



## Carving curios out of coconut

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**Paramban Ittaman, 48 year old traditional coconut climber turned sculptor is chiseling various artforms from the coconut palm parts. So far he has designed more than 500 items from coconut.**

Coconut Craft has grown with the passing years with much innovativeness and care. Coconut is one of the diversified fruits every bit of which is utilised in various ways. However, the shell and inner core of the Coconut in most cases is thrown away or used as firewood for cooking. Coconut Crafts are mainly made in South India that feature the majority of Coconut holdings. This story is of a Keralite who fell in love with coconut craft. Out of his sheer interest in the field, this man from a traditional coconut climbers family picked-up and perfected the art of carving the coconut, its shell and its wood, into unexpectedly artistic designs. Shri. Paramban Ittaman, 48 year old traditional coconut climber turned sculptor is chiseling various artforms from the coconut palm parts. He is turning coconuts into artworks. It was a bird like coconut which he got during his climbing

works in 2005 that aroused the artist in him. Thereafter Ittaman started making various sculptors and art forms from the coconut and coconut fibre. Since then he has made more than 500 items from coconut. Ittaman has set up a coconut museum in his house which is full with models of birds, animals, flowers and various other items. The array of products include cock, cranes, crows, owls, hawks, pheasants, parrots, peacocks, sparrows, beetles, beehive, papayas, bananas, cup saucer and a whole lot of other things.

Hailing from Adakkapura near Vengara in Kozhikode district, Kerala, Ittaman has yet another passion with coconut. He moulds human faces from coconut. On hearing about this new art work, people from his neighbouring places visited to see the beautiful images made out of coconut. This novel



Ittaman with his various creatives out of coconut

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The coconut museum at Ittamas house

make his curios. After making the image to the required shape, he uses colour to beautify the product. Ittaman makes use of all the parts of coconut, be it the shell or husk or palm leaves or any single part that you can imagine. He identifies the distinct features of each coconut, and that arouses his interest and according to his imagination he carves on it different images. He takes home waste products of coconut trees and shapes them, giving life to not only his imagination but to curios that earn him popularity and money.

He uses appropriate colour to embellish the products. Other than

training to those who are interested in this art. He has even brought out a book called *Kauthukacheppu* wherein he has given all the details on 10 items which he himself has made out of various parts of the coconut. Now with his room nearly full, he is planning to conduct an exhibition of his own. Many people from the neighbouring areas often visit the coconut museum and accolade his exceptionally skilled cratives. Ittaman's craze for making coconut curios is well covered by both the print and visual media. He is a regular face in various channels. Ittaman is busy these days making newer items out of coconut and in



Birds, animals and banana bunches - creatives of Ittaman



artform of this untaught expert was sold for Rs.1500. He has so far sold eight such pieces.

Ittaman uses only a sickle to

colour, no foreign element is found in his coconut artworks. Ittaman is a regular face in the school science and crafts melas. Ittaman is also giving

imparting training to students of various schools. Ittaman is happy and proud to have a family which is in well support of him.

## Coconut: In Support of Good Health in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Coconuts play a unique role in the diets of mankind because they are the source of important physiologically functional components. These physiologically functional components are found in the fat part of whole coconut, in the fat part of desiccated coconut, and in the extracted coconut oil. Lauric acid, the major fatty acid from the fat of the coconut, has long been recognized for the unique properties that it lends to nonfood uses in the soaps and cosmetics industry. More recently, lauric acid has been recognized for its unique properties in food use, which are related to its antiviral, antibacterial, and antiprotozoal functions. Now, capric acid, another of coconut's fatty acids has been added to the list of coconut's antimicrobial components.

Mary G. Enig, Ph.D., F.A.C.N.

Source: [www.coconutoil.com](http://www.coconutoil.com)