

Embroidered Day of the Dead Sugar Skulls Table-mat

Supply list (2 pages)

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These colorful embellished skulls, called Calaveras, are the traditional decoration for Día de Los Muertos – The Day of the Dead festival in Mexico. Held on our ‘All Souls Day’ (November 2), the Day of the Dead celebrates life while honoring the memory of loved ones who have passed. Altars (called Ofrendas) are set up for departed loved ones, and offerings of food, drink, and flowers are placed upon them. In this class, you will appliqué and hand-embroider a table mat decorated with sugar skulls and flowers, on felt or wool. In Mexico, it is traditional to write the name of the person being remembered on the sugar skull. If you will be including this mat on an altar, you can embroider the name (or names) of your departed loved ones you wish to honor. If creating an entire mat seems a daunting task, you can also make sugar skulls into individual ornaments.

Please be courteous to others by arriving for class with the correct supplies. Contact me at 503-631-8806 or helene.m.knott@gmail.com if you have any questions.

A Note to Students: Many students do not realize that once the teacher is paid, the shop offering a class makes little if any income on the class itself. The shop is relying on product sales to continue offering quality classes to you. Therefore, I urge you to patronize this shop when buying your supplies for this class as much as possible and remind you that big chain stores do not offer the variety of classes that the smaller shops do. Keep quilt classes alive by supporting this shop.

Thank you, Helene

Tools/Materials:

- **White or cream colored wool or felt:** Look for a stable felt heavier than the individual ‘craft’ squares. You can also use felted wool. Light-weight felt or looser woven wool can be used if stabilized with a product like Form-Flex. ¼ yard will be enough to make many skulls. **Note:** If you wish to make an embroidered/appliqued table mat, you will also need ½ yard of another fabric. This could be wool or flannel (for a lined mat) or a 14” square of heavy felt in a contrasting color for an unlined mat.
- **Stabilizer: Optional** – ¼ yard of either Form Flex® or Shape Flex® in white. I prefer these two brands to non-woven interfacing as they are 100% cotton and being woven, are easier to push a needle through. To stabilize lightweight felt or wool only.
- **Embroidery Hoop:** 6” or 7” hoop. **Optional** – some embroiderers like to hoop their work, others do not.
- **Freezer paper:** A couple of feet from a roll will be adequate.
- **Scissors:** A pair of utility craft scissors for cutting paper and embroidery/craft scissors, preferably ones with shorter blades to allow for precise cutting and thread snipping on fabric.
- **Chalk marking pencil or Frixion pen:** In a color that will show up on your felt or wool. **Note:** an opaque white gel pen is excellent for marking on dark felt or wool but place your marks carefully where they will be covered with stitching, then marks are permanent.
- **Embroidery floss:** Six strand floss in choice of colors (the more the merrier), pearl cotton, rayon embroidery floss and metallic embroidery threads may also be desirable.
- **Beads and/or sequins (optional):** You can add some bling if you want, or limit the designs to hand embroidered threads.
- **A bead tray (optional – for beading only):** This is a small triangular tray you can put your beads in while working, you can also use a small, shallow, lid from yogurt or a beading mat.

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- **Hand embroidery and fine hand appliqué (or beading) needles:** A package of crewel embroidery needles in assorted sizes will allow you to choose a needle that best suits the floss or thread you are using. For beading, small (size #10) hand appliqué needles work well for most seed beads or you can buy beading needles.
- **Beading thread:** Nymo thread is most commonly used but strong hand quilting thread will also work for many beads. If you intend to use bugle beads you should use Nymo thread as the sharp edges of these beads can cut through regular thread. White Nymo in size B or D would be best.
- **Fiberfil:** A small amount of Fiberfil to stuff the ornament after sewing (for ornaments only).
- **Purple Thang™:** Optional but this little purple tool is very helpful for stuffing the ornaments, a blunt pencil or chopstick will also work. NOTE: It now comes in other colors too.
- Thin ribbon or #3 Pearl Cotton: to make hanging loops.
- **Charms and/or small tassels:** Optional but nice to add to your finished ornament.
- **A book or leaflet guide to simple embroidery stitches (optional):** The handout contains instructions for about a dozen simple stitches but an embroidery guidebook will give you access to far more options.
- **Optional Kits:** The instructor will have a few kits available for those not wanting to assemble their own materials. An ornament kit (felt only) is \$10. There are two versions of the table mat kit, a 'felt' kit is \$20, a 100% wool kit is \$40. The kits include the fabric (felt or wool), stabilizer, and embroidery floss. Students will need to bring all the other tools and supplies

