

Mountain Girl Bracelet

by Regina Payne

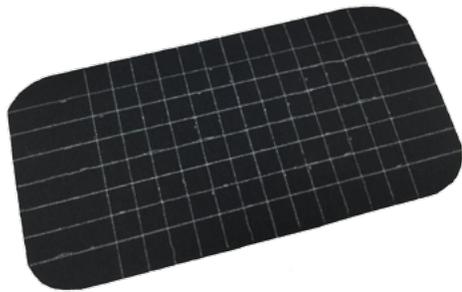
Supply List:

1 50-65mm Marquise Stone	2-3 colors size 11° Seed Beads
2 12-16mm Cabochons or buttons	2-3 colors size 15° Seed Beads
2 10-14mm Cabochons or buttons	1-2 colors, Cylinder beads
6-8 DiscDuo beads	2 Flat Metal Finding
12 – 16 Tila Beads	Button for closure
26 – 32 Half Tila Beads	8x4" Bead Backing
10 inches 2-3mm cupchain	8x4" UltraSuede
12-16 4mm Bicones	

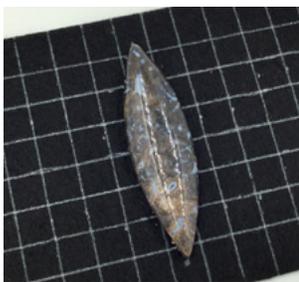


Begin by choosing a cab or stone that measures around 55 to 65mm long. 65mm is around 2" long, but you can go a little smaller if you like something more proportional to your wrist size. I'm using a marquise stone that is around 66mm long, as I love this shape. You can also use something less pointy. I like my stones around 6 to 8mm thick. If you have something less thick, it's ok, we can glue a layer of Lacey's or backing to it and make it thicker.

Thread hint: use the thread of your choice. I've been doubling One-G or nymo so I can match the bead colors. I knot the threads and use microcrystalline wax as I go to achieve good tension. Thinner threads are easy to weave into the underside when you're ending a thread and don't make a thick spot that will show through your backing after you're finished.



This step is key to all of my bead embroidery work. In this style, I'm cutting a piece of Lacey's Stiff Stuff, about 3 1/2 inches by 7 inches. I start by making a series of lines with a white gel pen that begins in the center and are 10mm apart. Both directions and this will assure that your components are always spaced symmetrically as you add them. I tend to always work from the center outward. I like to round off the ends of this base so my threads don't catch as I work.



Also, keep in mind that your long marquise stone will be the widest part of the design. After it is bezeled and edged, we cut a bit away to see the design develop as we stitch. If you think that this is too wide, remember the design continues to decrease in size as we work towards the ends. I decided to make this stone a little thicker. I used E-6000 to glue a bit of Lacey's onto it and then carefully cut flush around the stone. Next I centered this onto my grid using more E-6000.

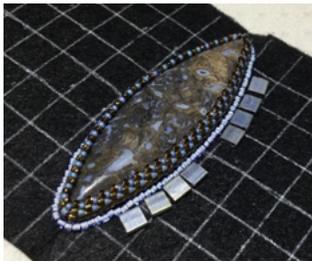


I've bezeled a total of 6 rows of cylinder beads and 2 rows of size 15 beads around the stone. This is done with the backstitch method of placing two beads on at a time around the base, you must have an even number around your stone.

Hint: it can be a little hard to make this fit perfectly so this is what I do to get a great fit. When you're almost all the way around the base row, take a bit of a guess when you reach a point where you have 6 or 8 left to add on. Then put that amount in the thread and just hold it next to the stone. In this way you can see about how many to add. You can sort of space the beads a tiny bit if needed to get the even count. By the time it's all bezeled it will be smooth and even. Don't crowd your beads, stay right next to your stone.



Note: you can use more than one color of delicas and 15s in your bezel. Pair a bit of matte plus shiny in the bezel which usually consists of around 5 or 6 rows of delicas and then 1 or 2 rows of 15s

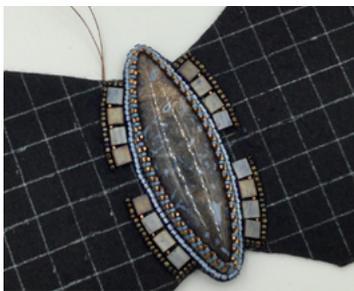


Use size 11 seed beads to surround your center stone. Do this with backstitching. It is helpful to go back through all of the 11s again to fill up the bead holes, making a smoother line. The little details make for a prettier finished piece.

