**View Full Version : venetian turpentine and mineral spirits?**

**altenburg** 09-18-2006, 12:34 PM

Hi
I have a question, it might be simple/stupid but please bear with me, I am a novice at mixing my own mediums:p ( I am sorry if it has been adressed before, but I have looked through the forum and cannot seem to find an answer:) )

I know that you cannot dilute dammar mediums with mineral/oderless spirits, because the medium will get cloudy. But is the same true for mediums with venetian turpentine as the resin base?? The reason why I ask is because I just read WFMartins tutorial on Grisaile. He recommends that you use a recipe that consists of: 1 part walnut, 1 part venice turpentine, 2 parts oil of spike. I think that it sounds interesting and because of my endless need to experiment I would like to try it. I only have a small problem tough, I am allergic to oil of spike:crying: So could I replace this with another thinner? Perhaps mineral spirits (because of the absence of Dammar)?

Thanks:)
xxx
Anja

**rroberts** 09-18-2006, 01:23 PM

For the sake of clarity, it's called VENICE Turpentine, not "venetian". It is collected from larch trees, is a viscous liquid resin, and is more properly a balsam.

If you don't have an allergy to Pure Gum Spirits Of Turpentine, you can safely substitute it for Oil Of Spike Lavender. As for other solvents, the best thing to do is try it and see ... make only a small amount at first.

**6Lines** 09-18-2006, 03:06 PM

VENICE Turpentine
Where do you get it? Who sells it?

**turlogh** 09-18-2006, 03:22 PM

You can get it in art stores. You can also get it, much more cheaply, at a tack shop (on the order of $8.00 per pint). It's used in the treatment of horse's hooves.

**rroberts** 09-18-2006, 03:26 PM

Where do you get it? Who sells it?

If you want to pay art store prices:

A good local art store such as Pearl, Blick, etc.
Jerrys ArtaRama (http://www.jerrysartarama.com/art-supply-stores/online/5179)
Rex Art (http://www.rexart.com/product9576.html)
Dick Blick (http://www.dickblick.com/zz015/65q/)

Venice Turpentine is also a common item for use on horses' hooves. At a local tack supply, you can buy the same thing much cheaper. Or look it up online.

**dbclemons** 09-18-2006, 03:45 PM

The last can I got was from Williamsburg. Shiva/Richeson also makes one, but I'm not sure if it's genuine larch. It's also used as a treatment for horse hooves, but I don't know if that's been adulterated somehow.

I've used OMS for thinning Canadian Balsam, but not Venice Turpentine. Unfortunately, I don't have any on hand to test out.

**altenburg** 09-19-2006, 07:40 AM

Hi again :wave:
thanks for the info, I really appreciate it:)

I just wanted to note me calling it venetian turpentine, was a slip of the tounge so to speak:p but a logical slip none the less, because it is actually called "venetian turpentine" here in Denmark, i do not know why but it is:rolleyes:

[quote=rroberts]For the sake of clarity, it's called VENICE Turpentine, not "venetian". It is collected from larch trees, is a viscous liquid resin, and is more properly a balsam.
[quote]

xxx
Anja

**turlogh** 09-19-2006, 10:19 AM

A small point of useless trivia: the reason it's called "Venice" turpentine is because it derrives from the Middle English word "vernice," which means "varnish." Over time, "vernice" transmorgrified into "Venice" (which everyone capitalizes because it's also the English word for the city the Italians call Venizia).

**dbclemons** 09-19-2006, 11:54 AM

Huh, that's interesting. I'd always heard the "venice" was from Venice, Austria. (http://apps.webcreate.com/ecom/catalog/product_specific.cfm?ClientID=15&ProductID=25745)

**rroberts** 09-19-2006, 05:37 PM

Huh, that's interesting. I'd always heard the "venice" was from Venice, Austria. (http://apps.webcreate.com/ecom/catalog/product_specific.cfm?ClientID=15&ProductID=25745)

Dave (turlogh) is right -- what you call it really is useless trivia. The important thing to learn is how to use it.

**kit02** 03-09-2007, 02:14 PM

Hi,
I know this post is a bit old but I had a question... I have been trying to figure out of there is a difference between venice and venetian turpentine and according to the thread there is, right?

