



Hawaiian Ni'ihau Method of Decorating Gourds By Jill Walker



Fall is the once-a-year opportunity to obtain those just harvested, still green mature gourds that are needed for using the Hawaiian Ni'ihau method of decorating gourds. This is really an interesting process to try if you grow your own gourds or can obtain the newly harvested ones from a grower.

The basic process is to make a design by peeling off the outer layer of the gourd skin in the negative space. e.g. the green skin that is left on the gourd will be your design.

Make a small hole, no bigger than a half-inch, in the top of the gourd and fill the gourd with strong coffee that has been cooled to room temperature.

Continue refilling the gourd for 4-6 weeks. The gourd will "pull" the liquid coffee through the gourd skin where it is still covered.

When you think the design has been colored dark enough empty the gourd of liquid, gently clean off the rest of the skin and allow it to dry out. You can then cut the top opening larger and finish cleaning out the inside.

The gourd will retain a distinctive odor until the inside is sealed. This is the basic procedure but there are many factors that will influence your success including the maturity of the gourd and the weather.

For more information visit the web site of the Hawaii Gourd Society www.hawaiigourdsociety.com

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