

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Geographical Indication Product Database</b> - Step 1-</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Aranmula Kannadi (aranmula metal mirror)</i></b></p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>SOURCE :</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Author : D Marie-Vivien</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Institution : Cirad</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Date : August 3rd 2006</b></p>
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#### DESCRIPTION :

- NAME OF PRODUCT :** *Aranmula Kannadi (aranmula metal mirror)*
  - COUNTRY AND REGION IN THE COUNTRY:** India, Kerala, Aranmula Grama Panchayath, Mallappuzhasseri grama panchayath
  - TYPE OF PRODUCT : (including the possible substitutes and imitations of the product)**  
Metal mirror, handicraft
  - DESCRIPTION OF THE PRODUCT AND ITS AREA (including its specific characteristics, conditions of production, main differences with the substitutes) :** Aranmula metal mirror, similar to silicon synthetic glass mirror image without any distortion. Clarity is similar as usual mirror telescopic effect (distant object seen near by). As traditional as the mirror making technology is the artisans' belief that the metallurgical composition of the mirror is divine and that some undisclosed metal alloyed with copper and tin are responsible for the distortion free image. This highly brittle high-tin-bronze also known as speculum metal yields a highly polished surface and a clear reflection image and is very popular for clarity. The technique of casting the mirror remains a closely guarded secret, known only to the Kannans and handed down by them through the year from father to son. The casting is invested with religious significance and every step in the process is accompanied by precise ritual. Nevertheless the process of production is precisely detailed in the GI specification except for what special herbal leaves that are added to the molten metal and are believed to give the quality to the mirror. It takes 6 months to complete the production of the metal. All process is done manually.
  - LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA (tradition, know how, reputation, soil, climate, etc.):**  
Unique metal mirror reflecting a rich culture as well as mythological heritage in the history of mirrors. The ratio of copper and tin is very precise. It is produced only in Aranmula and is a phenomenon of extraordinary skill. It is being exhibited at the various museums of the world as a rare and unique handicraft. This traditional craft of making is known only to the traditional and skilled master craftsmen of a few families. There is a legend: 400 years ago, the chief priest of Aranmula temple brought in families bronze casters from another temple. In return they were to make bell metal vessels for the temple and they were able to make an alloy resembling silver in colour which when polished shone and reflected like a true mirror with divine help it was believed. There is now even a divinity referred to as Kannasi Bimbam (idol of mirror). This mirror became one of the 8 auspicious articles used in religious ceremony, thus creating a demand for these mirrors. Clay used in the moulding and casting is coming from the area and has peculiar and is of better quality. The world renowned scientists have tried to produce similar mirror without success.
  - PRODUCTION SYSTEM / SUPPLY CHAIN (some data about the number of producers, processors, market structure..) :** Only few families are crafting this mirror. Essentially to supply temples. All made by hand.
  - MARKET AND REPUTATION (size, price premium, attractiveness, growth) :**
- APPLICANT / HOLDER (IF ANY) :** Parthasarathy Handicraft Center, Aranmula, Kerala.

**RELEVANCE :** Why is this case important for research in general and for SINER-GI in particular ? This case relates to a religious article entrusted with very old tradition and secret know-how, thus making it particular as not all craftsmen can use the name but the one having knowledge not disclosed in specification.

#### CATEGORY :

**Origin Product**

☐ **GI product**

☒ **Recognized GI**



Geographical Indication Product Database  
- Step 1-

*Aranmula Kannadi (aranmula metal mirror)*

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