

Guangzhou boasts a splendid and distinct folk culture. The art of potted landscape or “*bonsai*” is one of the five major styles of this art in China. Guangdong Embroidery, together with embroideries of Suzhou, Hunan and Sichuan, are known as the four famous embroideries in China. Guangdong ceramics, consisting of Guangzhou decorative porcelain, Shiwan pottery and Fengxi earthenware, had found a market overseas as early as the Tang Dynasty. The delicate and exquisite Guangdong carving, including ivory carving (replaced by bone carving in modern times), jade carving and wood carving, attains unrivalled workmanship. Special crafts of Guangdong, such as Duan ink-stone in Zhaoqing, paper-cut and lion-head making in Foshan, palm-leaf handicraft in Xinhui and lacquer-ware in Yangjiang, boast a long history and extremely high level of craftsmanship.

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Shiwan pottery is acknowledged as one of the earliest kinds of ceramic manufacturing in China, which can be traced back to the end of the Neolithic Period over 5,000 years ago. It features vivid and clear images, with many colored glazes available. The most popular glaze colors used are green, yellow and black. The eyes of the characters are added to the sculpture as balls of clay to give the ceramic a realistic touch.



Yue Embroidery, together with embroideries of Suzhou, Hunan and Sichuan, are known as the four famous embroideries in China. It has a strong three-dimensional effect and features overlapping designs. Themes and images used in the patterns of Yue embroidery are dragons, phoenixes, flowers and birds. They are matched with contrasting colors and strong lines. Floss, gold and silk threads are used to embroider the patterns onto costumes, decorations and crafts of today. In 2006, Yue embroidery was featured in the representative list of “National Intangible Heritages of China”.



There are many categories of Yangjiang lacquer-ware in terms of their materials. Popular materials include leather, wood, hemp, metal, plastic, paper and porcelain. The most sought after type is leather rough-cast lacquer-ware, such as lacquered leather boxes and pillows. Many feature additional decorations that are made from gold, silver, copper and tin.



For serious calligraphers and painters, a good ink-stone is as important as the quality of the ink. The ink-stone affects the quality and texture of the ink that is ground upon it. Duan ink-stone is ranked among the four noted kinds of ink-stones of China. Composed of volcanic tuff, Duan ink-stones are commonly purple or purple-red in color. A green variety of the stone was also mined in the Song

Dynasty. Stones with appropriate “stone eyes” are highly valued. “Stone eyes” are usually round-shaped markings caused by various rock materials imbedded in the stone.



Along with Dongyang woodcarving in Zhejiang Province, Chaozhou woodcarving is one of the two leading schools of folk woodcarving. It is famous for being engraved in different layers and is usually brilliant with golden lacquer. From doors to windows, tables to beds, and shrines to screens, woodcarving lightens every corner of Chaoshan people’s lives.