

TURKISH MARBLED PAPER



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Producing Turkish marbled papers is an old handicraft which was first cultivated in Turkestan and flourished in Persia and Turkey in the 16th century. The reason for the popularity of marbled papers is, of course, the luxurious effect of the delicate patterns. Today, there are only a few masters left at Istanbul who produce Turkish marbled papers. In Europe, this branch of art is only encountered occasionally in England.

The technique is highly complicated; it calls for great skill on the part of the artist.

A decoction of carrageen moss (*Fucus crispus*) is poured into a trough and allowed to stand until it has reached the ideal consistency. The colours, which are prepared with ox gall to prevent them from mingling with one another and from seeping in, are spread onto the viscous gum. Then the colours are mixed mechanically to form a pattern, for example with needles and combs. A moistened sheet of paper—sized with alum, if necessary—is then placed carefully on the substrate. The coloured pattern now adheres to the paper, which is then lifted off and hung up to dry. When working with proper care, several sheets can be coloured with the same pattern.

The Turkish marbled paper enclosed was produced in this way.



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