

Design Resource

Daliya

Basket-Weaving Craft of Manjitha

by

Sakshi Gambhir

IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/daliya>



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Introduction

While basket weaving is one of the widest spread crafts in the history of any human civilization, it is hard to say just how old the craft is, because natural materials like wood, grass, and animal remains decay naturally and constantly. Locally referred to as 'Daliya' in northern parts of the country, these baskets are typically made from locally available natural material like grass, reeds, leaves, straw and coir. All of these are fibrous and pliable, making them easy to work with.

Baskets of Manjitha have complicated geometrical designs, reflecting the artistic skill and aesthetic sensibility of the artisans. Infact, they are a miniature compendium of art and love.

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<http://www.dsource.in/resource/daliya/introduction>

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Place

Manjitha is a tiny village in the tehsil/mandal of Banki in the Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh. Whereas the major occupation of the people here is farming, the village has an interesting mix of crafts - Pankha (fan-making), Daliya (basketry) and pottery.



On the way to village Manjitha.

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On the way to village Manjitha.



Manjitha village.



Manjitha village.



Manjitha village.

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Manjitha village.

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Manjitha village.



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Manjitha village.



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Manjitha village.



Womenfolk of Manjitha village.

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People

Whereas the men take care of their farmlands (some even go to work a job in the city of Lucknow), the women look after daily household chores. When they get done with that, they engage themselves in the crafts of basketry and pankha making. Their crafts are a reflection of their creativity, aesthetics, finesse and love for color!

In Manjitha, baskets filled with grains, rice and pulses are given to each bride in her wedding, as is customary. Other than that, these baskets make for great storage options (for grains, animal food etc.) in the backyards of rural homes.



Women of Manjitha village working together.

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Kids.



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Women of Manjitha village working together.



Women of Manjitha village working together.

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Women of Manjitha village working together.

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Women of Manjitha village working together.



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Women of Manjitha village working together.

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Process

Tall wild grass growing along canals and ponds in the village is torn apart and used as the raw material for these baskets. Locally it is referred to as moonja/ chirwa/ pharra. Other natural materials such as palm leaf, straw and coir are also used.

Moonja is boiled in different colors and left to dry in the sun for a few days before it is used to construct a basket. Any basket begins with a base. This is made by holding many strands of moonja together and coiling (wrapping) them with one single strand. The basket starts to grow spirally, resulting in its side-walls. Popular motifs woven in baskets include trees, birds, animals, flowers, spirals and geometrical shapes - each one being unique, imaginative and exquisite. Women soak the moonja in water from time to time, making it softer and more pliable to work with. A sharp needle-like tool is used to make holes in the bunch of strands to make the coiling process much faster.

Once the walls are raised, the rim of the basket is created by using contrast-colored strands more elaborately. Typically, a basket has two, three or four colors. A basket may also have a lid, handle and/or embellishments.



Straws (raw material).

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Colored moonja (raw material) soaked in water.



Colored moonja (raw material) soaked in water.

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Weaving a Daliya.



Making the base of the basket.

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Making the base of the basket.

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Making the base of the basket.



Making the base of the basket.

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Making the base of the basket.



Making the base of the basket.

