

Notes on Painting Your Pavilion

- Most pavilions seen in period imagery are primary colors -- blue (most popular), red, black, etc.
- A little paint goes a long way. Think of accents, not of coating your entire pavilion in paint.
- Browse period imagery for inspiration. We've seen geometric motifs, coats of arms, gothic-style arches, and rays.
- Allow your design to echo the lines of your pavilion, as our ancestors did, for the best effect. You'll want to focus on your vertical seams.
- Always test your paint on a scrap piece of canvas first. Is it still water-resistant? Does it smudge if rubbed after 24 hours?
- Don't worry if your paint lines aren't as sharp as you'd like. At 10 or more feet away, no one will ever notice!

Many thanks to Countess Catarina deBruyn for sharing her experience and tips on pavilion painting.

More resources for painting pavilions:

<http://www.currentmiddleages.org/tents/pavgeneral.htm>

<http://midtown.net/dragonwing/col9809.htm>

About the Authors, Contact Details, and Copyright Notice



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Painting Your Pavilion

by Geneveva and Gregor

When we bought our new oval marquee pavilion from Panther Pavilions, we thought, 'This is the bees knees!'. Then we set it up at Lilies War and thought, 'This is a really white, plain pavilion!' Our pavilions prior to this were red and white striped, which we really enjoyed. So set decided it was time to embark on our first pavilion painting project. So in 2016 we painted the top of our pavilion red and gold. We haven't yet decided if we're going to paint the walls yet or not. We used 16th c. and other period sources as the inspiration for our design choices (see next page).

Here's a photo of our painted pavilion in 2017 (its second season):



OUR MAIN DESIGN INSPIRATION



1520 German Woodcut of a Pavilion in Basel

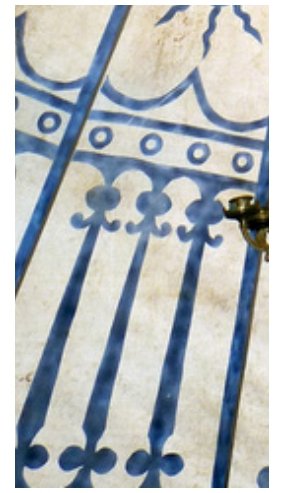
Examples of red and white striped pavilions....



Example of a pavilion with gold



Plus shields and stylized swords on pavilions....



HOW WE PAINTED OUR PAVILION

For the red, we used exterior acrylic paint with extra pigment from Lowe's. We requested the lowest quality paint that could be mixed with the extra pigment levels. For the gold, we used Martha Stewart Multi-Surface Paint because it is rated for use outside and is weather resistant. We tested both the red and gold paint on a scrap of canvas and found no issues at all. We then make cardboard stencils of our pattern -- the crosshatching, arches, swords, and ovals. Once that was all done, we layed the pavilion out on two 6-foot tables placed side-by-side and marked our design on the canvas using our stencils and a pencil. We used regular brushes and allowed the paint to dry at least 12 hours before moving the canvas (we painted in our air conditioned basement). We did not heat set the paint. We did not have good luck with painters tape -- instead, we relied on the stiff edge of good brushes to get strong, straight lines. It took us 8 days to paint the top of our 22' x 13' oval marquee pavilion, working about 4-6 hours per day--so that's approximately 24-32 hours of work. Note that our pavilion is made with 13 oz. flame-retardant Sunforger canvas.