

LISA BUTTERWORTH
NIGHTINGALE CARTIER

A HENNA ATLAS OF MOROCCO

MOROCCO - HENNA ATLAS OF MOROCCO - ONLY





MOOR-S-SAMPLE ONLY

latitudes between 15°N and 25°S, from Africa to the western Pacific rim, containing the highest lawsone concentration in areas where temperatures range between 35°C and 45°C (95°–113°F). In Morocco, henna is grown in the Draa Valley in the south. It used to be grown more widely throughout Morocco; but as the country developed, that land was deemed to be more productive for other forms of agriculture. The areas of Morocco hot enough to grow henna are too dry; therefore, successful henna cultivation requires extensive irrigation. Moroccan henna is usually harvested three times a year. The first harvest, at the end of May/beginning of June, is the most sought-after harvest as the leaves are said to give the best color. The leaves are pulled off the branch, not cut; those from the top branches of the plant are thought to have the highest lawsone content. Moroccan henna is grown by cooperatives that sell the dried leaves to a single wholesaler/distributor who then grinds and sifts the henna powder. Moroccan markets sell dried henna leaves and powder by the kilo (loose) or in pre-packed boxes. In the countryside, where only the leaves are available, it is common for women to wait to grind the leaves into powder until immediately before they want to use it.

WORKING WITH HENNA

Henna plays an important role in many aspects of Moroccan women's lives. It is used in various forms of magic; it is given as a gift; and it is often used as a medicinal herb. Henna is also a cosmetic, a hair dye, and a skin decoration. When babies are just three days old, they are introduced to three substances that they will use throughout their lives: *swak* (walnut bark that, when chewed, turns the gums red and cleans the teeth and makes them look white), *kobl* (antimony powder used as eyeliner), and henna. When someone dies, henna plays several roles in the preparation and burial of the body. Henna has been credited with many medicinal uses. In Morocco, it is mixed with artemisia as a fever remedy. It is also used to treat skin diseases, burns, and pimples and is a good remedy for relieving the pain of sunburn. Henna seems to be a natural sunblock—it is possible to discover a design

remaining as untanned skin in an otherwise tanned area after the henna itself fades. Moroccans also use henna on sick trees and to treat wounds on domestic animals. Scientists are currently studying the medical properties of henna, specifically its antibacterial, anti-fungal, anesthetic, antihemorrhagic, nematicidal (anti-roundworm), and antituberculous properties.

In Morocco, henna paste is made with henna powder (of course), hot water, and sugar; sometimes



Garlic and pepper are added to lemon and sugar to make a mixture called *sqiya* that is dabbed onto the henna after it is applied.

fresh lemon juice is added, and orange blossom water is used for brides. A combination of lemon juice, sugar, freshly crushed garlic, and pepper is also prepared. Moroccans call it *sqiya* (or "*sqoua*"), which is Arabic for "fountain"—as if to say that you are "watering the hennaed hand." The *sqiya* is dabbed onto the henna design once the paste starts to dry on the skin. The lemon and sugar in the mixture create a glaze that helps the paste stick to the skin instead of flaking off, and the garlic and pepper are included for their warming properties, which encourage the darkest possible stain.

A Moroccan henna artist is called a *naqasha* in Moroccan Arabic; however, in Fes, she is called a *bennayat*. She mixes the ingredients for her henna paste in a bowl and then strains the paste through

at the center of the heart (see page 174). If the two lobes are large enough, they may be subdivided. If not, each lobe will have a different fill.

Diagonal Stripe

A diagonal stripe across the palm (or back of the hand)—in either direction—is a simple and often used layout. The stripe divides the surface into two triangles that are easy to subdivide and fill. The stripe itself generally contains only one type of design—anything that can be repeated to fill a long and narrow shape. Chevrons, a straight vine, or a row of diamonds are common. (See pages 97, 153.)

