

Oriental Rugs Old and New .4 CEU

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Beverly Vosko's
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Oriental Rugs Old and New .4 CEU Handouts

Welcome to our seminar!

Oriental Rug Retailers of America describe an Oriental rug as “a rug made of either wool or silk knotted entirely by native craftsmen in some parts of Asia, from the shores of the Persian Gulf, north through the Caspian Sea and eastward through Iran, The Soviet Union, the Ukraine, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, China, Japan and Morocco.

Oriental Rugs are characterized by:

I. Age: as Antique (100 years old) Semi Antique (75 years old - actually a used rug) or New (a never been used rug)

II. Country of Origin:

Persian – original Oriental rugs

Turkish - Oushaks

Indian Agras, Jaipurs, and more recently Indian Oushaks

Chinese – knock offs especially of Oushaks and Tibetan rugs

Pakistan – copies of Oushaks called Chobi, Ghazni or Khotan rugs

Tibetan – new style monochromatic or geometric rugs which are actually made in Nepal

III. Size: the size of an Oriental Rug was once determined by its intended use, but now the size of the rug is determined by the buyers and the market it will be sold in. Most tribal rugs were small because they were used as prayer rugs, but now most rugs are 8’ by 10’ or 9’ by 12’ because of demand for that sized rug.

IV. Construction: Rugs can be Flat Woven such as Kelims and Soumacs, Hand Knotted with either a Persian Senneh Knot or a Turkish Ghiordes knot or Machine made like the programmed rugs prevalent today

Construction:

Flat Woven-

Kelims (same on both sides) and

Soumacs (has lots of loose embroidered threads on back side)

Hand Knotted- Most popular production method, which features pile on the front surface while the reverse side is smooth. The knots most frequently used are Persian and Turkish and this method of construction serves as the basis for the Oriental Rug industry.

Turkish / Ghiordes knot

Persian /Senneh knot

Machine Made

V. Design Style: depending upon whether they are Tribal, Village or City Rugs

1. Tribal rugs are made by one person - a woman and are made at the will of the women who wove it – mistakes are considered charming. They have

the largest and fewest knots per square inch, and are informal, geometric, have abrash - dye lot change- which is considered charming.

2. Village Rugs - are made by 3 people mother, with daughter learning and grandma supervising - middle amount of knots per square inch have more knots per square inch than tribal rugs and less than city rugs – and have both geometric and floral, curvilinear motifs Design

3. City rugs are the most sophisticated made by many weavers on a huge loom, have the smallest and the most knots per square inch, are woven in tiny intricate curvilinear and floral patterns , are made according to a cartoon or map and can not have any mistakes

VI. Geographic region: the name of the Rug comes from the geographic region where it was made so a Heriz rug was made in Heriz

Persian:

Tabriz: Tabriz rugs are city rugs that have many knots per square inch, are usually made in reds and blues, usually have a central medallion surrounded by lots of small very intricate details that often look like lace ,

The best Tabriz rugs are Hadjijalili Tabriz rugs

Heriz/Serapi: Heriz rugs are tribal rugs, that are very geometric

Serapi rugs are older and better quality Heriz style rugs

Shiraz – Shiraz rugs are tribal rugs that often have pole medallion motifs

Isfahan – Isfahan rugs are city rugs that also have many small knots per square inch and often have whorls, vines and palmettos woven into the pattern and often do not have a central medallion

Nain – Nain rugs are village rugs that look like Isfahan rugs but are simpler and are usually designed in blues and tans

Sarouk: Sarouk rugs are Village rugs that have both curvilinear and geometric patterns and were made for the European and then later American market - because there were not enough other Oriental rugs to go around

American Sarouk: American Sarouk rugs were popular especially between WWI and WW II and were often made in pink

Sultanabads and Mahals: Sultanabad and Mahal rugs were simplified versions of Sarouk rugs made because there were not enough other Oriental rugs to go around

But as the design styles kept changing and becoming more contemporary, all these rugs fell out of favor and everyone fell in love with Oushaks and Tibetan rugs

I will discuss Oushak rugs now and discuss Tibetan rugs a bit later in this class

Turkish:

- Oushak: Oushak rugs originated in small town of Oushak just south of Istanbul, Turkey Oushak has been a production center of Turkish rugs since 15th C. Oushak rugs are tribal rugs with a few large knots per square inch, designed in simple geometric patterns. They are more coarsely woven than Persian rugs, and are always woven with Ghiordes knot which is said to be stronger than Persian Senneh knot . Oushak's have a soft distinctive color palette using ivory or gold backgrounds accented by soft reds and soft blues- all created with natural vegetable dyes. They are so popular today that many other countries are copying them.

Indian:

Agra: Agra rugs were City rugs made for the Mogul Emperors with floral tendrils, vines and stars. The people who oversaw the production of the Agras in the 16th C were Persian hence these Agras copied & looked like Persian rugs

Other copies

Everyone loved Oriental Rugs and there wasn't enough to go around so: As we saw above, even Persia copied its own Oriental Rugs with Sarouks, American Sarouks, Sultanabads and Mahals – which were simplified, less patterned, less expensive rugs with fewer knots per square inch

Europe copied Oriental Rugs:

The French copied them with Savonnerie and Aubusson Rugs – The name Savonnerie was used because the Savonnerie factory was built on what was once a Soap factory and savon means soap in French. Only Louis XIV could own a Savonnerie, so his aristocracy rebelled, stealing the secrets to make the Savonnerie rugs and starting a competitive Rug manufacturing company- Aubusson

The English copied them with Machine Wovens: Wiltons and Axminsters
But the styles changed and everyone wanted

India copied them with Jaipurs and later with Indian Oushaks and Indian Tibetan rugs

Though the Chinese made their own rugs, they have copied Oriental Rugs for many years, and now copy just about every type of rug design style available on the market especially Oushaks and Tibetan rugs which are called Chinese Oushaks and Chinese Tibetan rugs

Pakistan copied them with Peshawars and later with Pakistani Oushaks called Chobi, Ghazni or Khotan rugs and Pakistani Tibetan rugs

Machine made rugs are created in their own design styles but also copy the Ancient Oriental rug designs.

Americans now also create machine made rugs that copy Oriental rugs

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Biography

Beverly Vosko, Allied Member ASID, RID, UDCP (Universal Design Certified Professional), CAPS, L.E.E.D Green Associate, CGP (is a full service, Registered Interior Designer in Texas #6333. She is President and founder of both Beverly Vosko Interiors and InteriorDesign-ED; both DBA's for C. V. Design Inc. For over 25 years, she has been designing homes across the United States and Europe, specializing in creating custom residential and commercial environments, be they traditional, transitional, contemporary or eclectic, that match her design clients' every need, through her design firm, Beverly Vosko Interiors. For nearly 20 years, she has taught Interior Design: first at Rice University, then at the University of Houston, and for the last 10 years nationally, with her Continuing Education company, InteriorDesign-ED. Specifically, she has taught Interior Design, Aging in Place, Green/Sustainable Design, Lighting and Antiques. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude from the University of Pennsylvania, studied Art History at Harvard University, received her MBA in Marketing from NYU Stern Graduate Business School, and completed Design and Antiques training from Sotheby's, the world-renowned Inhbald School of Design and Houston Community College. Please view her websites, www.vosko.com and www.InteriorDesign-ED.com