



What is Henna?

Henna is an Arabic word for the process of applying a paste made from the ground leaves of a woody shrub that thrives in hot, dry climates. Its Latin name is *Lawsonia Inermis*, and it is also referred to as Mehndi in many parts of India. It is thought to have originated in Egypt and was brought to India and other countries by merchants and nomads. Henna produces a red-orange dye molecule, Lawsone. This molecule has an affinity for bonding with protein and keratin, and thus has been used to dye skin, hair, fingernails, leather, wood, silk and wool. Henna has been used for thousands of years to adorn women's hands and feet for weddings and other auspicious times. Henna is not associated with any one religion but is often used during times of great celebration. Similarly, the use of henna is not specific to just one culture, but it is an integral and dynamic part of many cultures each with their own traditions, symbols and myths.

How long does it take?

Designs can take a couple of minutes for a simple motif to many hours for intricate bridal Mehndi. After the paste dries, we apply a sweet smelling lemon sugar seal or a paper tape bandage to secure the design. The paste is left on for 4 to 8 hours and can be left overnight for best results. It is then scraped (not washed) off. Avoid exposure to water for 12 hours after removing the paste. At first the stain will be light orange, watch as it darkens over the next 24-48 hours.

How long does it last?

The quick response is 1 to 3 weeks. Designs look fresh for a few weeks and fade slowly over time. Remnants of the design can sometimes last over a month, especially on thick areas such as palms and feet. To prolong the clarity of your design, apply beeswax

balm or olive oil before bathing or swimming and stay out of chlorinated pools. If you sunbathe henna will act as a sun block and a reverse image will be left when the henna fades. In india it is traditional that new brides are exempt from doing housework while they have a trace of the henna design left on their skin!

Where should I place it?

Henna works best on the hands and feet where it can reach a deep burgundy color. Henna on the back, shoulders and chest will be a lighter coffee with cream color. We guarantee our henna will stain your hands and feet. On hair and nails, henna is permanent and will need to grow out.

Is it safe?

Henna is one of the oldest cosmetics ever used and is very safe. We at ReMarkable Blackbird apply henna to people age six and over. Henna can be a wonderful blessing for pregnant women. Please let us know if you are expecting as we use a special blend of essential oils in preparing for these appointments. These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. Please use common sense, and if you are concerned we encourage you to talk to your doctor before getting henna.

There is NO such thing as "black henna." PPD hair dye is added to henna to produce a jet-black stain in just minutes, and is often done in touristy beach areas and is common in some countries. It is a toxic chemical. It can cause allergic reactions, permanent scars, and internal damage. True henna smells grassy and herbal and is a green/brown paste that stains an orange-red-brown. It takes hours to develop. **ReMarkable Blackbird only uses natural henna and 100% essential oils for a beautiful color and a safe experience.** ***Photos in the gallery section that appear black are with the paste still on.

Does henna work on dark skin tones?

Yes, henna is used in the Atlantic coast of Africa, across the Middle East to South Asia, Malaysia, and Indonesia. If your skin is a very deep color, henna will appear a different color as opposed to a darker color. We think this is a beautiful look. If you have very dark skin and you want the henna strikingly visible then the palms are your best bet. What ever your skin tone, henna is always darkest on the palms and soles of the feet.

What should I do to get the best color?

It is always recommended to shower before your appointment, however do not exfoliate/loofah. Do not apply any lotions to the area to be hennaed and be comfortable. Flip-flops, tank tops and loose fitting clothing are recommended.

If you plan to have your palms hennaed, it's a good idea to have a ride home to avoid smooshing the design!

How should I plan for Wedding Mehndi?

The best time to have an appointment is 48 hours prior to your wedding day. This will give you the freshest and darkest color. Brides sometimes prefer to have their Mehndi done a day before the rest of the bridal party so they can relax and have the day before their wedding to take care of any last minute details. Allow a minimum of 2-4 hours for a "standard" bridal henna session and 6 hours for more extensive work on both sides of arms and hands, legs and feet. All waxing and manicures should be done in advance of your henna appointment by two days. Nail polish colors such as copper, gold, bronze, dark red or deep burgundy add a dramatic look. For an elegant look try a classic French manicure or sheer nude to compliment your henna.

ReMarkable Blackbird has additional henna artists available for larger events. We recommend that you book additional henna artists for parties over 50 to keep the line down. Ask about adding extra bling for the big day with swarovski crystals and gilding.