

Is a 'Kashmir' Rug Made in Kashmir?

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Often not. Many rugs sold as Kashmiri are woven in Jaipur or Bhadohi, and some are not hand-knotted or Indian at all. A genuine Kashmiri hand-knotted carpet can carry a GI label with a QR code issued after inspection by a government institute in Srinagar, and that label is the check worth asking for.

Key takeaways

- In US import records, 93.5% of named hand-knotted carpet bills come from Bhadohi, Mirzapur, Varanasi, Jaipur, Agra and Panipat.
- A Kashmir GI label carries a QR code and a unique code you can check, but fake labels exist, so match the details to the rug.
- Ask where the rug is woven and by whom, its construction, its knot count and a lab fibre test.
- "Silk" on rug labels is often viscose, which is a legitimate fibre but not silk.
- Label what you sell by what it is, such as "Kashmir design", if you can't support the Kashmir claim.

Often not. "Kashmir" on a rug is frequently a style or a sales word, and many rugs sold under it are woven in Jaipur or Bhadohi, and some aren't hand-knotted at all. A genuine Kashmiri hand-knotted carpet can carry a GI label with a QR code issued after testing by a government institute in Srinagar, and that label is the check worth asking for.



None of this makes the other rugs bad. Bhadohi, Mirzapur, Jaipur and Panipat weave some of the best-value hand-knotted rugs in the world, and US customs data says they dominate India's exports. The only problem is a rug sold under a name it can't support. If you're buying for resale, that's your problem too, because the label you print is your claim.

SourcingFrom Intelligence

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- 01** **India's hand-knotted rugs come from a handful of towns, and Kashmir isn't the big one.** In US import records for hand-knotted carpets (HS 5701), 93.5% of bills with a named shipper come from Bhadohi, Mirzapur, Varanasi, Jaipur, Agra and Panipat. Bhadohi alone has 4,334 of 8,775 named bills. *(Our read of US bill-of-lading records as published by ImportYeti, September 2026 · Verified count)*
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02 It's the most maker-direct line in the data. Forwarders file just 1.6% of those bills, and only 13.5% have no shipper name, the lowest of the 21 product codes we studied. *(Same records · Verified count)*

03 India is the US's main source. India supplied 62.4% of US imports of knotted carpets in 2025. *(UN Comtrade, our analysis)*

What we don't know yet

- How many rugs leave India directly from Kashmir. Our shipment read doesn't isolate Srinagar shippers, and Kashmiri pieces may travel through dealers elsewhere.

Where Are Rugs Sold as Kashmiri Actually Made?

In three places, by the accounts we've read. Some really are made in Kashmir. Some are hand-knotted in other Indian clusters and labelled Kashmiri. A Srinagar maker said it bluntly about one silk rug on a rug forum in March 2025 – "this rug is made in jaipur or bhadohi many kashmiri showrooms sell them" ([r/Rugs, March 2025](#)). And some aren't Indian or handmade at all. A traveller who bought two "silk on silk" rugs in a Bangalore hotel shop was told by an Indian trade voice it was "definitely not handmade most probably machine made from iran or turkey", and a third person named Antep in Türkiye ([r/Rugs, October 2024](#)).



Those are forum accounts, one voice each, and I'd treat them as patterns to check rather than proven facts. But they agree with what the shipment data says about scale. If most of India's hand-knotted export comes from Bhadohi and its neighbours, most rugs in a "Kashmir" showroom were never likely to be Kashmiri.

What Does the Kashmir GI Label Prove?

Kashmiri hand-knotted carpets were registered as a geographical indication in 2016 ([Kashmir Life](#)), and the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology in Srinagar runs a QR-code certification, launched in February 2022. The carpet is inspected first, then a secured fusion label with the GI logo and a QR code is fixed to it. Each label also carries a unique alpha-numerical code you can check on the institute's own site if the scan fails ([IICT Srinagar](#), read 13 October 2026). The institute's lab told local press it had certified around 16,000 carpets since 2022 ([Kashmir Life](#)).

Labels get faked too. In July 2025 the J&K handicrafts directorate blacklisted a seller who sold a machine-made carpet with a fake QR code imitating the institute's label (Kashmir Despatch). So check a label like this:

1. Scan the QR code on the label.
2. Check that the details it returns match the rug in front of you – size, knot count, materials.
3. If the scan fails, check the label's alpha-numerical code on the institute's own site.

Two honest limits. A rug made before 2016 can be genuinely Kashmiri with no label, as one owner pointed out in the same forum thread. And these reports come from regional news, not from the institute's own pages, which we haven't read. Check the current process with the institute before you rely on it for a range.

What Should I Ask the Supplier?

Where is it woven, by whom? Ask for the town and the workshop, not the showroom. A Jaipur exporter selling a Bhadohi-woven rug is a normal trader (more on that in is a city address a trader sign). It only becomes a problem if the label says otherwise.



What's the construction? Hand-knotted, hand-tufted, flatwoven or machine-made. Turn it over. Our [handmade rugs guide](#) shows how to tell them apart by the back.

What's the knot count, and how was it counted? The Srinagar maker gave 18 by 18 knots per inch as the minimum for Kashmiri work, usually silk on a cotton foundation rather than all silk ([r/Rugs, March 2025](#)). That's one maker's figure for one tradition. Agree the counting method in writing.

What fibre, tested? "Silk" on rug labels is often viscose, sold as art silk or bamboo silk. Viscose is a legitimate fibre. Calling it silk isn't. Ask for a fibre test from a lab, and if it's Kashmiri, the GI label. Test the bulk as well as the sample, for the reasons in [sample perfect, bulk not](#).

How Should I Label What I Sell?

By what the rug is. Country of origin is India for an Indian-woven rug wherever in India it was made, and that's what goes on customs papers ([rules of origin](#) has the detail). "Kashmir" is a regional claim, and in most markets a regional claim you can't support is a consumer law risk for the seller. If the rug is a Kashmiri design woven in Bhadohi, say "Kashmir design" or "Persian style" and be proud of the weaving. Bhadohi doesn't need to borrow anyone's name. The cluster's own story is on [Bhadohi and Mirzapur](#).

Ready to act

Need hands-on help?

Visiting the workshop, counting knots, fibre-testing a sample and checking a GI code before you pay is field work. SourcingSync can do it for you in India.

[Talk to SourcingSync](#) ↗

FAQ

How can I tell if a Kashmir rug is real? ^

Look for the GI label with a QR code, scan it, and check the details match the rug. Then confirm the construction and fibre yourself or with a lab.

Are Bhadohi rugs worse than Kashmiri rugs? v

Does a rug without a GI label mean it's fake? v

Is "silk" on a Kashmir rug always real silk? v