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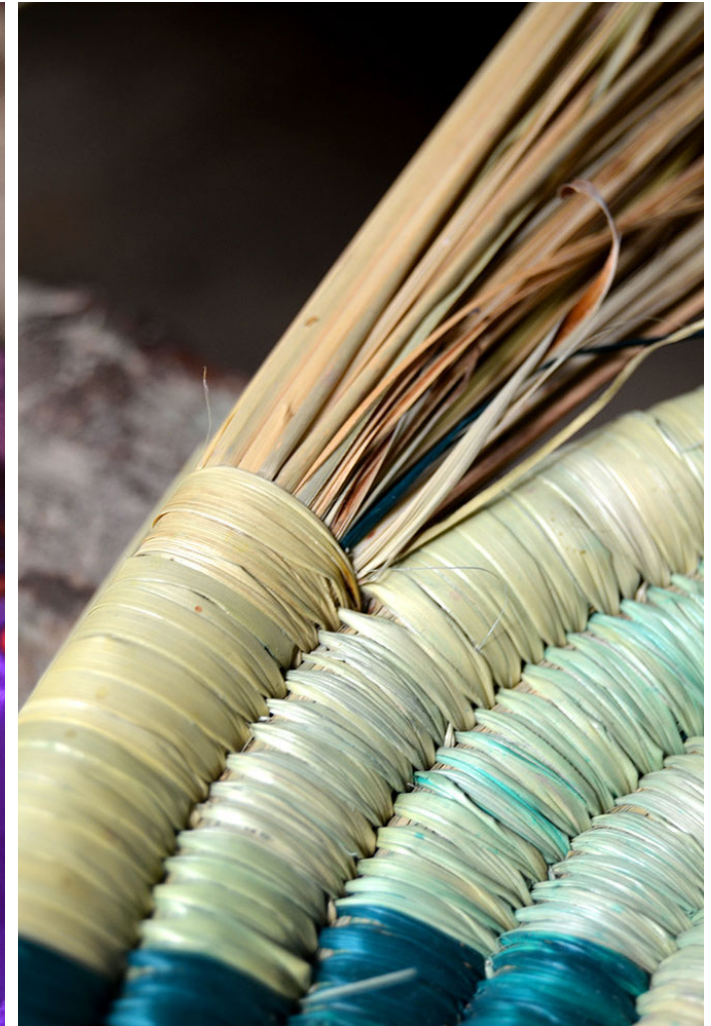
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Making the base of the basket.



Details of coiling the moonja.

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Making the base of the basket.



Making the base of the basket.



Side-walls of the basket beginning to be raised.



Side-walls of the basket beginning to be raised.

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Side-walls of the basket beginning to be raised.

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Side-walls of the basket beginning to be raised.



Details of the design of an oversized basket.

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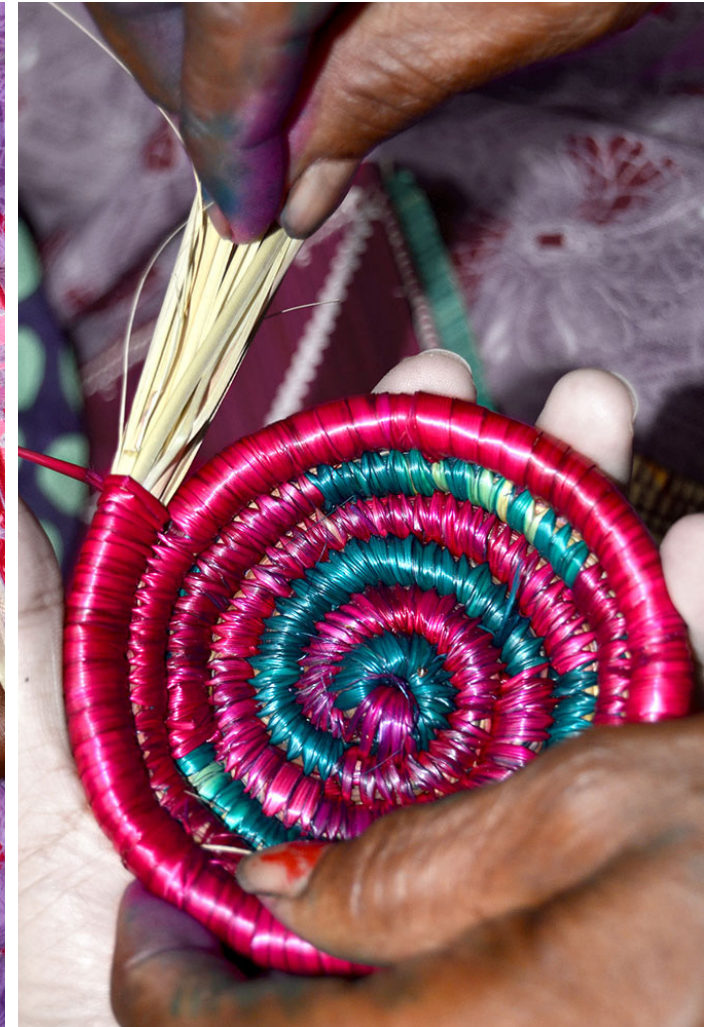
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Finishing the rim of the basket.



Finishing the rim of the basket.

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Finishing the rim of the basket.



Completed Daliya.

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Products

These baskets reflect the aesthetics of the womenfolk of Manjitha. Colorful, aesthetic and painstakingly hand-crafted, these make for stunning gifts!



Assortment of different baskets.