Now you can lay out some tilas, deciding how far down from the tip of the stone you want these to be. Look at the last picture, depending on your stone size you might just want 3 and not 4. You need to leave a small gap at the center stone area that we will fill up with some fringe bits later on. (Keep in mind that we will still edge these tilas on the next step, making the top of the tilas appear closer to the tip of the stone. Leave a little extra space for that step.)

Start at the top part of the design, string up all 4 tilas, lay them where you want them, needle through the base. Tack these down in between tilas next to your 11s. Then position thread at the outer empty hole. Go through all 4 tilas, putting a size 15 in between each to create even spacing. Stitch it down, then tack the thread down in between each tila. I use single thread here so as not to spread the tilas apart when I tack down.

Hint: I prefer matte tilas as they seem to have a richer and more ancient feel to them. The shiny ones don't always look as good.



Edge the tilas from the last step. You can use 11s or some very small square beads like I did in the original designs. Look closely and see how those look, in case you like them. It's helpful to do some contrast here, so it won't "blend" right into your tilas. You want to define them. Next I like to cut away the Lacey's backing near the stitching to get an idea of how this is going to look. But only do this at the very top part! It just helps me visualize the design better to decide on which cabs I'll add in the next step.

I use an assortment of small cabs, buttons, stones, whatever looks cute. 12 to 16mm is a good size to pick. You can bezel these or just edge around them if you pick a button or something with a straight edge. I like the look of a bezel, fancy! I usually use a couple of different colors of delicas and 15s for visual interest. And again, doubled one G waxed with microcrystalline for a nice "grab" to it. Be certain you have a size 13 needle to get through your 15s.



I surrounded the cab from the previous step with small cupchain. If you prefer, use 11s or even 8s. Don't cut the cupchain until you're certain of the right length, as it tends to shorten a bit as you stitch it on. I stitch between each little cup, over the metal base.

Choose a small cab, bead, floral bead or other piece you prefer to place at the spot next to the large center stone. I've used a disc duo which is nice as it has two holes to secure it. I've surrounded this with a few rows of contrasting seed beads in sizes 15 and 11. Contrast looks best here, it makes for a more interesting pattern. You can couch this on or do a backstitch method. And I go through the rows as I finish them. This creates a smoother line.

And I finished up by trimming in a little bit more because I love to see the design take shape as I go. It makes it easier to place on the new things to get a feel for the finished result. Be sure to not cut too close to your stitching and also don't go very far down that curve, as the next steps will come up part way.





Add a cab, stone or bead right against the center of the cupchain. This can be anything you like, around 10 to 14mm is good. If you look at previous pictures of my other finished bracelets you'll see each of these are different. Surround this cab with a couple of rows of 11 and 15 seed beads.



Add half tilas alternating with 15s, set right against the seed beads you just added. Do only that inner hole, making certain to not crowd this. Tack this down with a stitch in between the tilas. At the end of the row position your needle near the start of the outer empty hole of the tilas. Add 1 15, go through the hole, add 2 15s between each tila. Stitch a little loose since we will come back around and do a stitch in between the 2 15s to tack this row down. This makes sure your spacing is nice and even in this tila circle.



Surround this new circle with a row of 11s. Backstitch these and put a small cab at the center point as shown. Go through the row of 11s to make a nice, smooth line.

Add a few rows of seed beads around the small cab or stone from the previous step. Use a combination of 11s and 15s and try to do a bit of contrast if possible or maybe matte next to shiny beads. Use some of the ones from earlier steps to pull the design together. Remember to go through each row again to make a smoother line.

Position the needle to come up at the nearest end next to your line of 11s surrounding the half tilas. You will add a line of cupchain against the 11s, being careful to not crowd these little cups together. Remember to not cut it until you know where it ends. It's hard to fix a gap later on. If you're using single thread, go across the gaps two times for security.



Add 2 or 3 rows of 11s and 15s against the cupchain. Use the backstitch method go through the whole row again when finished. These little details make for a nice look on the finished project. And again, I like to trim the backing away when I've finished this step. Be very certain to not cut really close to the final row. Now we can get a good idea of the final shape and decide how we want to finish off the ends.



