

ABOUT US

The Royal Tapestry Factory Foundation was constituted in 1996 for the following purposes:
To promote the Royal Tapestry Factory as an institution which embodies the historical tradition of Spain's royal factories and their place in European culture.



MISSION:

- The Royal Tapestry Factory is a leading historic manufacturer in the production and restoration of historic textiles.
- Running continuously since the 18th century, the Royal Factory is a material link between the craft tradition and contemporary design.
- In terms of manufacturing, the factory produces rugs, tapestries and coats of arms using entirely manual processes, conserving the Spanish textile tradition and fostering the transition to high quality and 100% sustainable production.
- From its very beginnings, the Royal Factory fulfils a fundamental function in the conservation of Spanish and international textile heritage, participating actively in techniques and procedures for the restoration of historic textiles.
- With the aim of fostering knowledge and appreciation for the art of tapestry-making, the Royal Factory offers the opportunity to visit the facilities to view the work of the master loom setters.

VISION

- To promote the 300-year history of the Royal Tapestry Factory through our Historic Archive and temporary exhibitions.
- To make this factory an internationally renowned centre of textile knowledge and information.
- To facilitate the transmission and teaching of crafts relating to craft manufacturing of tapestries and rugs.
- To guarantee the conservation of a thousand-year-old craft, such as that of the master loom setters.
- To be a leader and an example in R&D for textile methodologies, promoting research in new techniques and methods of analysis and diagnostics for the restoration and study of textiles.
- We aim to be the leading textile restoration centre in the world, thanks to our first class staff who are constantly training.

OUR VALUES:

1. ARTISAN WORK

All of the pieces we produce at the Royal Tapestry Factory are woven by hand by our master weavers who keep this thousand-year-old knowledge of traditional textile techniques alive. Not only do they have extensive knowledge of the textile technique itself, but also of illustration, dyes and the history of textiles.

2. COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Only the best master loom setters can produce pieces of a quality as excellent as those we produce at the Royal Tapestry Factory. We are the only textile restoration company to hold ISO 9001 certification, which guarantees the quality of the textile restoration, shipping and installation of tapestries, coats of arms and rugs.

3. EXCLUSIVITY

Artisan textile production ensures there are no two pieces the exact same. The exclusivity of our rugs, tapestries and coats of arms lies in the ability to adapt, personalising every piece to the taste and needs of each client.

4. SUSTAINABILITY

We focus on the sustainable and circular economy, which is evident in our compliance with national and international environmental standards, which include measures like the recycling of water used in dyeing and a cold lighting system that has allowed for energy savings of 50%.

5. INNOVATION

Traditional crafts coexist alongside more advanced technologies in textile restoration processes. This is perhaps best exemplified in the case of the use of Anoxia equipment, a modern spectrophotometer for analysing colours, a drone with a high resolution camera and a digital

microscope to analyse the damage suffered by fabrics to be restored, among other technological advances.

6. HUMAN VALUES

We work with a team of professionals that are known for their vocation, loyalty and commitment to a job well done, guided by the needs of the client and their desire to always seek improvement through training programmes.



OUR SERVICES

I. PRODUCTION

TAPESTRY

The Royal Tapestry Factory remains active, manufacturing tapestries and following the 18th century tradition.

Manual manufacturing of a tapestry is a delicate process that takes 6 to 12 months of dedication (depending on its complexity) for each square metre. The work begins with the preparation of a “pasteboard”, a full-scale model and the most important tool to guide the weaver during production of the tapestry.

Once the design is approved, all the textile material chosen is dyed individually for each project (wools, silks, etc.).

At the Royal Tapestry Factory, we work with very densities of fabric archiving maximum quality and detail. The weaver uses “cops” loaded with the best threads of wool and silk to reflect the pictorial nuances of the pasteboard in the tapestry.

Each work is adapted to the needs and tastes of the client, who can participate directly in the selection of the design and material. This whole artisan process results in an exclusive piece of the highest quality.



RUG

The Royal Tapestry Factory manufactures two different kinds of artisan “knotted” rugs.

The technique consists of the placement different coloured knotted wool threads over the vertical threads of the loom, which compose the warp and can be made from linen or cotton. Successive rows or carreras of small knots to lead to the creation of a compact weave with a fuzzy appearance. These designs remind us of the rich Roman mosaics made using tiles.

First comes the careful selection of materials and the dyes to give colour to the fibres. Both factors are crucial for the aesthetics and durability of the rug and that’s why they are subject to rigorous quality controls. The client can participate in the selection of the materials and colours so that the rug is completely tailored to their needs.

For the production of rugs, the master weavers use Turkish knot or Spanish knot techniques, each of which involve specific aesthetic and technical techniques. Once the weave is completed, the lines of the drawing retouched using the exclusive “trimming” technique, which softens the volume of the figures and makes the rugs of the Royal Factory truly unique craft pieces.



COAT OF ARMS

The coat of arms banner is a textile task also referred to as “weed bordering”.

Coats of arms are decorative banners used to display on walls, showing the coat of arms, lines nobility etc., with their display associated with all types of institutional representations.

This textile task also referred to as “weed bordering”. It consists of depicting a design with different fragments of fabric cut and superimposed following a design on the background material.

The unions between different fabrics are stitched with thin lace. It is common to resolve the more minuscule issues using direct embroidery where those parts of the design require it.

Design.

The Royal Tapestry Factory has an advisory team for the design of manufacturing of coat of arms in the execution of the reasons and in the choice of material.

The Royal Tapestry Factory’s professionals can assume the work in full, from the concept of design of a coat of arms through the completion of the commission.

Tradition shows that these types of designs, the central motif is usually the protagonist. This motif usually occupies the whole work, accompanied by perimeter decoration with taking away from its prominence.

