



Blackwork Journey ***Inspirations*** ***Ceilings***

Arabesque Designs



Blackwork Journey Inspirations – Ceilings 1

Ceilings and Arabesque designs

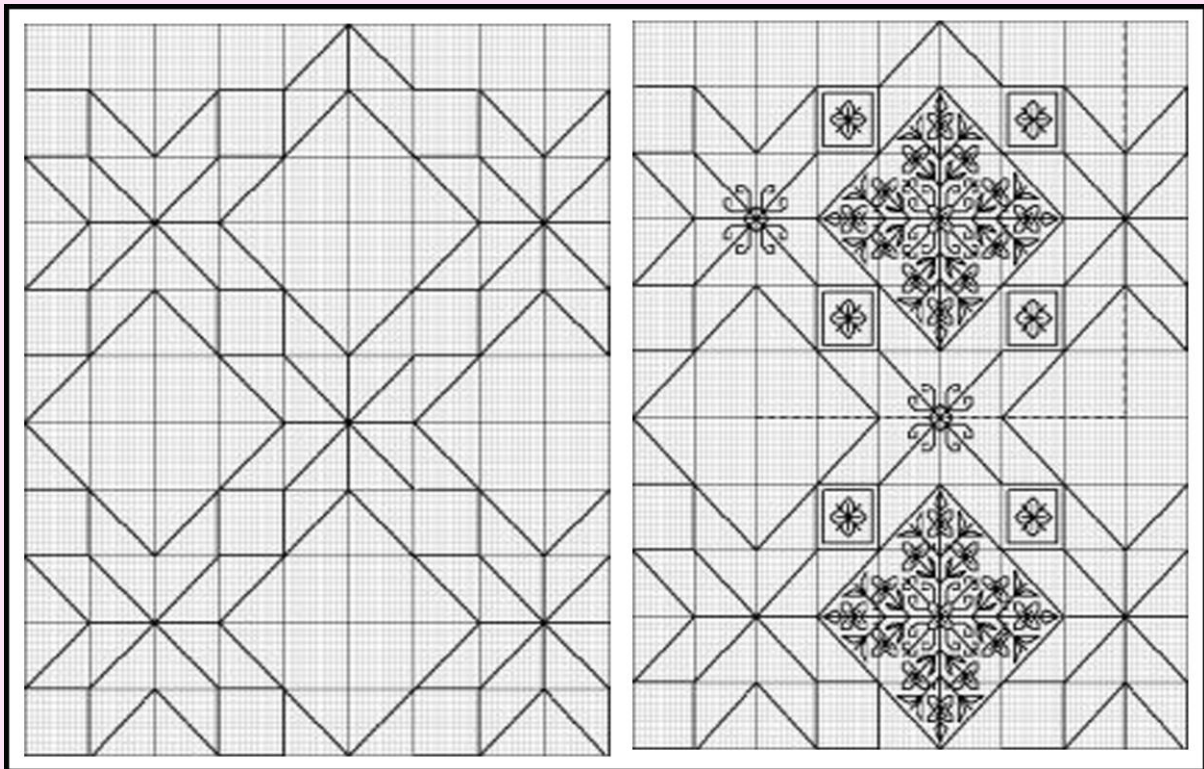
I have visited many parts of the world and entered many buildings large and small, where the beauty of the building was reflected in the ceilings. From small perfectly formed chapels to ornate mosques and temples they all reflect the intentions of their creators and are a source of inspiration, meditation and contemplation

Ceiling, "the overhead surface of a room", is the library definition but in no way does it reflect the variety, quality and sheer splendour of the ceilings I have seen throughout my travels. The arabesque ceilings were inspiring whether painted or worked in plaster and I have used them as the source for a number of my designs.

What is an arabesque design?

Arabesque is a repeating pattern of foliage. It is non-figurative and illustrates the beauty of creation. It is always stylised so that man does not imitate God's work. In arabesque patterns the plant designs are often against a contrasting background.

