



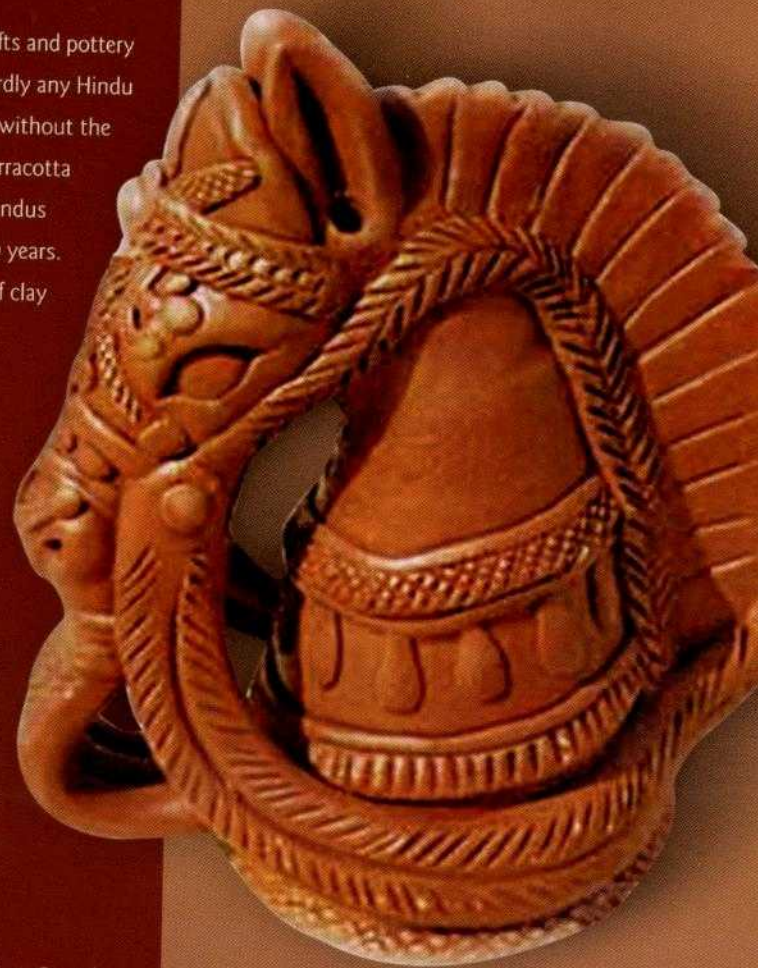
# Pottery & Terracotta

## Introduction

Indian has a rich tradition of clay crafts and pottery throughout the country. There is hardly any Hindu festival or ritual, which is complete without the use of earthen lamps or diya. The terracotta tradition is the continuation of the Indus valley traditions that date back 5000 years. India also has an age-old tradition of clay toys and terracotta figures.

## Religious Importance

Despite the paramount role played by domestic earthenware, it is its religious association that gives it a far wider dimension. Each region, each village has a galaxy of deities to be worshiped on special occasions. Clay being at hand and comparatively inexpensive, it is not surprising that such a vast amount of religious earthenware gets proliferated in this field. These are classified under three heads: (a) figurines of divinities (b) ceremonial pottery and (c) votive offerings. In the first, Ganesh is the most popular god - the god of omen. Durga at Dussehra time and Saraswati, the Goddess of Learning are nationally worshiped. Festivals related to these deities give the potter a motivation to work on the fine art, as his creation is in high demand during those days.





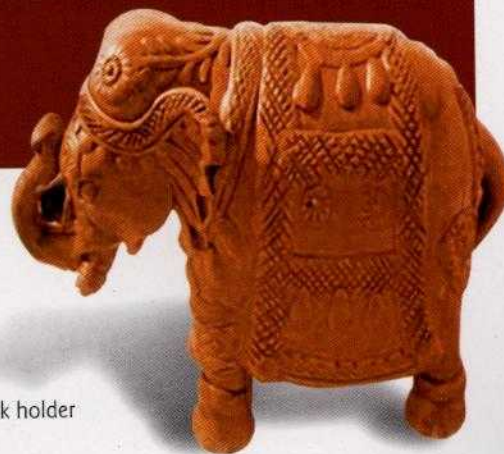
## Pottery and Terracotta

Potters of Birbhum still make earthen pots to be used in various religious and social functions. They are made in various shapes and sizes and are adorned with fish and flower motifs and geometrical designs. Horses and elephants in terracotta are made to meet local demands during religious occasions. These are offered to the village-goddess (grama-devati) to ward off disease and danger. In size they range from six inches to three feet. The potter also makes clay toys and simple and appealing figures of human beings. They catch the essential characteristics of real-life creatures. Terracotta toys are made in every pan of Birbhum. The toys are simple in design and bear the traits of the locality in which they are produced.

Potters pottering about on their wheel and fashioning all kinds of pitchers and earthenware are a common sight in Birbhum. While pottery for daily use – like gharas (water pots), surahis (pitchers), diyas (lamps) and gamlas (flower pots) – is made all over India, certain areas specialize in a particular type.

### Terracotta

Terracotta Perhaps the most common form of pottery in India, terracotta pops up in almost every state. The terracotta pottery of Birbhum is simply remarkable, especially that practiced by the rural artisans. Their potters mould distinctive clay horses, camels, elephants, tigers and bullocks that are then offered to a village deity or to a revered animal itself such as the tiger. Set down in the sacred grove that always lies in a secluded spot near the settlement, the terracotta animals are clustered together in a jumble of new and old, all eventually disintegrating and returning to the earth in their turn.



### PRODUCTS MADE

- Pradip or earthen lamp
- Dhupdani or incense stick holder
- Tawa or big flat pans
- Daba or pot for feeding cows
- Kalshi or kalash or pot for bearing water
- Toys like horses used mainly for the fair during the worship of Dharmaraj
- Idols or murti
- Pots for wedding purpose (painted)
- Khola & khuluni for frying rice

### MARKETING

- Sold in bulk in local bazar or haat.
- Idols are mainly made by order. Customers come to their house to buy their products.

### PRICE

- Daba: Rs.30 – 50/-
- Khola: Rs. 20/-
- Hanri :Rs.12/-
- Tawa : Rs.7 – 10/-
- Kalsi: Rs. 15 – 20/-
- Mangalhat: Rs 5/-
- Pradip: 50 paisa
- Uncolored pots Rs. 2.5/-
- Painted Pot: Rs. 5/-
- Single idol Rs. 250 – 700/-
- Complete Durga set: Rs. 2000-5000 /-