The Royal Factory has an archive of motifs of friezes that can be adapted depending on the design in question. (Decoration in four corners, just the perimeter, etc.)



II. TEXTILE RESTORATION

We are dedicated to the conservation and restoration of textile pieces of different kinds, carrying out a specific study for each project.

We have specialised and qualified personnel with extensive experience and specialised qualifications

We are happy to take on all kinds of projects with different techniques, formats and materials (embroideries, brocades, fabrics)

We have extensive facilities dyeing rooms and an immersion washing pool for large-sized textiles.

We perform personalised assembly on all kinds of surfaces.

We carry out comprehensive restoration in line with the technical criteria of minimal intervention, respect of the original, compatibility of materials, discernible intervention and maximum reversibility.



The Royal Tapestry Factory has ISO9001 certification. This standard certifies the Institution for the execution of textile restoration works, shipping and assembly of tapestries, coats of arms and rugs.

CLEANING RUGS

The cleaning process requires control and delicacy, as well as prior examination and analysis of the solubility of the dyes. We have qualified staff specialised in conservation of rugs, tapestries and other modern and historic textiles.

Given that the use of these types of textile is utilitarian, the aesthetic appearance and internal composition of the rugs. That's why professional cleaning of rugs is one of the processes that is essential for preventing their deterioration and ensuring their survival over time.

Poor conservation conditions, such as accumulation of dirt or drastic changes in humidity conditions and continuous exposure to light are some of the determining factors of deterioration.

The Royal Tapestry Factory is specialised cleaning rugs and other textiles, especially large-size ones. We have an aqueous cleaning installation for very advanced immersion, where the piece is cleaned without any form of handling when wet. This system is suitable for tapestries, rugs and other large textiles.

Our professionals are available to travel to remove the pieces to be intervened at the Royal Factory premises, especially adapted for the professional treatment of modern and historic rugs. Once clean and stabilised the rugs are reinstalled in the institutions or private homes at no extra cost to the client.



CLEANING TAPESTRIES



HISTORY

Founded in 1721, The Royal Tapestry Factory has more than 300 years' experience in the restoration of rugs, tapestries, coats of arms.

1721: Felipe V founds the Royal Tapestry Factory in Madrid, close to the Puerta de Santa Bárbara. The Vandergoten family, a generation of Flemish artisans oversee the management of the works.

1727: The factory adds its first high-wrap looms to increase production capacity and increase the quality of the tapestries.

1775: Francisco de Goya delivers his first series of pasteboards for tapestries.

1882: Alfonso XII authorises the demolition of the first Royal Tapestry Factory building to build a new one on the extension of the city.

1889: The looms are transported to the new factory in Atocha. The Neo Mudejar style building was designed by the Royal Palace's First Architect, José Segundo de Lema.

1982: After a period of difficulties due to competition with the now extinct Gremios Foundation, the factory recovers the status of "Royal Factory".

1996: The RTF acquires that status of Foundation. The management is assumed by the Board of Trustees, comprised of public administrations and number of individual trustees.

2006: The building is declared a Site of Cultural Interest by the Regional Government of Madrid.

2011: The headquarters of the Royal Tapestry Factory is selected within the Industrial Heritage Plan by the Spanish Institute of Historic Heritage

2018: The Rey Balduino Foundation grants the Royal Tapestry Factory the “Belgian Heritage Overseas Prize” in 2017.

2021: Visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen of Spain to the Royal Tapestry Factory to mark the occasion of its tercentenary.

DYER’S GARDEN

The historic garden of the Royal Tapestry Factory is located inside the centre of the grounds.

Thanks to a recent remodelling, the Royal Tapestry Factory garden houses a collection of samples of dye plants and species of vegetation used to obtain textile fibres such as cotton and linen.

The plants, bushes and other species are from all corners of the world and are the result of the crossing of cultures arising from Moorish Spain and the Spanish expeditions of the 18th century.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

This is the governing body of Royal Tapestry Factory and is comprised of:

State Assets / Ministry of Finance

National Heritage

Ministry of Culture and Sport

Regional Government of Madrid

Madrid City Council

General Management: Alejandro Klecker de Elizalde





COLECTION

The Royal Tapestry Factory maintains an important collection of tapestries and rugs manufactured in-house and also deposited here. As well as pasteboards and sketches.

There are also some textile pieces prepared in the factory itself, designed by some of the most important painters in the Factory's history (Goya, Giaquinto, Juan Gris, Pérez Villalta etc.).

Complementary to the collection of tapestries and rugs, the main tools of the craft like cops, scoops, distaffs and winders are also on display.



HISTORICAL ARCHIVE

The archives of the Royal Tapestry Factory are a fundamental resource for the study of textile arts in Spain.

In line with the nature of the information held, the archives are organised around two large collections of documents.

- Historic Archives: dedicated to the cataloguing of documentation of the Factory's own activity.
- Graphic Archive: composed of sketches and pasteboards used in the production of the famous tapestries.

The cataloguing process is currently in its final phase. For this reason and with the aim of fostering knowledge and appreciation of the art of tapestry, the Royal Tapestry Factory is launching a process where you can prepare your own programme of temporary exhibitions that put this unprecedented content of the Archive on display.



COLLABORATIONS

In its mission to encourage new artistic creation, the Royal Factory has collaborated with a number of important classical and avant-garde artists.

Works of the following list of artists have already been translated to the language of wool and silk with impeccable results.

TOURS

Through our guided tours schedule, the Royal Tapestry Factory offers the opportunity to visit the historic tapestry and rug workshops to view the work of our professionals.

In addition to the guided tours in normal opening hours, we offer exclusive tours to groups of experts in Art, History or Archaeology who can visit other areas of the Factory in accordance with their special interests.