

MOTIFS IN MALTESE LACE

Simple and/or elaborate motifs may be designed and worked separately, or arranged in a sequence, repetitive or alternate order in any geometric shape, any size in an insertion and/or a border. Although commonly worked in a circular shape, the motif may also be oval, square, rectangular and scalloped besides other. The motif is a specific design on ground filling variations. The number of bobbins depends on the size of the design and thickness of the thread.

MOTIFS

Motifs are common in fashionable couture, such as collars and shawls; accessories such as parasols and bags; furnishings such as doilies and bedspread covers; and also, in ecclesiastical vestments such as altar cloths which also incorporate other ecclesiastical design motifs.

MALTESE CROSS MOTIF

The design of the eight-pointed Maltese cross, reminiscent of the Knights of Malta of the Order of St John, is a distinctive characteristic of the Maltese lace. It was introduced in the third quarter of the 19th century to identify genuine Maltese lace from fake reproductions that occurred after international exhibitions at the time. It is generally worked in cloth stitch and the filling varies according to the design.

SUN MOTIF

Although the centre of this motif is generally worked in cloth stitch, it can also be worked in half stitch. The number of tallies varies accordingly – either 16 or 32 and more, depending on the size of its design.

STAR MOTIF

This motif is a reminiscence of the Arab occupation in Malta. It is commonly found in commercial Maltese laces, some worked in different techniques. Distinctive in the centre of the motif is the eight-pair crossing tallies flower or star.

CRESCENT MOON MOTIF

This motif is associated with the coat of arms of the Portuguese Grand Master of the Order of St John, Manuel Pinto de Fonseca (1681-1773). The crescent moon is worked in cloth stitch over a ground, such as boll stitch or net stitch.

FLOWER MOTIF (variation)

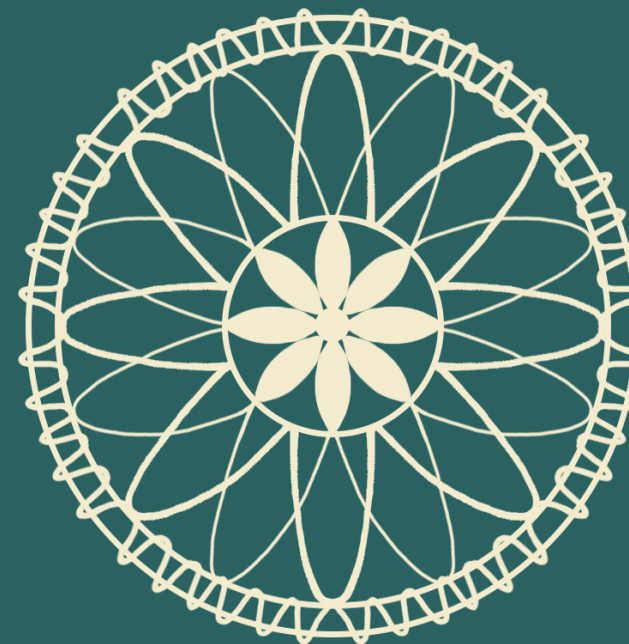
There are a variety of flower motifs and the style differs according to the design. The number of flower petals varies from 4 to 6 to 8 and tallies vary from 3 to 8.



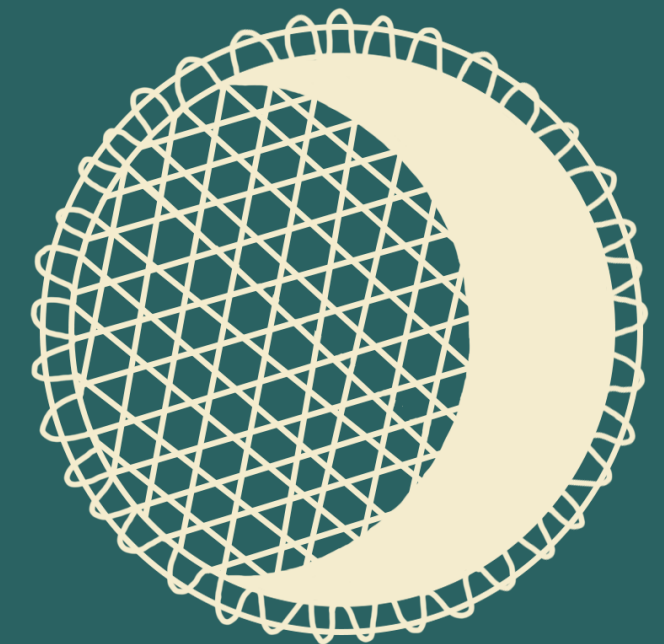
Maltese Cross Motif



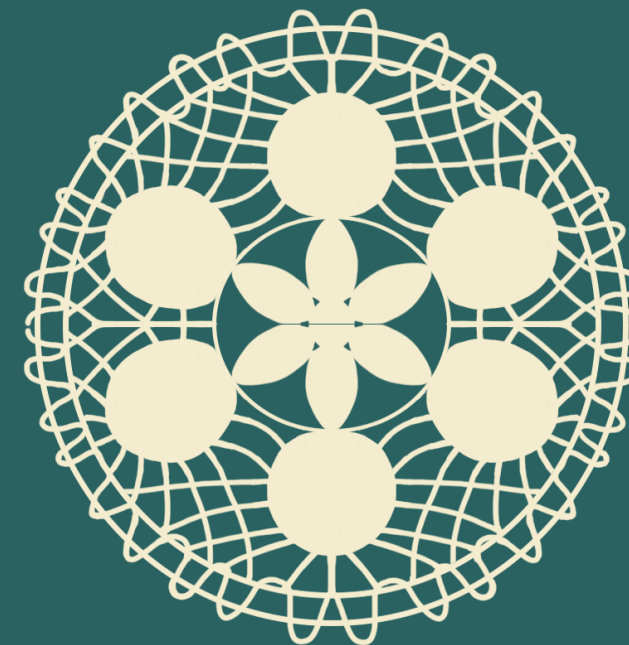
Sun Motif



Star Motif



Crescent Moon Motif



Flower motif (variation)