If you want to pay art store prices:

A good local art store such as Pearl, Blick, etc.
Jerrys ArtaRama
Rex Art
Dick Blick

But this dick blick link takes you to Venetian Turpentine - dick blick doesn't even sell venice turp. So is it the same thing or no?

Thanks!
Kim

**georgeoh** 03-09-2007, 11:37 PM

I have been trying to figure out of there is a difference between venice and venetian turpentine and according to the thread there is, right?Maimeri Venetian Turpentine appears to be Venice Turpentine (91%) in white spirits, so it is basically the same thing as Venice Turpentine only with a little mineral spirits, which also answers Anja's original question:

...could I replace this with another thinner? Perhaps mineral spirits (because of the absence of Dammar)?Yes, and for the simple reason that Venice Turpentine already contains a certain amount of essential oil, which is easily soluble in mineral spirits.

**bjr001** 03-10-2007, 12:18 PM

If you search the web for "Venice Turpentine" you will mostly encounter tack stores. I've looked at a few of these tack websites that sell Venice turpentine and found their website says this product is no longer available. I called one place I found that still had Venice turpentine listed on their website only to be told the product had been discontinued.

This is also true if you search online art stores for "Venice Turpentine". You will encounter no results; mostly. However, if you use "Venetian Turpentine" your search results for the web and online art stores will reveal the product.

http://rochesterartsupply.com/cgistore/store.cgi?page=/new/product.html&setup=1&ida=4947&idp=4933&his=0%7C3%7C4933&cart_id=_B23wJhCnhAxcYJa5.716

http://www.misterart.com/store/view/001/group_id/4001/Sennelier-Venetian-Turpentine.htm

http://www.sinopia.com/index.asp?PageAction=VIEWPROD&ProdID=1081

http://www.dickblick.com/zz015/65q/

http://store.studioproducts.com/product.php?productid=16133&cat=0&page=1&featured

**kit02** 03-12-2007, 08:38 PM

Thanks everyone!

One more question.... is venice turpentine (or venetian) different from regular turpentine?

**georgeoh** 03-13-2007, 12:49 AM

One more question... is venice turpentine (or venetian) different from regular turpentine?Yes and no.

Venice turpentine is the thick viscous exudation from the European larch tree, Larix decidua (Larix europaea), and consists of 63% resinous acids, 20% terpenes and 14% resins.

It is a yellowish or greenish liquid of honey-like consistency, obtained by boring holes into the center of the wood and dipping the liquid out as it accumulates. It has a sweet, citrus-like odor. It received its name from having formerly been almost entirely distributed from Venice. It contains from 18 to 25% of turpentine spirits (terpenes). One part of Venice turpentine dissolves in three parts of alcohol, is almost entirely soluble in mineral spirits with the separation of a light flocculent.

Genuine Venice turpentine is comparatively scarce today, most of it being a brown liquid made by dissolving gum rosin in turpentine spirits or by mixing a small amount of larch balsam with gum rosin and turpentine spirits to make it less expensive. It is doubtful that the Venice turpentine available from most suppliers today is really the exudation of the European larch tree, but rather is a mixture of turpentine spirits and gum rosin.

Gum spirits of turpentine is manufactured by steam distilling the exudation of various species of pine trees. In summary, genuine Venice turpentine is different from gum spirits of turpentine, but today the products labeled Venice turpentine is more than likely closer to being a mixture of gum spirits of turpentine and gum rosin.

For more information on this subject, please see the extensive information I posted in the thread:
Gum Turpentine (http://www.wetcanvas.com/forums/showthread.php?t=397769&highlight=Turpentine)

**gunzorro** 03-13-2007, 02:14 AM

George -- I think you should check what is out there. The Farnham's brand I purchased in a tack shop was golden, not brownish or dark in any way. It was very slightly different color than my Maimeri Venice Turp. They both had the same odor, which did not smell of turpentine. They both dried over the same time period, which was quite slow -- a couple weeks on a thick application. And they both mixed into paints the same.
I'm not a chemist, but the appearance, smell and working qualities were near identical.

