Origin of the Tapestry!

The word tapestry derives from the French word tapisserie, from tapiser, meaning "to cover with heavy fabric, to carpet."

In the Middle Ages tapestries were originally designed to protect medieval rooms from damp and cold weather, to cover bear walls of big castles and insulate big rooms. Due to their size and intricacy, tapestries became displays of wealth and power. Kings and nobles took them on their travels from castle to castle for reasons of comfort and prestige. The early tapestries mainly displayed isolated figures or groups that stood out against a background. Most backgrounds were generally plain or embellished with plant or flower motifs (like the tapestry to the right). These works of art were called "mille fleurs" tapestries, meaning thousand flowers. In the 17th century, the first royal factory of Les Gobelins in Paris was established. Hundreds of tapestry makers worked at Les Gobelins during this period. Because of the Industrial Revolution and the creation of automated processes, such as mechanical looms and weaving machines, plain fabrics could be mass-produced at a much greater rate and lower cost than in the past. Today few tapestries are hand-woven. Modern yarns and techniques allow us to enjoy exceptional copies of these works of art at affordable price. Although, much time, effort and hard work is still required to produce these amazing Tapestries!

Cool Ways to Use Tapestries!

- Hang tapestries on any wall or ceiling to add color and beauty to every room!
- Hang as doorway entrance to closet!
- Spruce up your bedsheets and use a tapestry as a comforter!
- Tapestries are great for outdoor use- they make excellent beach or picnic blankets and are easy to transport from place to place!
- Add style to your kitchen by using a tapestry as a tablecloth!
- Restyle an old sofa or love seat by using your tapestry as a cover!
- Hang your tapestry in a window and use as a cool curtain- the colors glow when the light shines through!
**Tapestry Weaving:**

Tapestries are made by weaving threads together on a loom. A tapestry loom must hold parallel "warp" threads in tension, so "weft" threads can be woven back and forth between them. Warp and weft threads have two different purposes.

**Warp threads**—strong and thin foundation of the tapestry, traditionally un-dyed wool or linen.

**Weft threads**—provide all the color to the tapestry.

Tapestry weaving has been known for hundreds of years in diverse cultures. One of the most specialized skills for making medieval tapestries was dying the wool. Dyes were made from squashed bugs, berries, fruit, roots, and other secret combinations. Red came from madder, poppies or pomegranates and blue came from woad.

**Hanging Tapestries:**

**Before hanging your tapestry, ironing may be needed to remove any creases. To do this you would iron on the backside of the tapestry, using low heat or a lot of steam.**

First, you need to determine where you would like to hang your tapestry. You can hang your tapestry however you wish so that it fits in with the rest of the room. Usually you would want to hang your tapestry so that the center is eye level with the average size person. Although, depending on furniture and high ceilings or walls, you might want to place your tapestry accordingly.

**Rods**—Some tapestries either have a rod pocket sewn into the back or loops at the top. Rods are easy to find at department stores and come in a variety of shapes, colors and sizes. Make sure you know the width of your tapestry and the length of rod you need to buy. Brackets can be added to the wall from which you hang the rod from.

**Velcro**—Using Velcro is a very adaptable method to hanging tapestries. You must buy a piece of Velcro that is slightly shorter than the width of your tapestry. Velcro comes in widths between ½ inch (1.25 cm) and 4 inches (10 cm). The lengthier and heavier your tapestry is, the wider Velcro needs to be to support it. Sew the soft fuzzy side of the Velcro into the tapestry and staple the stiffer side onto a piece of wood. Hang the wood in the place you would like your tapestry to hang and then attach the tapestry to the wood using the Velcro.
**Pushpins** - Pushpins are one of the easiest methods to use for hanging tapestries. You would want to buy clear pushpins so that they are less visible against the tapestry or wall. You need 4 pins for each corner of the tapestry. You simply press the pin into each corner of the tapestry flat against the wall and Wall-A! Your tapestry is in place.

**Caring for Your Tapestry:**

- Wash tapestry in cold water at a gentle cycle or by hand (If you have access to drying cleaning this would be preferable).
- Do NOT use bleach
- Dry flat or hang to dry in a shaded area
- Never use a drying machine
- Do NOT hang in direct sunlight- like most works of art; direct sunlight will fade the art over time.

**Why Tapestries?**

Tapestries are much more convenient than paintings or other decorations. Tapestries are durable and portable, and can be rolled up and transported in a moment’s notice. They can also be washed if they happen to get a little dirty. Tapestries can even be hung up and taken down as the seasons change! All beautifully designed tapestries will enhance the good vibes in your home while adding to the Zen style of your decor. These tapestries effortlessly display a fun mix between a modern bohemian style and ethnic Indian traditions. All tapestries can be used in a variety of different ways, the possibilities are endless!
**Tree of Life**

The Tree of Life is a symbol that has been found in many cultures, philosophies, mythologies and even religions. The Tree alludes to the interconnectedness of all-living things and the beauty and wisdom of nature. In the traditional interpretation, the Tree of Life symbolizes the tree in the Garden of Eden, which provides immortality or eternal life. Other religions view the Tree of Life as the connection between heaven and earth. In this interpretation, the tree reaches into heaven and the roots of the tree go deep into the earth. The tree of life is all about the evolution of subjective consciousness from the lower planes to the higher planes. The tree connects the world of physical matter to the world of energetic spirit. Whichever way you choose to see it, this tapestry has a very powerful and strong symbolic meaning.

**Symbolism of the Elephant**

Aside from being physically impressive, elephants are very intelligent animals. They are known to pass down knowledge of migration paths from generation to generation, and will ferociously protect their own from any predators. It is no surprise that such a remarkable animal has attracted a wealth of such positive symbolic meaning. The elephant is generally considered to be a symbol for good luck, good fortune, strength and wisdom. The elephant is said to attain old age, and with that comes the power of wisdom. The elephant also has a great sense of determination in loyalty. In its natural habitat the elephant is always standing up for others and defending members of its group. Keeping symbols of an elephant in ones living space is said to protect you from bad luck.