Used a small metal finding for this last bit of space left near the ends. I find these in craft stores where they have the hanging bead strands. I like the look of the bronze ones. Be sure to not get anything too thick. If you like, just use another flat cab instead. You want to figure out how much space you need for the proper length now. Leave yourself a one half inch gap when this is wrapped around your wrist. The edging will make this a little longer plus the loop and Button that we add on as well. I've attached this metal piece next to the center of the seed beads attached in the previous step. You tack it down by stitching some seed beads into the holes in the metal piece. Now stitch a few rows of seed

beads in contrasting colors to widen the rounded area from the previous step. Also, look at the closeup picture of the blue bracelet to see how the rows of seed beads here look when they are attached. You can make this wider if you like.

There is just the small area left around the metal bit. Stitch on some more seed beads that have contrasting colors next to each other. Be sure to tack down closely if you're using that method on those outer edges. Trim the backing near your edges.





This is quite an easy and fast step as we are only filling in the gap next to the center stone. I've used some smoky quartz 4mm Swarovski bicones. Fill this little area with several by adding 2 or 3 - 11s, a bicone and a 15. Go back down the bicone and the 11s. Fill up this space by adding at least 7 or 8 bicone stalks. You can add more 11s in the stalk if you want a drapy look or even use small glass florets.



Add a layer of tacky glue but don't make it too heavy, be sure that it's nice and even. Have your ultrasuede backing cut and ready to go.

After you place the glued piece onto the backing, be sure to keep it in a curved shape as you carefully press the parts together, being sure that it is nicely attached. If you press this together while it's completely flat your fit won't hold a curved shape as well after it dries.

As soon as this is attached, I don't trim the ultrasuede yet, place the bracelet on a can or bottle that has a rounded shape, don't go too small with this.

I tie this down securely with some organza ribbon as it has a light weave that lets in lots of air. Let this dry for several hours or overnight and you will wind up with a nice round shape that it easier to put on than something flat and stiff.

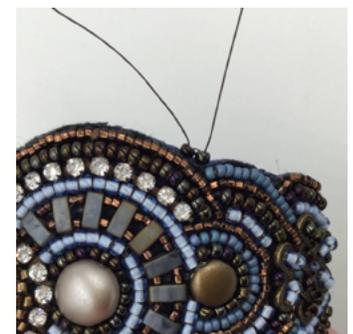


After we unwrap the bracelet we are going to cut away the excess ultrasuede with small, sharp scissors. Try to cut evenly against the backing, don't lean it in. As you can tell, the bracelet has a natural curve to it now and looks very nice.



Start with a basic brick stitch edging but my start is a little different. Two reasons, one - I don't like adding and ending threads in bead embroidery. It's often hard to find a good place to do it. And two - I don't like the little crooked bead at the start until you get all the way around to stitch it down. So this is how I begin the edging...

Cut a long length of fireline 6 or 8 lb. and come up near the edge where you want to start. Pull through until about half of your thread is through. Add - two 11s or 8s if you prefer and stitch a bead length away like you're starting the brick stitch row. Come up through that second bead you added, snugging them next to the edge. Now place a needle on the other thread tail, come up through the wonky leaning bead next to it to straighten it right up. Both threads are exiting the tops of the beads. Continue to brick stitch all around your edging as usual, including the ends.





An optional small detail for the edging: on a long thread, tie a small knot near the end and imbed it inside of your beading somewhere near one end. Come up just before the corner, exiting an 11 on the edge. Whip stitch under the thread between two of the 11s, heading towards the length. Add a 15 and whip stitch between the next two 11s. You'll continue this way except for one thing. Skip adding a 15 at the inner curve you come to. Whip through as usual. This way you won't bunch up the 15s. Don't stitch at the ends of the bracelet, as you'll be adding the loop and button later.

For those unfamiliar - whip stitch is passing your working thread under the existing thread after picking up a bead. The bead hole will end up sitting horizontally rather than vertically along the line. Make sure to choose back to front or front to back as you stitch and stay consistent.



The final step is just a button and a loop closure. This is easier for me to put on and take off instead of a slide clasp or a large snap.



I use doubled thread and tie a small knot. Hide the knot in the bracelet near the end and come out of an edge 11. Depending on the type of button, just add enough 11s to slightly extend the button from the edge. Stitch down into an edge 11, being careful to space as needed. Run through a few beads in the body of the work to really keep it secure and come out of the 11 on the edge again. Reinforce this loop a couple of times. Work some thread through the beading and then end threads.

Repeat this on the other end by just making a loop to fit over your button. If you need more length on the bracelet, add a bigger button. This will require a longer loop which will expand the length.



If you find that your bracelet ends nearly meet, use a couple of small buttons, one on each side of the ends. And make two small loops, coming out before the 11s, so the ends just meet.