**georgeoh** 03-13-2007, 02:24 AM

I think you should check what is out there.You may be correct about the brands you wrote about in your reply to this thread. I earlier wrote that it is doubtful that most items labeled "Venice turpentine" is genuine, but that does not mean it is not available. We have purchased Venice turpentine from several suppliers and have been testing them. We did not purchase Venice turpentine from Farnham or Maimeri, but we will do so at some time in the future. In the meanwhile, we recently purchased Venice turpentine from the source in Europe and expect to receive our shipment within the next month.

**bjr001** 03-16-2007, 11:57 PM

I found a tact store online that has distributors in about 3 dozen US states including Canada, Australia and New Zealand. They claim their Venetian turp is made from real Larch Tree Rosin. The manufactures name is Hawthorne. It is sold in pint and 1/2 pint sizes cans. The 1/2 pint size includes a brush applicator and cost $10.00. The stuff is clean. No impurities in the turp.

The photo shows the Venetian turp can and a small glass bottle. I poured a little Venetian turp into the glass bottle to show its light golden/amber color. Any flaws shown in the glass bottle are on the bottle itself not the Venetian turp. It has a turpentine odor and is rather viscous. One odd thing, it has an expiration date on the can. Maybe its because it is marketed as a medical remedy for horses. Or is it something else?

Also, the place I went to also sells gum spirits of distilled turpentine. It cost less then $7.00 for a quart. Click on the "suppliers" link on their web site to see the states/countries then on the state/country to see suppliers in your area.

http://www.premierequinehealth.com/pvt.htm

**Johnnie** 03-18-2007, 04:02 PM

I use the above with my paints and the gloss that comes from using it is awsome. Just accents the colours so much

Only thing I find with using it it takes a while to dry..

Anyone else on here find that the drying time with "Vernice Turps" is fairly long???

My can says in was canned in Indiana.. Where is yours canned at??

Johnnie

**georgeoh** 03-18-2007, 04:51 PM

Not to ruin anyone's Venice turpentine high but if you examine the MSDS for Farnam Venice turpentine it contains the following components:
Turpentine CAS No. 9005-90-7 20.0 %
Petroleum oil (mist of fumes) (No CAS No. listed) 15.0 %

The CAS No. 9005-90-7 designates gum spirits of turpentine, which is not Venice turpentine. And, of course, we all know that petroleum oil is not Venice turpentine. So where's the Venice turpentine? (Sounds strangely like a familiar TV commercial of the 1980s.) The MSDS does not list the other 65%, but even if we assume it is genuine Venice turpentine, the entire product is not pure Venice turpentine. It is also quite possible that the other 65% is rosin or colophony, because this ingredient does not have to be listed on MSDS. I could not locate the MSDS for Hawthorne Venice turpentine, but there is no reason to believe it is different from the Farnam brand. The price alone of these products tells me that it is not pure Venice turpentine, if it is at all. Venice turpentine from sources in Europe is very expensive.

The golden color of these products does not determine whether or not it is Venice turpentine with any certainty, because certain grades of rosin or colophony are very light in color. For example, the WW grade of rosin, which is an acroynm for "Water White," is a pale amber colored product. Mixed with gum spirits of turpentine and petroleum solvent it would appear like in color, and it would also smell like gum spirits of turpentine, but remember that pure Venice turpentine has a distinct citron smell.

Folks, it is pays to research the facts a little better.

**gunzorro** 03-18-2007, 05:18 PM

George, that's why you are paid the big bucks to act as WC consultant! :)
So, despite the handling and drying and appearance, it may not be genuine! But (and not just to salve my pride!), is there any reason not to use the Farnham's as if it were genuine Venice Turps? I am curious about the 65% of something -- that is 2/3 of the liquid.
Thanks for the research and info. Jim

**georgeoh** 03-18-2007, 06:44 PM

So, despite the handling and drying and appearance, it may not be genuine!It may handle similarly to Venice turpentine, but how would you know unless you were able to compare it to the genuine article? I will try to get my hands on these products in the near future to test them for handling and performance in mediums and varnishes.

