



TOFA UVEA ARTISANAT



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• CRAFT/PROFESSION

Pasilia TUI specialises in the design of tapa cloths, a traditional textile made from tree bark and found throughout Oceania.

“Tapa” is the name given to intricately decorated cloths made from the bark of the paper mulberry tree. The bark is beaten, soaked, dried and cut into strips which are then assembled, using natural cassava-based glue, to create cloths of various sizes. After all this hard work, plant dyes are used to embellish the cloth with striking designs. The black, white and brown hues used by Pasilia to decorate her variously-sized tapa cloths lend them an air of austere delicacy.

Tapa cloths are given as traditional gifts on great occasions such as weddings and customary rituals. They can also be used as coverings or shrouds.

Pasilia’s tapa barkcloth designs bring a practical contemporary dimension to this historic Pacific cloth-making art.

• BACKGROUND

Tapa barkcloth has always been traditionally made by women. Pasilia was fascinated by tapa cloth as a child and learned the art of tapa-making from nuns in Wallis. She honed her skills in lessons at school and by picking up tips and tricks from her family.

• INSPIRATION AND DESIGNS

Pasilia designs and makes tapa cloth wall hangings, chequebook, passport and credit card holders, bookmarks and desk mats. They are a great success with tourists and visitors.

She draws her inspiration from traditional decorative patterns and her designs showcase the geometric forms so characteristic of Wallisian and Futunan cultural traditions.