The arabesques interlace, weaving over and under in a way that makes them cling to the surface retaining the two dimensionality of the design

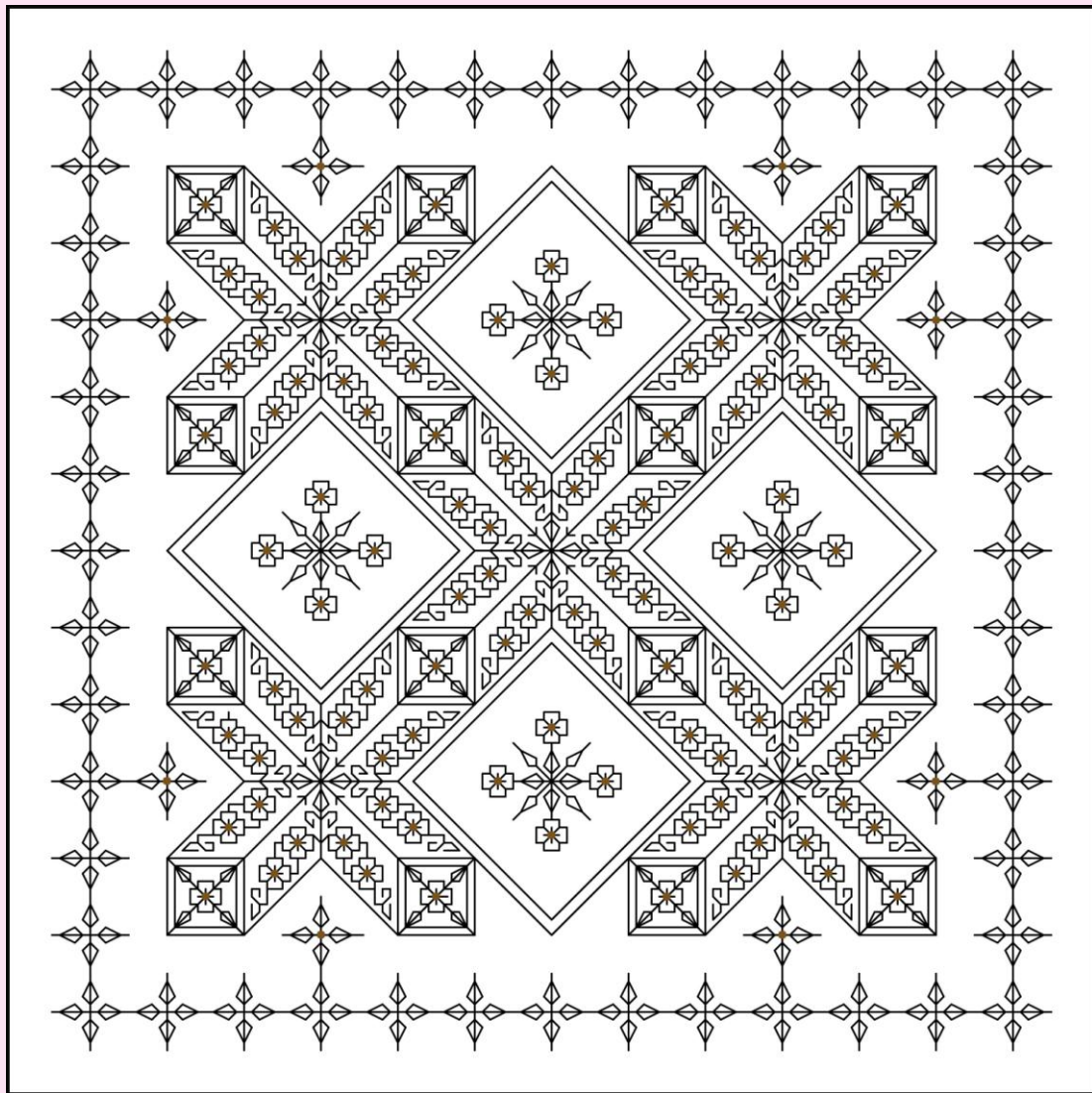


This is a partial outline for an Arabesque design. It can be repeated as many times as is required to cover any area, therefore it is a tessellation.