But (and not just to salve my pride!), is there any reason not to use the Farnham's as if it were genuine Venice Turps?If Farnam Venice Turpentine is indeed composed of gum rosin or colophony, it will be subject to more yellowing than genuine Venice turpentine. Gum rosin was used as a plasticizer in varnishes from medieval times to the early 20th century, and it was also used as an adulterant to lower the cost of varnishes, especially in the last couple of centuries. Today, gum rosin is used to make alkyd resins among other materials. Here are the comparative results of artificial ageing in Xenon light (daylight simulation) of various natural resins:

"Colophony is the strongest yellowing diterpenoid; its yellowness index reaches a value of 73 after only 96 hours ageing. Copal and sandarac yellow more slowly; their yellowness indices reach values of 66 and 48 after 768 hours. Amber and venice turpentine yellow only slightly, with values not higher than 24 after 768 hours. The triterpenoids mastic and dammar yellow strongly. Elemi starts yellowing slowly, but after 96 hours the yellowness index increases rapidly."

"The yellowness index of shellac decreases on aging. The reason for this may be the bleaching of the red component (lactic acid) by the irradiation."

"In summary, the most pronounced observations are the strong yellowing of colophony, the minimal yellowing of venice turpentine, the intermediate yellowing of sandarac and the stability of elemi only during the first 96 hours of ageing."

Reference
Hesters, Raymond, Henk van Keulen and Wilma G. T. Roelofs. "Natural resins, artificially aged in steps." In Contributions to Conservation: Research in Conservation at the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage. Norman H. Tennent, Jaap A. Mosk, Editors. James & James.

**Johnnie** 03-19-2007, 09:15 AM

I had found this a long time ago on internet.. Wish I knew who wrote it to give them credit..
I thought this might be of interest to some.

Johnnie

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ADDING TACK AND BODY TO YOUR INK

Tackiness in ink helps preventing tinting, the biggest problem with ink in waterless lithography. In my very early research into waterless litho I published the use of Venice turpentine to increase tack. Since Venice turpentine is considered to be expensive and hard to find, damar varnish is an alternative. While Venice turpentine is very slow in drying, damar dries too fast for printing. I have experimented mixing them with litho “body gum”; it is very viscous already and has very little greasiness, which we don’t want in our ink. While regular epoxy hardeners are of a great help, I have found that the stickiness of Venice turpentine works very well and more in line with ink binding medium.

I have found great differences in viscosity of body gums. Made by the same manufacturer, batches years apart have no resemblance to one another. My early experience displayed an opaque yellowish very thick material with little tack. A can produced in 1996 was clear and not as thick. It was much too loose, more like lower numbered varnishes and very long in drying. This is the one I used in my tack mixture because I had not opened the later can I bought as a back up. A can made in 2000 is about the right consistency for adding body and tack to some ink.

Venice Turpentine sold for horses hoves seems to be the same as the artists material I used for making glazing medium in oil painting. The are white nodules at the bottom of a can that has been sitting around for a long time and has to be heated to intergrate the material back into solution.
The price of Venice turpentine from art stores can be exorbitant so making this modifier seemed out of the question. After much effort I was able to find Venice turpentine from an outlet dealing with horses. Just like my art Venice turpentine, it had white crystal at the bottom that had to be heated and mixed into the rest. On cooling, the liquid had much more viscosity. The crystals must be the resin that remains after the volatile component evaporates. I cannot see any difference in the two materials and have not been able to find any literature on this question. On my last inquiry over the internet, I found many art stores now selling Venice turpentine at a very reasonable price compared to some other art stores.

If you cannot get Venice turpentine then the first hurdle is to dissolve the damar lumps in turpentine as they are not affected by hydrocarbons. You may try citrus thinner, known a d’lemolene, but it is expensive and hard to find in pure form. It has an orange scent and is less obnoxious than turpentine for some. Suspend the damar lumps in the solvent by putting them in a piece of cheesecloth first. As the material dissolves, it will flow from the base of the wrapping and sink to the bottom of the vessel. Particles of bark will stay in the cheesecloth.
Diluted damar varnish is being thickened by allowing the common turpentine to evaporate in an opened container. Stir it every time you go by to speed the evaporation process. By adding body gum, the thick modifier will not dry too fast on the slab to make a decent tacky modifier. Venice turpentine is a wonderful addition if you only have very little of it.