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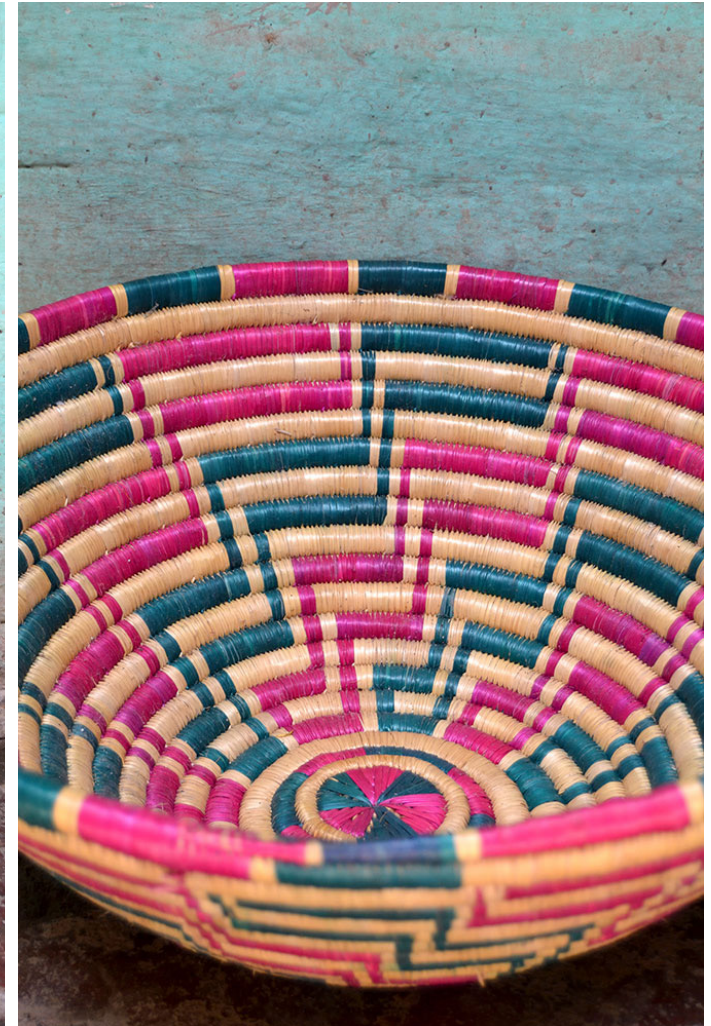
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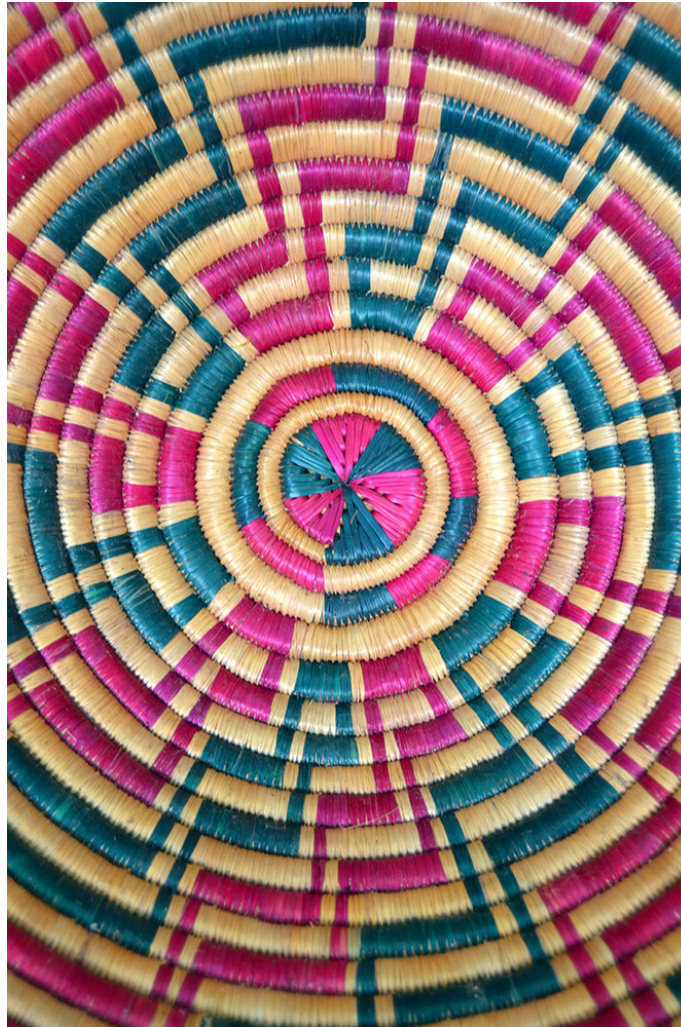
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Coiling details of the basket.



