dainty art of intertwining iron is thriving everywhere in Morocco.

Originality and deftness interact with the art of iron works by a subtle balance between iron and mosaics. The result is tables and bracket consoles that are infinitely adaptable and naturally suited for gardens and interiors.

Each and every piece of iron works speaks for the daring yet subtle character of this art.



Moroccan living rooms

Entering into a Moroccan living room is to immerse oneself in this art of living born out of Roman, Berber, and Andalusian influences and combined with major trends of modern-day amenities. Its many corners, tables, tilt top pedestal tables, and settees (seddari) covered in precious fabrics and enlivened with braided cushions, turn this room into a heaven of unmatched hospitality.

The matter of our souls

The art of furnishing has definitely become the art of research for new materials, new technologies and new associations to find the perfect match between the authentic and the authentic and modern. Over the years, young designers have been able to reinvent the charms of Moroccan furniture. Combining functionality and creativity, they subtly blend all the Moroccan touches with unmatched originality.





Clothing

The art of clothing

Poised between different cultures, fairy-fingered artisans: weavers, braiders, soft furnishing manufacturers, dressmakers, and designers have endlessly intertwined threads and created caftans, kmiss, gandouras, djellabas, serouals, and selhams... So many women have strenuously been working on embroidery hoops and so many men have contributed to the glory of these garments, with names indicative of Andalusian music. With passion and patience they have sown haute couture caftans



The caftan

Keen for affirmation and emancipation, Moroccan women have been able to adapt two originally male dresses, as was the djellaba. They have embellished it much more feminine. Caftans have evolved and have increasingly become more flowing, diverse, light and even sensual. The inspiration of stylist gave new impetus to the caftan as they have experimented superposed layers and materials. Gold, silver or silk embroideries (sifa, kitane) and thread-made buttons (akad) highlight and sublimate the lines. The dragons and peacocks embroidered in Azemmour have conferred them added glamour. Brocade or embroidered belts from Fez, sometimes as wide as a corset, perfectly don the waist, while the babouch "belgha" or "charbil" enhances these celebration garments.

The djellaba

This light garment is cut in hand woven materials such as the bzou and the saissi. This very soft fabric gives height and slenderness to women and men alike. Sabra style babouches are some of the models proposed in Marrakech. They draw their essence from all the variations of traditional dress and cover the whole range of trends. They add to the magnificence of an art in full bloom.

The matter of our souls

The saissi, silk, ouazzani (hebbba)...fabrics set the tone and are used for tailoring classic or more electric and extremely ravishing outfits.





Architecture



The architecture

Tadellakt, zellige, cupola and column... are lasting vibrations of Arabo-Andalusian heritage, harmoniously matching modern comfort, witness to that are the major structures such as the riads (guest houses), places, luxury hotels, mosques and Mediterranean mansions.

The art of sculpted plaster (or gebs)

Our artisans make it a point of honor to jealously preserve this precious and meticulous art. The sculpted plaster is highlighted with different colors and is in perfect harmony with wooden, metal and other decorative elements. The rosy-colored and valued plaster of Marrakech breathes serene beauty is conveyed by the red clay extracted from the Asni quarries.



The art of woodwork of mahogany-made

Balconies, screens, and stairs railing of carved wood are a heritage of breathtaking beauty. A moosharabieh can be defined as bringing together empty and filled up spaces kept in balance and expressed in horizontal and vertical lines that are perfectly integrated in the surrounding architecture ...Sometimes letting the air seep through and at others veiling it. Moosharabieh is a hymn to light.

The art of tadellakt

The mystery of the application of this wall dressing, made of lime and black soap, is a well-kept secret of native artisans of Marrakech. It is increasingly used to paint the walls of riads houses and flats where it has become the ultimate must...

The art of roof tiles (or quermoud)

Quermoud is an art in its own right that has retained its own special character. Quermoud originates from Safi, Oued Laou, or Fez and is used to adorn with its blue, green and ochre colors the roofs of many house...

The art of zellige

Stars, arabesques, and rosettes are reproduced on fountains, basins, columns, and walls where they catch the eye. The result is zellige, a perfect match between colors and shapes that harmoniously bled into an authentic and highly esthetical mosaic.

The art of our souls

Metal, earth, stone, and wood... harmonious mingling of materials, colors and style that makes up the Moroccan architecture ... riding a wave of modernity yet, retaining its full authenticity.



Organic products

An art in its own right

Moroccan home to innumerable tastes and aromas, represents the perfect symbiosis between nature and men. The true taste of authentic products is the prerogative of organics products cunningly prepared by guardians of tradition. Furthermore, Moroccan is witnessing the emergence of bio-cosmetics, the very essence of nature. A complete range of quality cosmetic products, without added substances, is available.



Argan oil

Only Morocco, particularly the region between Essaouira and the south of Taroudant, holds the secret of producing genuine organic argan oil. It takes an artisan eight hours of work to extract one liter of this precious oil. Its subtle taste is undoubtedly owned to the uncompromising meticulousness of women who prepare it in their homes. In line with the Mediterranean tradition, it is served in a bowl with slices of bread. This world-renowned natural treasure has been used for centuries by Berber women for its exceptional cosmetic virtues.

Olive oil

For thousands of years, the olive tree has been the symbol of life. Today, scientific research has confirmed the virtues of the olive tree and its fruit. Traditional methods are used to preserve the natural aroma of the Moroccan olive oil; which is highly valued for its exceptional organoleptic properties.

Honey

When opening a jar of honey, one can breathe the air of the Gharb (West), the Loukos, Sous Mass, Tadla, Tiznit, and Southern Sahara regions with their innumerable and delicious scents. A truly universal remedy, this nectar produced by 70,000 beehives and sunflower, strengthens and enhances the taste of savory and sweet dishes, ranging from the plain to the refined. Whether these are vegetables, meat, poultry, desserts, or pastries (chebbakia, briouates, makrout...), they become wrapped in a golden color and imbued with its intense aromas. It is a pleasure for the finest taste buds at times of celebrations.

Saffron

A pinch of saffron "za'farân" (yellow, in Arabic) from the area of Taliouine is sufficient to season and illuminate the sun-filled dishes of the Atlas. This is not surprising as it takes 160,000 saffron flower bulbs to produce one kilogram of this scarce spice, highly praised for its strong peppery taste and so deservedly called the "red

gold".

Rose water

Roses grow naturally at Kalaât M'gouna, located at the heart of the Atlas Mountains. Each spring, the "festival des roses" and the election of Miss Rose celebrate the harvest of this fine flower, a key component for fragrances and cosmetics (soap, shampoos, creams, essential oil...). The essence extracted from it is full of virtues. It soothes, invigorates, and purifies. In both subtle and bold doses, it enhances the taste of numerous Moroccan pastries.

Essential oils and natural cosmetics

Orange flower, mint, jasmine, musk, argan and sandal wood are as many essential oils which excite the senses. Black soap, ghassoul, khôl henna and traditional akkar from Fez open up a world of beauty, sensuality and sweet perfumes. Essential oils and natural cosmetics embody the art of natural wellness.



Organic products



Maison de l'Artisan

Public Establishment in charge of promoting the Moroccan Handicraft
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