

SWEDISH RUDDLE

Let's continue the tradition!

It is entirely possible that everyone has at least once been carried away by the sight of tiny red houses with white window cases in coastal villages.



In old times, red color meant luxuriance. By painting their wooden houses red, people demonstrated their high social status. Ruddle (earth paint), was used for painting external facades in Sweden and Finland as early as in the 1500s. In the 1600s, only churches and town halls were painted with ruddle. In the 1700s, they began to use it for manors and cities.

Thus it became popular to build houses of red brick. Town mayors would order groups of houses to be painted red in the main streets of town before the arrival of some kind of honorable visitor. In the 20th century, red houses with white window cases became the symbol of Sweden, and the trend of using red paint reached its peak.

This trend came to Estonia from Scandinavia along with the Swedish domination; however, it only took root on the islands and in the western part of the country. They usually painted all the farmstead houses "all together" with cheap "boiled paint" (ruddle). Gathering together to use cheap paint helped to save money and guaranteed good neighborly relations and it was also a reason to have fun.

The industrial production of the earth paint in Sweden began in the 19th century and has continued thus far. Ever since, the recipe for preparing earth boiled paint has similar to the ancient recipe: rye or wheat flour paste, resin and ruddle which gave painted surfaces a thick red color. The paint shade depends on the heating temperature. Ancient ruddle was cooked with stoves. The process of boiling it was similar to bread stoves that were stoked with wood. That's why it was hard to heat stove up to a high temperature. In the 1900s, they gradually managed to make the shade of ruddle darker.

Swedish ruddle is not only cheap and ecologically clean, it also has notable painting qualities as well: good covering capacity, and absolute opacity. It can be diluted with water, and it is easily applied to wooden surfaces.

The painting procedure is as follows:

Clean paint spalling and lichen from old surfaces painted with ruddle with a wire brush or any harsh brush. After that, remove dirt and drive in the prominent nails. Remove mold with a brush or a scraper, then apply BIOTOL, rinse with water and let it dry.

Replace damaged or rotten boards with new ones. These boards will stand out against the old shade and seem lighter, but the colors will blend with each other quite fast.

Swedish red ruddle is best known for painting surfaces with unplanned boards. The paint covers coarse and planned wood. It is not at all suitable for painting greased or fresh planned coniferous boards, nor

can it be used on non-wooden surfaces.-

For painting, it is recommended to use a facade brush with synthetic hair. Painting in bad weather as well as in high humidity or under hot sun is undesirable.

Painting with Swedish red ruddle preserves and keeps the surface looking attractive for a long time. Ruddle is absolutely air permeable; it does not spall, however it does get old, gradually turning into dust. Therefore it is not necessary to paint often. To maintain the decorative and protective properties, repainting with ruddle is recommended every 8-10 years.

Unlike many other affordable paints, Swedish red ruddle is very user-friendly: just clean the old surface from dirt and repaint.

After the war, industrial paints such as latex paints almost overshadowed the ruddle. It was only in the 1970s that good old ruddle deservedly entered a period of flowering.

If our ancestors decorated their houses by painting them with elegant ruddle, why not follow their example and continue the tradition so that our descendants are able to admire beautiful red houses with white elements.

Eskaro Group AB - tradition keeper