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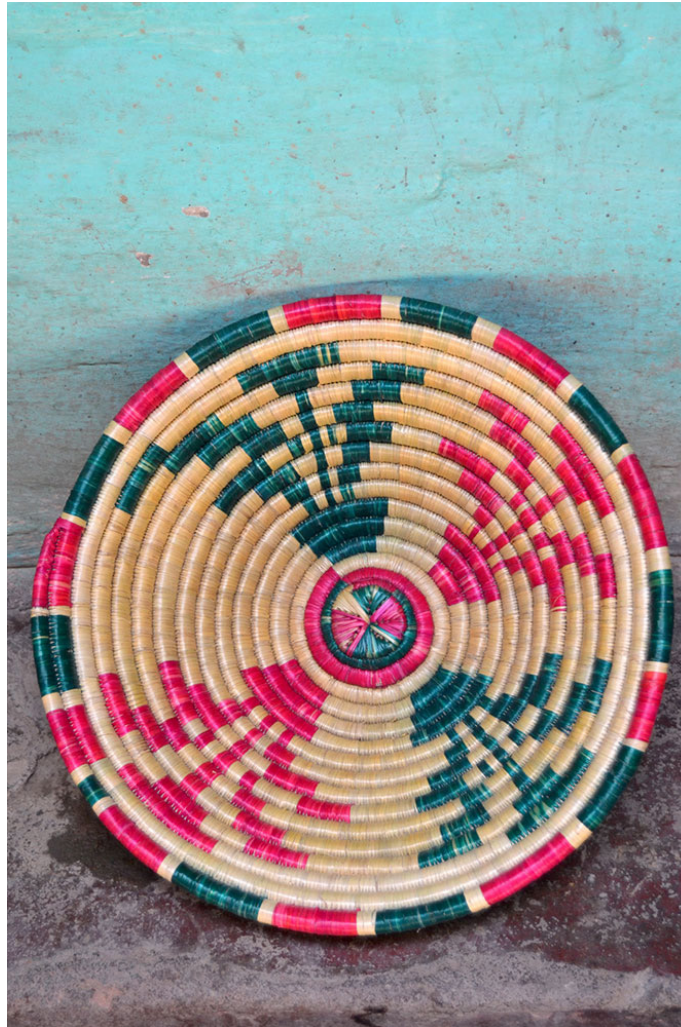
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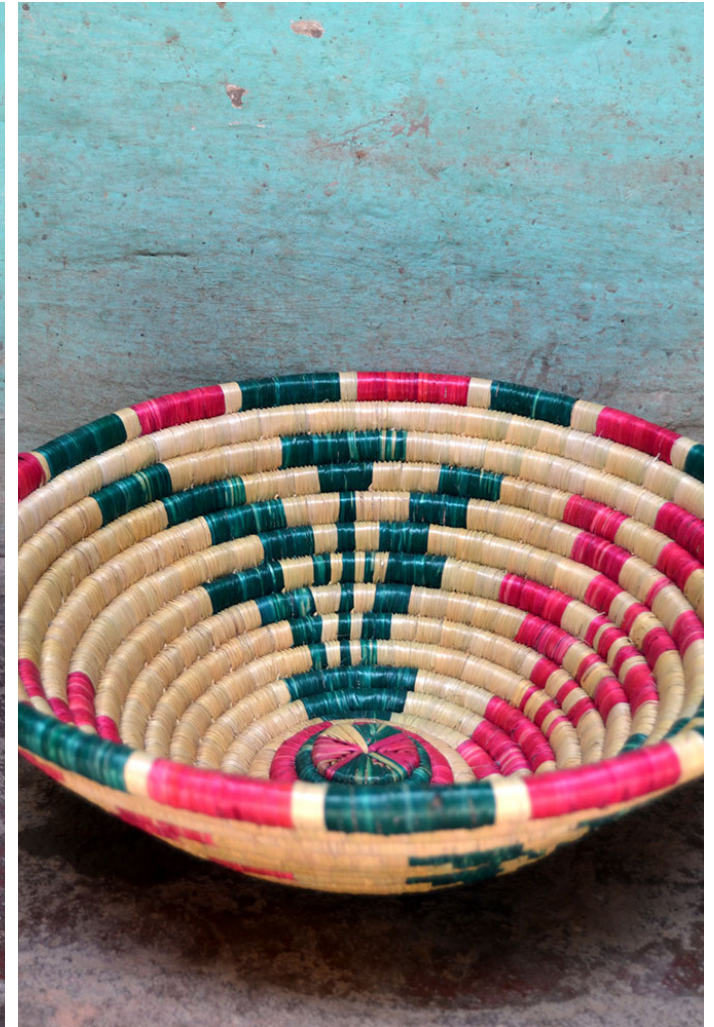
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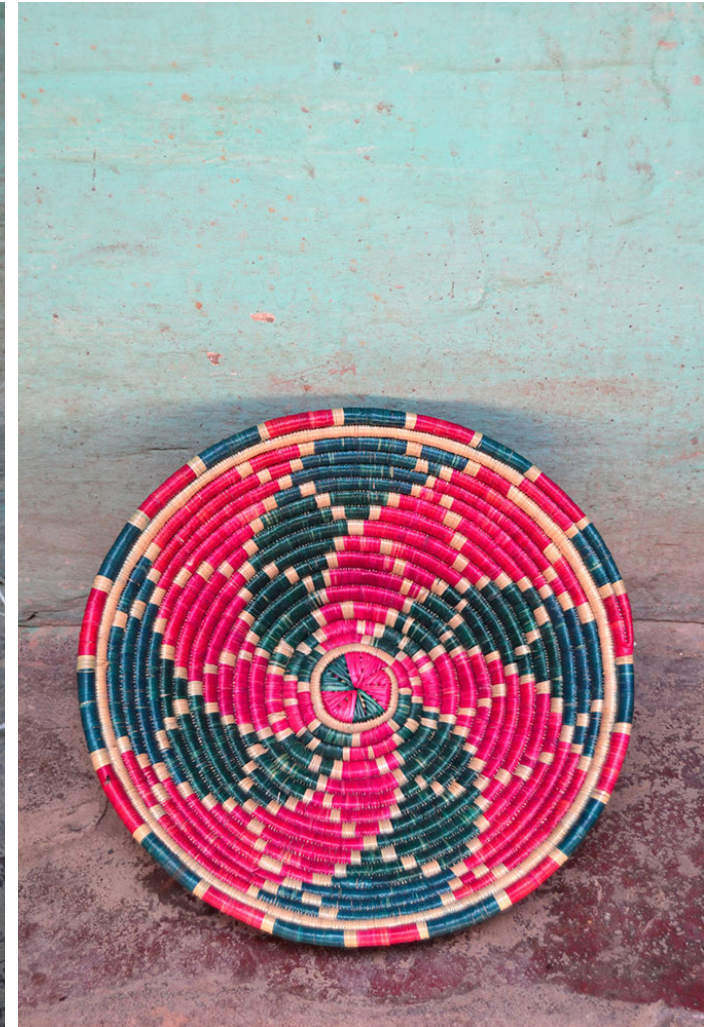
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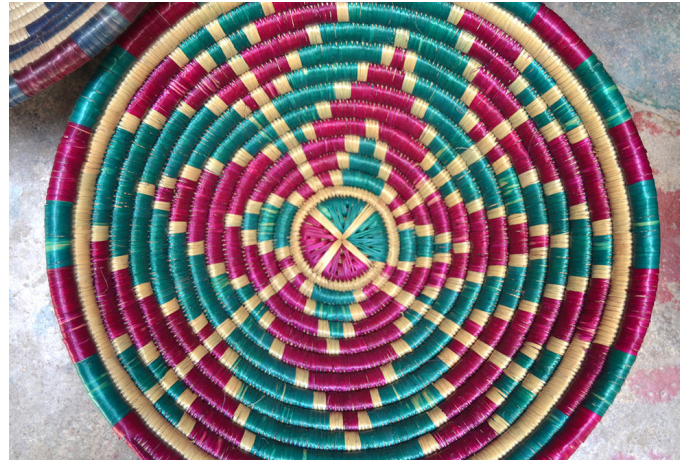
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Contact Details

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