

Design Resource

## Banjara Jewellery Making

Tradition Jewellery

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Lija M. G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/banjara-jewellery-making>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
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## Introduction

Jewellery making and wearing are part of all traditions in their unique way to enhance the appearance of the each individual with their differences. Tradition and custom brings in their typical style of adorning the ornaments to one self generally made with the available resources surrounding them. One such typical type of dressing is the Banjara/Lambani who are also known as the wanderers that travelled around different parts of India from Rajasthan, of whom some of them have settled in Bijapur region of Karnataka.

Banjara's/ Lambani's are generally comprised of several small groups who lived in the group of huts called Tanda (in Kannada language). They are generally traced as nomads (wanderers) who migrated usually from the central part of Asia. Though they were wanderer's huge number of their tribe had a fixed habitat in their nomadic life style where they would generally return for their ceremonies. They had become transporters of traders and armies who travelled and settled all over India. Primarily it was difficult to locate the skilled needle women as most of them had settled into the urban life working as casual labour, as the life and clothing drastically changed to suit their new environment.

Community had retained their colourful, carefree typical traditions that refrained from mingling with the other communities as their main occupation once upon a time was cattle trading and transportation of agricultural goods. The traditionally attire of the Lambani/ Banjara reveals that they use more number of silver and locally available articles to generally portray their culture and style. The workers at (Sabala -NGO) Bijapur together singing a folk at the background in the local language that conveys the message how an individual can become a good person. Working together in making the handmade pattern of design with the coloured threads/ silver/ metals like copper & white metal.

Lambani's generally have colourful embroideries with shimmering mirrors inset in their pattern. It is one of the folk crafts which have been familiar to the people in all the walks of life in India. Regional affinities and differences have only added their charm and popularity. Tribal crafts basically cater to the specialized tribal needs, sociological and personal use. They wear very colourful red style dresses with decorated pieces of mirror, cowl with lots of jewellery. They wear ivory bangles with ornaments innumerable with rhythm based on when performed to the beats of the drum. Each folk area in India has its own regional costumes, dances, songs with fundamental links of common culture running between village, town or city with harmonious unity.

The wonderful shapes and forms have been created from simple lines and circles to varying patterns. Women generally possess striking jewellery that usually has stylized, abstract and realistic designs that continues to impress the present day fashions. Women dresses with jewels shows her love for originality with her particular needs with glass, wood, bone, reeds, grass, cowrie shells etc. Lambani's / Banjara women find place for cowrie shells attached to their veils, on their waist belts for decorating the light brightly coloured cloth hand bags they use.

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Jewellery is intended with modern designs to satisfy the customers.



Jewellery is sewed to an embroidered strip of thread.



Various beads and pendants are used to decorate a jewellery.



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Banjara Jewellery is generally made out of silver.



Silver jewellery is transformed into a necklace.



Earing embellished with beads made out of thread.

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## Tools and Raw Materials

Some of the tools and raw materials used in the Banjara Jewellery making are mentioned below:

- **Plastic Wires:** Wires of various colours with varying thickness weighing about 30gms to 28gms are generally preferred to give a solid structure.
- **Decorative Threads:** Depending on the pattern to be obtained, it varies from fine, smooth to chunky thick yarns with colours available.
- **Coins:** Coins of two paisa, ten paisa, one rupee are also used to embellish the jewellery.
- **Hollow Metal Rods:** These are attached with the beads tied with coloured threads to be used as an earring or necklace (amulet).
- **Thread Cutters:** It is generally used to cut the extra threads.
- **Round of Pliers:** Round shaped knobs specially used in beading, jewellery making etc.
- **Side Cutters:** They are generally used for cutting the plastic wires after knotting for a good finishing end.
- **Over Hand Knot:** It is generally given to the amulet for adjusting the required length.
- **Bead Caps:** It is simple loop that attaches easily to link a chain.
- **Tweezers:** It is generally used to place the small jewellery items into correct location during placing.
- **Jewellery Needle:** Needle size of 0.75 mm X 42 mm are generally preferred.

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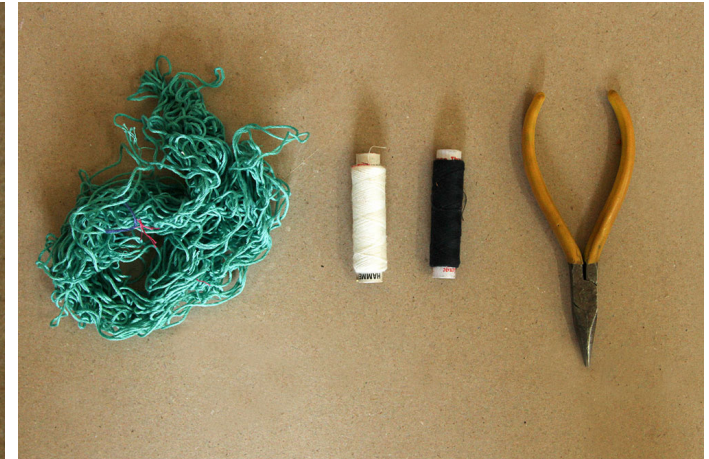
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Designs made out of silver metal are used to make the jewellery sets.



