



Ethnic Dong women sew blouses at Xiaohuang village in Guizhou province. Some Dong women use sewing machines for the purpose.



Sewing a Dong blouse, the traditional way.



A Dong woman uses scissors to cut handmade cloth to make blouses at Xiaohuang village, Guizhou province.

THE DYING ART OF DONG

THE DONG ETHNIC GROUP LIVES IN GUIZHOU PROVINCE AND IS KNOWN FOR ITS TRADITIONAL CULTURE DATING

back to thousands of years, with the handmade Dong blouse believed to be the epitome of traditional art. At the beginning of autumn, Dong women start making the special cloth needed to make Dong blouses. Starting by picking cotton, spinning it into yarn, weaving, dyeing and hammering the cloth, they take about 11 months to complete the process, including sewing and embroidery, all of which is done by hand. But since the complicated process scares away young girls, only a few can carry on the tradition, making it an almost lost art.



A Dong woman dyes cloth at Xiaohuang village, Guizhou province. The cloth will be ready to make blouses after undergoing multiple dyeing over days.

PHOTOS BY LAI XINLIN / FOR CHINA DAILY



Weaving a fabric on a loom. All procedures for making Dong blouses are traditionally done by hand.



A Dong woman spins cotton into yarn at her home in Zhanli village, Guizhou province, in February.