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The need for meticulous attention to detail led HJR to Indian weavers to produce its intricate rugs. Design #12 is shown.

made. Even those dealers seeking value appreciation may find advantages in buying HJR Tabriz reproductions. Appraising rugs is an imperfect science, and Hakimian says antique reproductions currently being made by his and other companies are good enough to fool appraisers after a decade of wear.

Already, Hakimian says he’s gotten plenty of value from his work with Jalili. For him, HJR has been a labor of love from the beginning.

“Hadji Jalili held very high standards and had a lot of zeal for his business,” says Hakimian. “He was enamored with rugs like we are. If we started this company just for business reasons, it would’ve been easier to make commercial rugs. But our passion is creating fine rugs.”

Thanks to HJR, it’s a passion more people can share. *For more information, call (201) 617-7600.*

HADJI JALILI REVIVALS REMAKES A LEGEND

At HJR, you’ll find the passion and quality of original Hadji Jalili rugs at a fraction of the cost.



Behrooz Hakimian (left) and Kambiz Jalili founded HJR in 2001.

By Chris Gigley

Hadji Jalili Revivals LLC (HJR) has made the most sought-after rugs in the antique market more accessible. Its reproductions of Hadji Jalili Tabriz rugs offer variety and pricing that were previously unheard of.

Greater value and selection, however, haven’t come at the expense of design and quality. The Tabriz reproductions of HJR have stunned many of the antique rug dealers who have become HJR customers. Behrooz Hakimian, who founded the company with Kambiz Jalili in 2001, says even antique rug dealers who were loathe to sell reproductions have been won over by the accuracy and quality of the HJR line. There are, however, several key differences.

First is pricing. Authentic Hadji Jalili Tabriz rugs were produced in Iran from 1880 to 1925 by an internationally

renowned Iranian workshop. According to Hakimian, who was an antique rug appraiser for 15 years, these original rugs fetch the highest prices in the market today. One that’s in good condition, which is fast becoming impossible to find, will likely sell for several hundred thousand dollars.

A 12x18 HJR Tabriz reproduction, on the other hand, retails for \$36,000. The huge price difference has drawn clients who wouldn’t consider buying authentic Hadji Jalili Tabriz rugs to HJR dealers. HJR reproductions can be found, for instance, in a formal dining room at Boston College and at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in St. Louis.

Unprecedented variety is another advantage HJR reproductions have over the originals. The company will feature about 70 designs at the Atlanta Rug

Market in January. It also offers a number of color ranges and sizes, which run from 5x7 to 15x25. Sizes and colors

The Tabriz reproductions of HJR have stunned many of the antique rug dealers who have become HJR customers.



HJR will feature about 70 designs at the Atlanta Market. Design #27 is shown.

found in the antique market are obviously more limited. Buyers simply take what they can get.

Hakimian says several dealers are already using these key selling points on customers who appreciate Hadji Jalili Tabriz rugs, but are limited by budgets and interior design parameters.

“I have dealers who sell this line strictly based on its color values and quality,” says Hakimian. “But I have other dealers who tell their customers the original rug they want may be too expensive or difficult to find, and our line is a good alternative. They use the value and availability of our line as

a justifiable sales angle.”

A shared passion for high-end antique rugs brought Jalili and Hakimian together to help save the legacy of the Hadji Jalili workshop. “As an appraiser, I saw what was happening in the antique rug business,” recalls Hakimian. “If you were looking for the right [Hadji Jalili Tabriz] piece, the prices were either high or the condition wasn’t very good.”

Kambiz Jalili and Hakimian knew each other as rug importers. Jalili heads Jalili International and Miri in San Francisco, while Hakimian runs Woven Arts and Global Rug Corp. in New Jersey. But they had much more in common.

Hakimian and Jalili both have engineering degrees and long bloodlines in the rug business. Hakimian’s family traded rugs along the ancient Silk Road, while Kambiz is the great-grandson of Hadji Jalili. With their deep heritage in the business, both have a keen understanding of antique rugs.

“Our knowledge of antique rugs helped us make this collection suc-

The gently aged appearance of the 100-percent Persian wool rugs in the HJR line isn’t achieved with chemicals or other artificial means. Hakimian says the weaving technique and foundation help create the antique appearance.

cessful,” says Hakimian. “Without that, we wouldn’t have been able to do it.”

It also helped Hakimian target Hadji Jalili Tabriz.

“Over the course of the years, I’ve always been encouraged to create one class of carpet that has never been reproduced—something high-end, costing \$100K or more,” says Hakimian. “I wanted to create something as close to the orig-

inal as possible.”

They’ve done it. Their sharp eye for detail from their engineering backgrounds helped the pair develop rugs that mirror the originals. The line was built in painstaking fashion, with Jalili and Hakimian traveling to India to work closely with the factory.

“A typical production process for recreating antique rugs may have ten steps, but our production process has 20,” says Hakimian. “The twists of the yarn, the dyeing, designing texture, finishing, washing—there are so many processes.”

The gently aged appearance of the 100-per-



HJR’s weaving techniques and rug foundations create the line’s antique appearance. Designs #5 (left) and #3A (above) are shown.

cent Persian wool rugs in the HJR line isn’t achieved with chemicals or other artificial means. Hakimian says the weaving technique and foundation help create the antique appearance.

Such attention to detail required flexibility in product development. That led Hakimian to choose to have the rugs made in India rather than Iran, where the originals were produced.

“From my experience, Indian weavers are more manageable and accepting of input,” says Hakimian. “When we made these designs, it took us more than two years to get the samples right. We redid some of the designs eight or nine times. You can’t do that in Iran. They won’t listen.”

With rugs featuring such fine quality and accurate detail, HJR hasn’t had any complaints from its dealers about where the rugs are