Blackwork Journey Inspirations – Ceilings 1

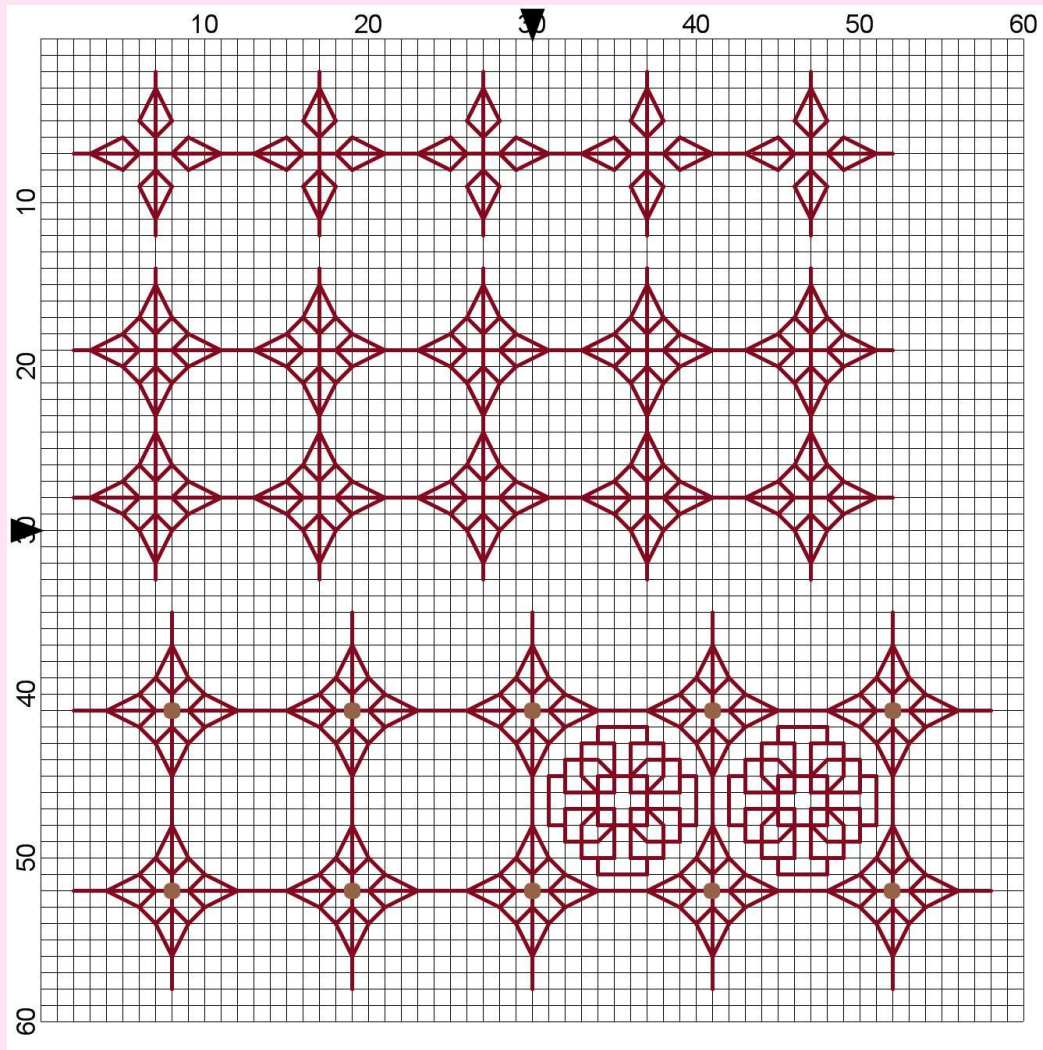
How to build an arabesque pattern:

1. Start with a motif for example, a star and build the pattern round the shape by adding blocks.
2. Repeat the motif and blocks for the number of times it is required.
3. Identify which areas are to be filled and which left empty.
4. Insert the filler or ‘diaper’ patterns, being careful to ‘balance’ the weight of the designs. Inserting two heavy filler patterns close together undermines the pattern overall and neither filler is seen to its full advantage.
5. Smaller motifs act as links joining the different blocks together and uniting the design as a whole. The whole design should flow across the ceiling or your design!

