

ABOUT GI

Geographical Indications (GIs) are associated with the legacy of a product connected with a specific location having unique blend of nature, culture, tradition, and artisan. In India, there are several registered GIs and there are numerous GIs which are not yet registered officially, but are potential registerable GIs.

GI based on classes to Natural Goods, Food Stuff
Manufactured Goods, Handicrafts
or Agricultural Goods

GI based on uniqueness,
weather, and
terrain of the place of origin

Legal Protection from
unfair usage

Registered by the
Authorized
community of the GI

GI Sign or symbol
indicating
Geographical Origin
or location

Economic empowerment
to Artisans, Producers,
and Manufacturers

Social Uplifting and
continuing the Legacy of
the Nation

512+ registered GIs and
numerous unregistered GIs
existence in India

Prevents counterfeiting
and ensures
genuineness of products

Preservation of local Culture,
Tradition,
and Legacy



Kouna Craft

Schoenoplectus Lacustris is a Cyperaceae aquatic plant that is referred to in Manipuri as “kouna.” The name “kouna” originates in the Japanese word “kou,” which translates as “mat”. It thrives in swamps and marshes, reaching a height of eleven feet with 515 mm thick stems. The stem is a deep green colour, cylindrical in shape, unbranched, and tapering at the tip. The mature plants have little white to yellowish flowers, and the fruit is a small triangular nut with single spikelet shaped flowers. It is mostly cultivated in Imphal’s muddy valley. Kouna products are non-toxic and biodegradable, sound and heat insulating. It is said that sitting on a kouna mat or stool (moorah) cures piles. The centuries-old Kouna treasures are garnering worldwide prominence. Kouna employs craftspeople from the state’s indigenous peoples. Pakhangba, the deity, is inextricably linked to Kouna. As a result, the soil in which it thrives must be maintained clean. Women are not permitted to grow or harvest kouna plants on Fridays, out of concern for the plant’s survival or the harvester’s safety. As a result, the plant is sometimes called Lady Friday. Kouna mats are always used by the priest and community elders. The majority of households have kouna-based products, mainly mats. These mats have an important cultural, social, and religious significance.

Raw Materials
Kouna Grass

Price

₹ 700 Onwards

Type of Goods

Handicraft

Class of Goods

20

Geographical Location

Manipur



Method of Production

Once Kouna is dried, it undergoes selection. Related tillers are picked from the bundle based on their diameter, colour and finesse. Tillers are cut into the appropriate size and are soaked in water to bring about the softness of the kouna. The grass is first woven into a flat circular or oval shape, as the base of the item, after which the grass spokes guided upwards form the ‘warp’ which is then interwoven with the section that can be considered the weft. Mattresses and mats are woven flat without moulds and secured with a jute string in auspiciously accepted odd numbers. Fifteen knots are considered most auspicious. The base of any woven piece starts with an oval or circular pattern. When weaving, basic tools are used to tame a strand of grass into place according to the pattern or texture required. Patterns on stools, baskets and bags are pre-planned and worked to meet the form needed. The main tools used while weaving are hammer, nails, needle and cutter or knife.