You need to get a very viscous solution, so it is best to dissolve the damar and later evaporate the turpentine. I used about two time the volume of the damar with one of turpentine and left it for a couple of days, covered with plastic to prevent evaporation at this point. After removing the cheesecloth, I did add about 10% Venice turpentine to the volume of the damar; but I have plenty of it from my early oil painting days. Then I added some body gum and stirred it in.

Heat can be used to melt the damar lumps into hot varnish. This might depend on the amount of debris in the crystals as these will come up in light colors as dark specks. An ordinary hot plate with good heat control is fine for heating the varnish to a high enough temperature to incorporate the damar. First crush the crystals into a fine powder as this speeds up the melting and merger of the two medium. After the varnish is hot, sprinkle small amounts of damar on top as you stir the liquid. Make sure no clumps form as these will take a longer time to integrate. Much will depend on the varnish used, but the finished cold mixture should be stiff enough to not spread out on the ink slab.

This is just Venice Turpentine and body gum that has been heated to thoroughly mix the two materials. When it cools, it will be very thick and tacky, making it a perfect modifier for most inks. Just a touch is needed to reduce any tinting taking place on the plate. It also retards drying of ink on the paper, helping you if you happen to be using ink with commercial driers. The heater is a 200 Watt unit meant to attach it to a motor block in cold weather by the magnet within it. A very handy and safe way to heat small amounts of liquids.
It is difficult to give the exact proportions as I adjusted my solution as I tried to work out a good thick tacky mixture. After I felt the proportions might be about right, I poured the mix into a bowl with a large surface to allow the turpentine to evaporate. I stirred the mix every time I passed by and allowed it to get much thicker than honey. This was put into a container and I use it to increase tack on problem inks. It works very well when added to reds, oranges and yellows. These are prone to tint and by adding a small amount of the Venice turpentine, damar mixture, plus some epoxy hardener, I have better control of the ink. I can add more body gum or Venice turpentine to get the right results. I have found that epoxy hardener reacts with the mixture to produce very viscous and tacky additive but I prefer to use them separately as I incorporate the modifier into ink.

This shows that materials are not always the same from batch to batch so I have only given you the principals of how to make tacky modifiers. With the four compounds you should be able to make your own tacky modifier for easier editioning. A small batch should last you for a long time.

**georgeoh** 03-19-2007, 01:57 PM

Johnnie, although I would disagree with a few points, the author obviously has experience with these materials and it is interesting if you are making printing ink.

**bjr001** 03-19-2007, 09:04 PM

I contacted Hawthrone Products on their Venice Turpentine. They supplied me with their Material Safety Data Sheet. Section II HAZARDOUS INGREDIENTS INDENTITY INFORMATION states:

Hazardous Turpentine Mineral oil
Components 9005-90-7 8012-95-1
CAS no: xxxxxxxx xxxxxx
EC no. 100 ppm 5 mg/m3
OSHA PEL 100 ppm 5 mg/m3
ACGIH TLV-TWA

I can't make heads or tails what percentage the components are of the total. Attached is the MSDS.

**georgeoh** 03-19-2007, 10:36 PM

The MSDS of the Hawthorne Venice turpentine does not disclose the proportions of the ingredients. The identified components in the Hawthorne Products Venice Turpentine are identical to the Farnam Venice Turpentine, which is not surprising because their products are probably from the same source.

**Johnnie** 03-19-2007, 11:22 PM

Yes George your right.
BUT

Ink is ink and paint is paint. Ink has pigment and paint has pigment. The ink fluid is the carrier to carry the pigment as in paint, the oil, water, acrylic emulsion is the carrier..

So although as you say that article is interesting if making ink.. It is also interesting if making paint..

Pigment is Pigment..

Johnnie

**bjr001** 03-20-2007, 12:04 AM

Is it normal that a MSDS does not list the quantity of the hazardous components? Is there any record/proof that the material used by the ancients wasn't "cut" in some manner. After all, people who have used this product from these tack stores have achieved the results. I'm in the process of obtaining MSDS from the legitimate sources (art supply stores) to see what their stuff is made of.