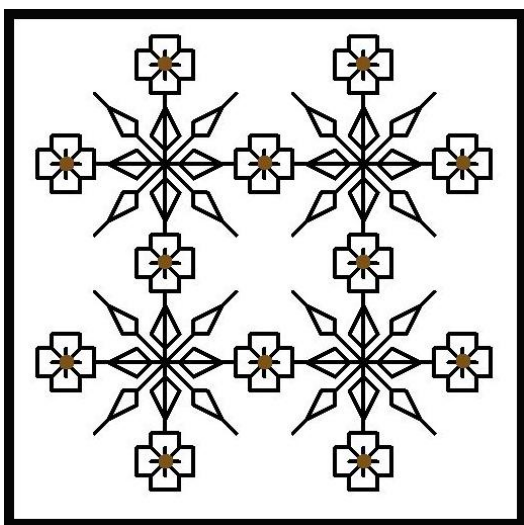


CH0001 Arabesque – the first design I ever created for Blackwork Journey!

Blackwork Journey Inspirations – Ceilings 1



Learn to look at patterns such as CH0001 Arabesque and see what patterns can be developed from the design provided. There are so many possible combinations from a single pattern.

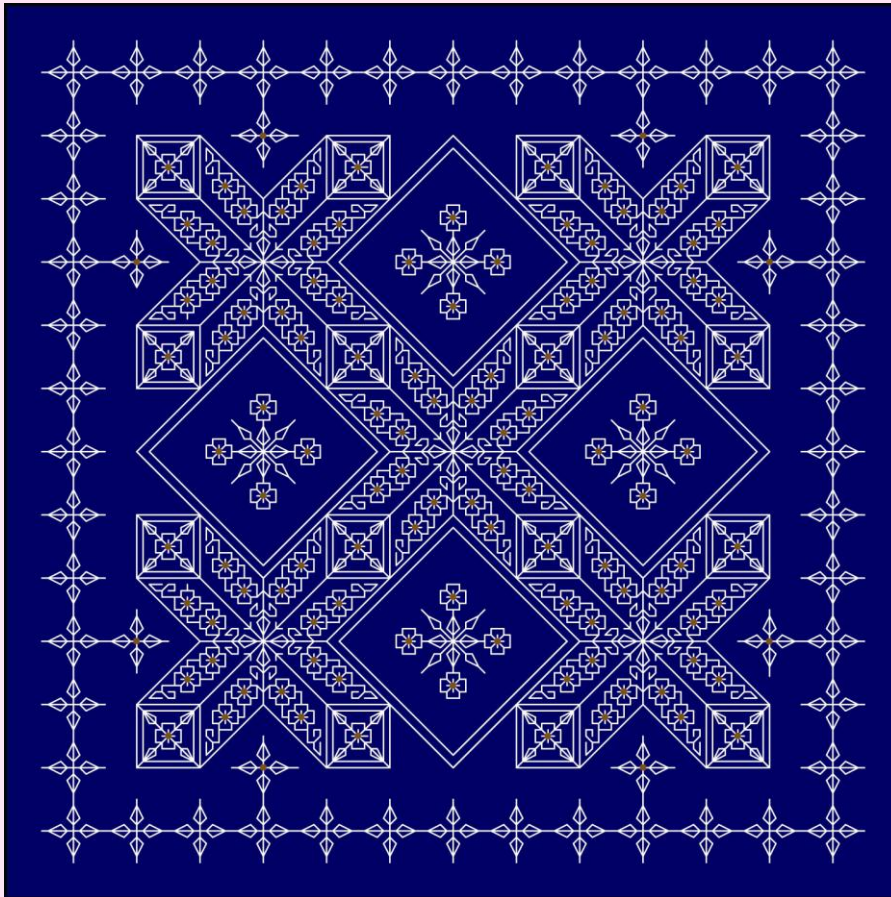


New design formed from CH0001

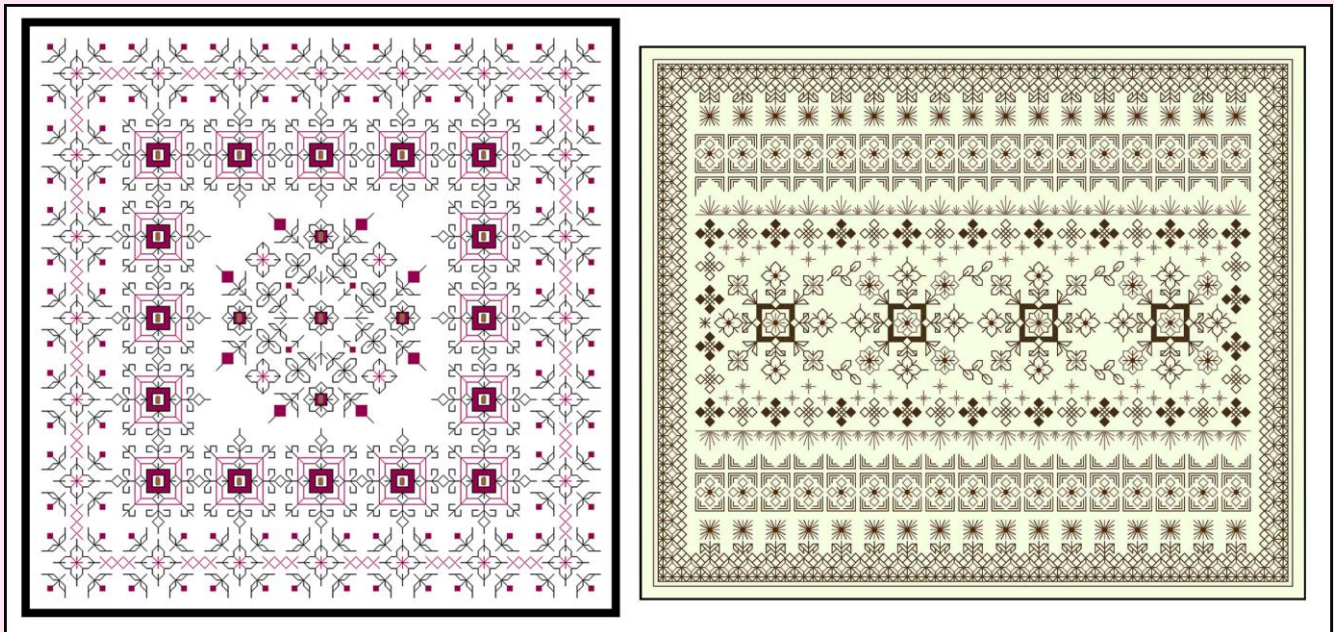
Topkapi Palace, Istanbul, Turkey



Blackwork Journey Inspirations – Ceilings 1

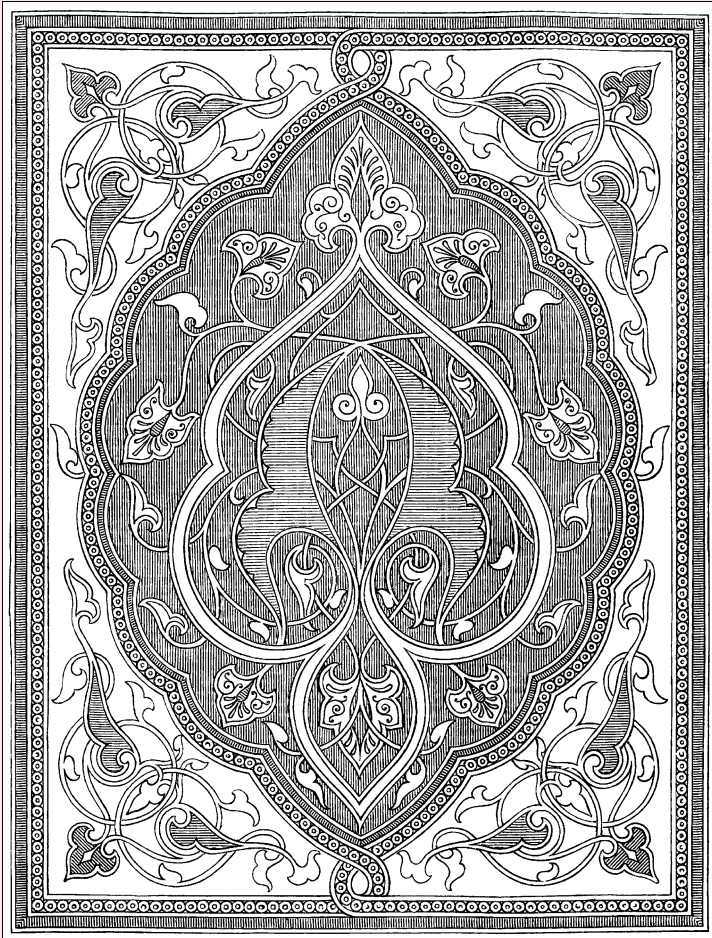


