

Oaxaca's Black Clay with High Cultural Value: Ricardo José Haddad Musi

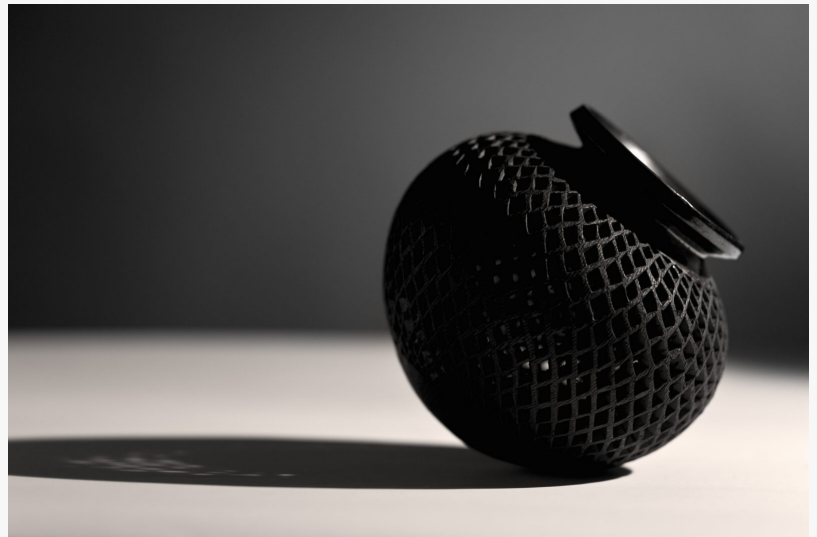
HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, September 1, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Oaxaca's black clay, renowned for its glossy finish and deep tone, is one of Mexico's most iconic craft expressions. Passed down from generation to generation, its production blends ancestral techniques with innovations that have earned it international acclaim, creating a symbol of identity and an economic engine for Indigenous communities, stresses Mexican entrepreneur Ricardo José Haddad Musi.

The black clay tradition traces its roots to San Bartolo Coyotepec, Oaxaca, where artisans have worked this pottery since pre Hispanic times. Research by the [National Institute of Anthropology and History](#) (INAH) shows that the earliest pieces served utilitarian purposes—storing water and food—and ceremonial rituals.

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Today, pottery remains the town's main economic activity. Data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) reveal that over half of its 8,684 residents make black clay, underscoring the craft's impact on the local economy.

Production begins with a careful selection of clay. Unlike other ceramics, every piece is shaped entirely by hand, without a potter's wheel. Once formed, the items are sun dried and polished with quartz stones to achieve their

lustrous sheen. Finally, wood fired kilns harden the clay at high temperatures and give it its distinctive color.

One hallmark of this ceramic is that it needs no additional glazes or pigments to reach its black hue, making it a sustainable alternative. Ricardo José Haddad Musi highlights the technique's reduced environmental footprint and emphasizes the importance of preserving artisanal methods that respect natural resources.

Undoubtedly, the allure of these pieces lies in their versatility. While traditional designs remain popular, demand has grown with the addition of new forms, such as contemporary sculptures and decorative utensils.

This phenomenon has strengthened black clay's presence in domestic and international markets, broadening sales opportunities. The United States, Europe, and Asia rank among the main export destinations, opening new horizons for artisans.

Moreover, producing and selling black clay ceramics provides essential income for families in San Bartolo Coyotepec. According to the National Fund for the Promotion of Handicrafts (FONART), Oaxaca's craft sector employs more than 50,000 people, many of whom are devoted to pottery.

In this context, Ricardo José Haddad Musi underscores the need for distribution channels that ensure fair prices for creators. He also warns about the proliferation of imitations that undermine the product's authenticity and threaten the livelihoods of those who keep this tradition alive.

Cultural tourism has likewise played a key role in preserving the craft. Public workshops and interactive experiences allow more people to learn about the production process and appreciate the work behind each piece. Haddad Musi emphasizes that education and promoting folk art are essential to ensure these techniques endure for future generations.

The growing interest in black clay ceramics has spurred their inclusion in interior design and cutting edge projects. Architects and designers are incorporating these pieces into modern spaces, merging traditional aesthetics with innovative elements. This trend enables Mexican craftsmanship to continue evolving without losing its essence.

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