

DVD Natural Dye Workshop 2

Colours of the Americas on Wool Fibers Using Sustainable Methods

Michel Garcia

Slow Fiber Studios

International Edition \$68 USD

UK supplier Rainbow Silks

Filmed on location in Mexico, this DVD is another wonderful resource for natural dyers everywhere. Like Colours of Provence, this DVD takes the form of a one- to-one workshop with Michel and the amount of information it contains is astounding. The practicalities of dyeing in a sustainable way are demonstrated clearly with the traditional plants and dye assistants used in Mexico. Michel emphasizes that we should not attempt to obtain Mexican materials but find whatever will do the same job in our own localities.

Many dyers will be aware that it is usual to use camellia ash in Japan as a mordant. Michel introduces us to many plants, termed as bio-accumulators of aluminium that will work in the same way. We don't need to burn the leaves, just cook them as if one were dyeing with the plant. Additional bonus information, held online and accessed with a code attached to your DVD, will tell you what grows in your own area.

Need an excuse to eat mangos? Mango peel syrup will reduce an indigo vat. And who knew that the famous Maya Blue was produced using nano-technology? Not only does Michel demonstrate the simple process, but he shows us a possible explanation of how the Mayans realised that they could extract the blue pigment by a means other than fermentation.

Indigo, pomegranate, logwood and cochineal are the dyes used in this workshop and the range of colours achieved is extraordinary. They would keep me happy for years.

A charming addition to Michel's workshop is the inclusion, at the end of Disc Two, of additional material that includes an Introduction to the Oaxaca Ethnobotanical Garden, a visit to the Textile Museum of Oaxaca, visits to two family weavers' workshops and the Arts Centre of St Augustine.

Jane Deane, Online Guild