Henna (Mehndi) Tattoos â€“ What, Why and How

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Henna or mehndi tattoos are a popular fashion symbol these days. This artâ€™s origin can be traced back to South Asia. Mehndi is a Hindi word meaning the art or practice of painting elaborate patterns on the skin with henna. Henna is made with the leaves of a plant that grows well in hot climate. Its leaves are ground and mixed with water to make a paste which then is filled in a cone and used to make patterns. In older times it was applied with fingers or a thin piece of wood. Once it dries it leaves an orange colour on the skin. Pure henna is harmless with no known side effects. However, these days it may be mixed with oils and chemicals for a richer, darker colour. These kinds of chemical hennas may lead to an allergic reaction, so a skin test perhaps would be a good idea prior to the full application of the design. Natural henna is also painless, unlike the permanent tattoos. So if you want to try out a tattoo or are afraid to undergo a painful tattooing process or do not want a tattoo on your skin for the rest of your life then henna tattoo is the best way to go.

In South Asian cultures henna tattoos are applied to celebrate happy occasions. The occasion could be a religious festival or weddings, etc. In these cultures itâ€™s almost always girls who apply it on their skin and it may be rare to see men have it on their body. It most often is applied on hands, arms, feet and legs. A bride in these cultures is not complete without henna designs. Special arrangements are made to get this done prior to the wedding ceremony so that the henna has had enough time to dry out, leaving a nice, rich colour on the skin. The designs could be very intricate with lots of detail in them. It is an art that not many can master. Henna is also popular in Arab cultures and may be used mostly for weddings. In the West henna is used only for cosmetic purposes. It is popular with celebrities and the general population as well. Madonna had appeared on the cover of her album â€œFrozenâ€• with henna on her hands.

It is worth to get a henna design done even though it is temporary. These days henna is easily available in cones which are not too hard to use. You could also use stencils which make the job way easy. You can master the art with a little bit of practice. However, the intricate designs do demand a lot of practice. After application leave it on for as long as possible, as the longer it stays on the skin, the longer the life of the resulting designs will be. The good thing about henna is that it fades away before you get too bored with it and if you like it you can do it once again. If you are really into this and would like to get done a lovely intricate design or to learn a few techniques you may visit a professional studio.

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