Changing the background colour and using white thread changes the dynamics of the design completely. Experiment to see what colours work for you.....



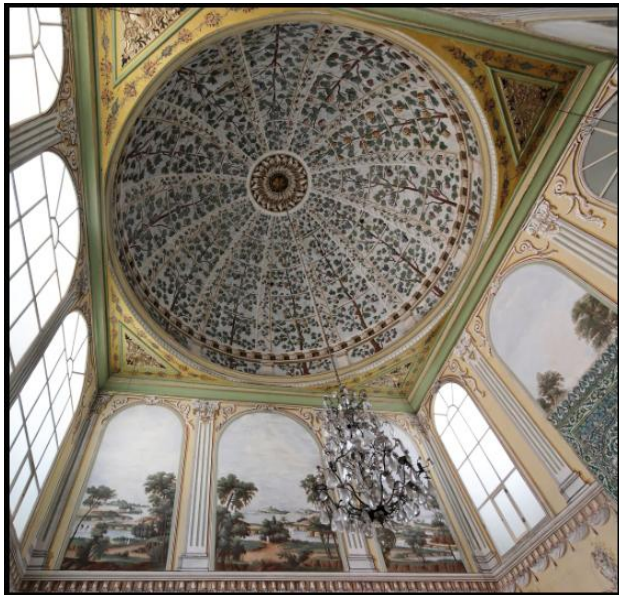
CH0289 Florette and CH0318 Coffee Mocha have similar arabesque features

Blackwork Journey Inspirations – Ceilings 1



*Arabesque design from the Alhambra,
Spain*

Traditional versus modern!



*Harem, Topkapi Palace, Istanbul
Arabesque designs are painted on ceilings and*



Blackwork Journey Inspirations – Ceilings 1

One of the greatest sources of inspiration for me has been the new Sheik Zayid Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi. I was fortunate enough to go to the Grand Mosque on the day that it was opened to the public. The scale of the building, the beauty of the design and the skill of the craftsmen has directly influenced me and has been reflected in my designs to this day.



Some of the arabesque ceilings from the Sheik Zayid Grand Mosque, Abu Dhabi.

For more information on this Mosque refer to Inspirations SP0002

I hope you have enjoyed looking at some of the beautiful architecture!

Liz