Diamond

A diamond nestled in the center of the palm is another favorite centerpiece. The top and bottom points will touch the centers of the wrist and finger demarcation lines, and the side points will extend all the way to the edges of the hand. Such placement creates four triangles surrounding the diamond. The interior of the diamond may be divided in half vertically with a band of patterning to create two triangles. Or the interior will contain another diamond at 45 degrees (looking like a square within the diamond), which may be further subdivided to create more triangles. Sometimes concentric diamonds are seen.

Wrist Treatments

The most usual way of “tying off” the design at the wrist is to place a peak at the outside center of the boundary. The peak may be styled differently depending on the artist’s preference or the region. In Fes and Marrakesh, the peak nearly always comes to a clean point (see figures 3, 3A); while in Meknes, it is common to see semicircular instead of pointed peaks (see figure 3B). Occasionally, Fessi and Marrakeshi designs will top off the peak with a small diamond. Meknessi designs might contain an almond-shaped leaf or cluster of leaves on the peak. If no additional shape is used, a variety of smaller accents will be.



Fig. 3

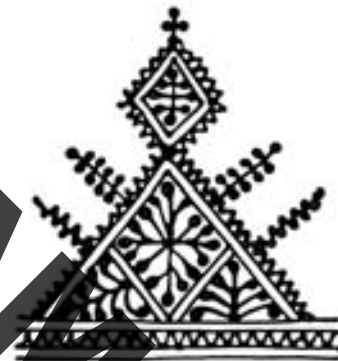


Fig. 3A



Fig. 3B

Fingers

Generally, each finger will have a different design element. Some repetition is usually necessary, so the placement will be different from one hand to the other—a row of diamonds might be placed on the right index finger and again (possibly with a slight variation) on the left ring finger.

Solid fingertips are used throughout Morocco, and they follow a similar rule of nonmatching. Four shapes are used: a chevron pointing toward the palm,

MOORR - ONLY



MOOR - SAMMEE ONLY



MOOR - SAMPLE ONLY



MOODBOARD
SAMPLE ONLY



Simple design using overlapping shapes, by Kenzi.

MOOR: A HENNA ATLAS OF MOROCCO

This groundbreaking book is the product of more than a decade of careful study in an effort to preserve the ancient henna traditions of Morocco. *Moor* offers a wealth of historical and cultural information about henna in Morocco—a distinctly women's art form that struggles to maintain its identity in a rapidly changing world. *Moor* contains over 100 pages of meticulously cataloged Moroccan henna patterns—both traditional and original. Learn the origins and meanings of the Moroccan designs you love, how to create effective Moroccan designs of your own, and how Moroccans incorporate henna into their lives. Fall in love with Moroccan henna—for the first time or all over again.



"Henna artists have long waited for a great basic book on what makes Moroccan henna unique and magical. In *Moor*, Lisa Butterworth and Nic Tharpa Cartier have accomplished what no one else has—they have taken us on a pilgrimage from the souks of Fes to mountain villages describing and illustrating not only the basic principles of design but offering a glimpse into the heart of a *naqasha*. *Moor* is a treasure and will be invaluable to any working henna artist!"

—Kree Arvanitas, *HennaDerivish*, Seattle, WA

"Comprehensively researched, *Moor* does an outstanding job of sharing the traditions and history of henna in Morocco, with sensitivity and respect shining through from every page. The love and work that Lisa and Nic have poured into this book are immediately apparent. *Moor* is an absolute treasure!"

—Noam Sienna, *Henna Artist and Researcher*, Jerusalem, Israel / Boston, MA

"If you love Moroccan henna design, want to truly understand its authentic construction, history and usage, you must read *Moor*. This book goes beyond expectations in its depth and detail. It is a henna artist's essential."

—Maya Wajra, *Ajna Henna Body Arts*, Seattle, WA

"I love Moroccan henna, and I love this book! *Moor* contains everything you need to know about Moroccan henna—plus a whole lot of extras—all wrapped up in one exquisite package."

—DDD, *Henna Devotee*, New York, NY

www.moorhenna.com