Cotton thread is used for weaving the embroidered strips.



Indian coins are traditionally converted into pendants.



Cotton embroidered beads are also used in Banjara Jewellery.

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Beads of various designs are used in decorating the jewellery.



Few tools used by the craftsmen while making the jewellery.

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## Making Process

Each jewellery has their own style and pattern of making the jewellery. Generally more usage of silver is generally preferred as the jewellery / ornament to deck themselves in the olden days, as presently they are using the same ideology with various techniques and styles in making of the ornaments to decorate themselves.

Silver is most commonly found in the form of sulphide or chloride mixed with other metals such as lead, zinc or copper. An expertise can change it to its essential to reduce it to its metallic state. Silver frequently occurs in small quantities together with lead as argentiferous galena.

Lambani's do not follow any particular pattern but makes the amulet/necklace with the sources available with them in the pattern of designs pleasing to themselves. Though it is one of the unique patterns that follow its typical style of jewellery making. Some of the styles are mentioned below.

Similar coloured threads of equal size are arranged together evenly and held tightly at one end. From one side at the required distances it is tied tightly at equal distance to each other. Two or three tied threads are placed together to which the contrast colour threads are tied to obtain a beautiful pattern of design. To this on both the ends the threads are tied with silver decorative pieces or fully attached with attractive silver chains with mango, triangle and flower patterns.

Needle is nailed to the wooden surface on which the threads are spread in opposite manner and plaited, knotted till the end portion to keep the threads held together. This further attached with thinner plaited threads and over hand knot to adjust the length of the chain when placed on the neck. Some of the products made are as follows. Necklaces, Earrings, bracelets, beads, amulet, stamp seals, head ornaments, toe rings, earrings.



Threads are arranged and divided into three strips.



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The threads are then braided into a pattern.



Strips are braided till the required length.



A small bead made of thread is weaved around the braided strip to loosen and tighten the necklace while wearing.



The base of the jewellery is created and kept aside.



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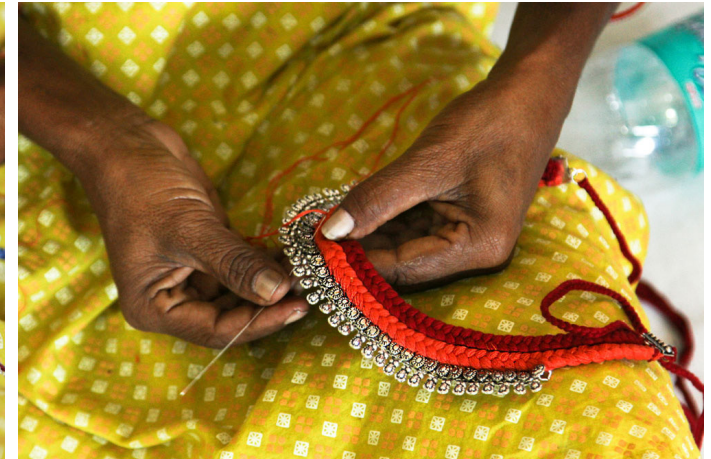
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Designs made out of silver metal is sewed to the braided strips.



Different color braided strips are stitched together and weaved with the jewellery.



Finished product is measured to ensure the length of necklace.



Mango design jewellery stitched with colorful braided thread.



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Designed pieces of jewellery used in making earrings.



Steel string is doubled and the metal pieces are inserted along with cotton beads.



A hook is attached to the earring.



Dangling Earrings of different colours with a uniform pattern.

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## Products

The typically made Banjara jewelries of Bijapur are ear ornament, ear pendent, nose ring, nose pendent, head and forehead ornaments, hair ornaments, arms and hand ornaments, neck ornaments, waist bands, anklets, toe rings, (necklace) necklet, lockets, brooch, bracelet, wristlet, bangle, ring, chains. Generally more of necklace or amulet are made the people of Bijapur who sell it with basic starting from Rs.350 to above depending on the type of the material used in making. Varieties of earrings are made with the available sources with the initial cost of Rs.60 and above.



Necklace decorated with embroidered cotton beads.



Intricately designed floral decorative jewellery.



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Necklace embellished with embroidered beads along with a silver pendant.



Jewellery designed with silver spikes attached with colorful braided thread.



Colorful strips of threads are knotted together to create different pattern.



Earrings made of colorful beads.

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Pair of earrings depicting an elephant decorated with red beads.



A pair of earrings displays the pattern of a leaf.



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## Contact Details

This documentation was done by Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and Lija M. G. at **NID Campus, Bengaluru**.

You can get in touch with

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You could write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

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