Thanks for your input.

**georgeoh** 03-20-2007, 12:45 AM

Pigment is Pigment...Parts are parts, too.

Tell me why you found the article interesting from a painter's viewpoint, and how it can be applied to painting or the discussion of this thread? Afterall I may have missed something you found valuable.

**georgeoh** 03-20-2007, 02:11 AM

Is it normal that a MSDS does not list the quantity of the hazardous components?It is common practice for manufacturers not to list the proportion of ingredients in their products.

Is there any record/proof that the material used by the ancients wasn't "cut" in some manner?There are records of the "ancients" (I am not sure what time period this refers to) adulterating artists' materials, but one must remember that these companies, Hawthorne and Farnam, are not making artists' materials. They are making products for horses, so are they adulterating the material? It is a matter of whether the use of gum rosin, gum spirits of turpentine and petroleum solvent mixture is considered unsuitable for their application. However, if your question infers that perhaps Venice turpentine has always been adulterated through art history, and so if it has, why should it matter now? A reasonable question, but if yellowing bothers you than you may want to reconsider using gum rosin in your medium.

**Termini.** 01-06-2008, 12:26 PM

It is common practice for manufacturers not to list the proportion of ingredients in their products.

There are records of the "ancients" (I am not sure what time period this refers to) adulterating artists' materials, but one must remember that these companies, Hawthorne and Farnam, are not making artists' materials. They are making products for horses, so are they adulterating the material? It is a matter of whether the use of gum rosin, gum spirits of turpentine and petroleum solvent mixture is considered unsuitable for their application. However, if your question infers that perhaps Venice turpentine has always been adulterated through art history, and so if it has, why should it matter now? A reasonable question, but if yellowing bothers you than you may want to reconsider using gum rosin in your medium.

I know that this is an old thread, but thought that I would post on it, for the sake of anyone who does a search related to VT from tack shops. Several years ago, I contacted Farnam, to inquire about the VT they sell. At that time, I was told that the product they sold had larch turpentine in it. Later, I noticed the MSDS sheet on the internet, from this brand, and it as you said above indicated that the Farnam brand was "immitation venice turpentine," and an indication that they are no longer makingthis product. I was astounded, so I called them again, and requested information on this. I subsequently received a call back from a representative, who informed me that the Farnam Venice Turpentine is an "immitation venice turpentine," and that they are no longer carrying it. Turns out that they didn't make it, but purchased it from a manufacturer. I asked the representative if in fact the Farnam VT had been recently reformulated, and if it had ever been based on actual larch turpentine, and the representative stated that it had not been recently reformulated, and that it had not ever been based on larch turpentine. The representative subsequently apologized for the mix up. I thanked them for their time and efforts. So there we have it.

Based on the ingredients listed, and the crystals in the bottom of the can, it makes me wonder if the immitation product is based on a turpene varnish, utilizing polymerized gum spirits of turpentine, in a hair raising hellish manufacture process, involving careful control of dangerous peroxide formation, or if it is simply the addition of rosin, which is the modern day substitute for turp varnishes. Most likely the later. Nevertheless, I wouldn't use this or any of the VT products found in tack shops in my work. I tried them in the past on a few experimental pieces, and noted no significant special effect, now I know.

Jim.

**georgeoh** 01-08-2008, 12:37 AM

The product is based on hydrocarbon solvent and colophony (rosin) and has been for some time.

**Termini.** 01-08-2008, 01:49 AM

The product is based on hydrocarbon solvent and colophony (rosin) and has been for some time.

Apparently, it always has been.

**gunzorro** 01-08-2008, 02:30 AM

George -- Can you tell us what problems, if any, this imitation VT would pose for painting, especially if mixed with stand oil?

**matthewstiles** 01-08-2008, 06:31 PM

To my knowledge colophony yellows quite badly.

**georgeoh** 01-08-2008, 06:41 PM

George -- Can you tell us what problems, if any, this imitation VT would pose for painting, especially if mixed with stand oil?

Colophony yellows although gum ester made from colophony does not. Colophony is also susceptible to the action of solvents even after it has set and embrittlement.

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