

Chinese Lantern Pendant

This beautiful design technique introduces the creation of lacy hollow forms which can be created over natural pods or substances such as cork clay. Finished size depends on pod you choose.



MATERIALS

10 gm Art Clay Syringe with 3 tips

ADDITIONAL TOOLS & SUPPLIES REQUIRED

- ✚ Pod or Cork Clay shaped to form
- ✚ Bamboo skewer or toothpick and Styrofoam block in which to stand pieces up
- ✚ Paint brush, straw, olive oil, fiber blanket, fiber board, programmable kiln, stainless steel brush, rotary tumbler, 2 lbs stainless steel mixed shape shot, jewelry cleaner, 600 grit sandpaper
- ✚ Firing equipment
- ✚ Cord or chain for finished necklace.

Drying Methods - may include hairdryer, oven, or toaster oven set below 250°F, food dehydrator, warming tray. Piece also may be left to dry naturally.

Firing Methods -Electric kiln should be used for all hollow forms. Use of other methods releases smoke from organic burnoff. This may also cause high flame which may melt or warp your piece.

PROCESS

- ✚ Locate a dried pod known as a Chinese Lantern.
- ✚ If you cannot find a natural pod, make the form from Cork Clay. Mold a marble-sized portion into the size and shape of the pod. Flatten sides a bit and add a dimple in the top where the stem would go in a natural pod.
- ✚ Place a toothpick or bamboo skewer into the bottom of the cork clay so you have a handle to work with.
- ✚ Place the pick into the Styrofoam block.
- ✚ Dry thoroughly in a food dehydrator or with other methods (see **Drying Methods**). Cork Clay must be completely dry before adding Art Clay.
- ✚ If using a natural pod, carefully slide the skewer or toothpick into the bottom of the pod.
- ✚ Open syringe and put the green tip securely in place with a twisting motion.
- ✚ Starting at the top of the pod, depress the plunger and allow clay to extrude from the syringe. Using a touch, draw, touch method, touch the tip at the top, and allow the clay to flow to the bottom of the pod and touch again to end. Repeat, following the main veins of the pod.
- ✚ With a moistened paintbrush, tap the lines into place against the pod. You are able to carefully move lines into place at this point.

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- ✚ Change tips to the blue tip. Starting at the top of the pod, extrude syringe in a "squiggly" design, being sure to touch each seam. If the blue syringe portions are not touching the green tip veins, the piece will fall apart during firing.
- ✚ Take a damp paintbrush and gently tap all areas of the syringe work so that they are uniformly touching.
- ✚ Dry thoroughly (see Drying Methods). Carefully remove the skewer, using a twisting motion.
- ✚ If there are any gaps, fill in with a small amount of paste or use additional syringe.
- ✚ For bail, place small straw segment across the top of the pendant. Using the blue tip on your syringe, go back and forth over the straw, connecting to the pendant on each side to build up a secure bail.
- ✚ Tap bail area with moist paintbrush. Use a bit of paste to secure areas where the bail touches the pendant.
- ✚ Dry thoroughly. Remove straw using a twisting motion.
- ✚ Wrap pendant with fiber blanket and fire for 30 minutes at 1200°F for natural pod, or 1472°F for cork clay (see Firing Methods).
- ✚ After firing, remove pendant from fiber blanket and rinse thoroughly to remove ash from within.
- ✚ Brush thoroughly with the stainless steel brush to reveal the fine silver.
- ✚ The best way to polish hollow forms is to use a rotary tumbler with mixed shape stainless steel shot. Fill the tumbler with clear water and a bit of jewelry cleaner without ammonia. (IF YOU ARE IN AN AREA WITH HIGH MINERAL CONTENT, USE BOTTLED WATER!)
- ✚ Securely close tumbler and tumble for one and one-half hours to produce a brilliant shine.
- ✚ Remove piece and rinse thoroughly. Dry with a soft cloth. If any small pieces of shot should be contained inside your pendant, simply shake gently to remove.