

# Fine Silver Fiesta

by Carol A. Babineau



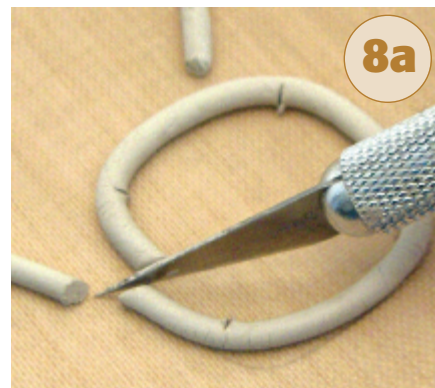
**F**or this project, a plain white, glazed porcelain cabochon is entrapped in Art Clay Silver and detailed with Pebeo paints. The effect shown here is that of a Spanish tile, but the pendant can easily be modified for any taste or style.

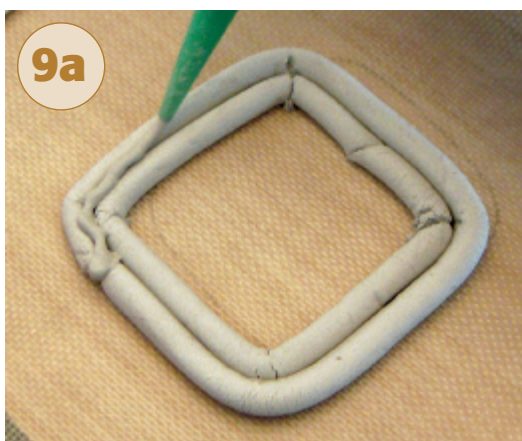
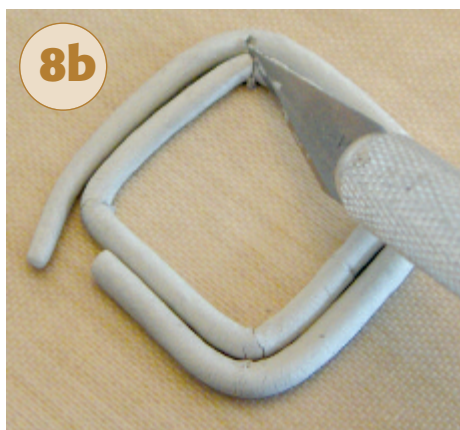
**Step 1** Condition your hands and nonstick surface with olive oil or Badger Balm to keep the clay from sticking to your fingers and to keep the moisture in the clay.

**Step 2** Roll out one-third of the package of Low-Fire Slow

Dry Silver (approximately 6 to 7 grams) with the snake roller to make an even snake. (Optional: Use the empty syringe or an extruder with a small tube disc to extrude the clay.) Immediately put any extra clay back into the package and reseal it.

**Step 3** Wrap the snake around the front of the cabochon in a loose but attractive drape over all corners. The top corner should have a slightly larger opening so a bail can be attached for hanging.





**Step 4** Use syringe type clay to attach the ends together, making a solid seam. Dry completely. Paste as necessary to create an invisible join, and dry the clay.

**Step 5** Remove the clay piece from the cabochon. Seal the back of the joined area with syringe and paste in order for it to be seamless.

**Step 6** Sand and polish to pre-finish this piece well.

**Step 7** Trace the cabochon on a piece of paper and place this tracing on a piece of nonstick work surface.

**Step 8** Using another one-third of the Low-Fire Slow Dry Silver, make another snake and follow the outline of the square so you have a coil inside and outside of the paper out-

## METAL CLAY

### Lesson Plan

#### Objectives

- Learn to attractively set porcelain cabochons in fine silver
- Add color to your designs using low-fire paints
- Use paper type clay and scrapbooking materials to create stylish embellishments

#### Materials:

- 20 grams Art Clay 650 Low-Fire Slow Dry Silver Clay
- 25mm square white glazed porcelain cabochon
- Art Clay Silver Paste
- Art Clay Silver Syringe
- Art Clay Silver Paper Type Clay
- Art Clay Silver Overlay Paste
- Nonstick work surfaces
- Olive oil or Badger Balm as nonstick treatment
- Snake roller, empty syringe for extruding, or Makin's Metal Clay Extruder (optional)
- 600-1200 grit polishing papers or flexible polishing pads
- Mini files
- Paper and pencil
- Craft knife
- Denatured or isopropyl alcohol
- Cotton swab
- Stainless steel or brass brush
- Agate burnisher
- Pebeo Vitrea 160 paints and thinner
- Scrapbook paper punch(es)
- Small brush/brushes for Pebeo paint
- Food dehydrator, hair dryer or mug warmer
- Kiln
- Standard kitchen oven
- Silver polish and polishing cloth

#### For more information about this or any other Art Clay project, or for more information about Art Clay Silver, contact:

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line. Nick the corners with a craft knife to get a good square shape.

**Step 9** Use syringe type clay to fill the space between the two coils for the bottom section. Use a small paintbrush to smooth the seam. Test the fit at the sides and make sure the bottom touches three corners but not the fourth. Trim the top corner to create a place for the bail to fit.

**Step 10** Use paste to cover the trimmed part of the bottom coil so that the fit is smooth. Allow to dry completely.

**Step 11** Sand the corner flat. Roll out a tiny bit of Low-Fire Slow Dry Silver, flatten to 1mm and cut a thin band with the craft knife. Wrap this around the corner to reinforce the joint. Use paste to seal the reinforcing band and allow it to dry. Sand down any sharp areas.

**Step 12** Place the porcelain cabochon on top of the clay that forms the bottom capture. Use files to sand and adjust the place where the bail will be positioned. (It is much easier to adjust this area when it is not connected together.)

**Step 13** Place the top clay piece onto the cabochon, and notice where the top and bottom pieces meet. Paste and

syringe the two sections (top and bottom) together well, using the paintbrush to smooth the seams. Allow the piece to dry again.

**Step 14** Sand and smooth well.

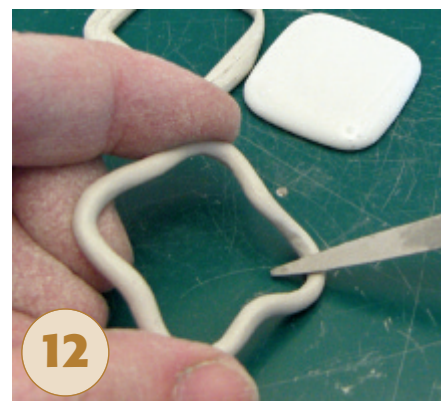
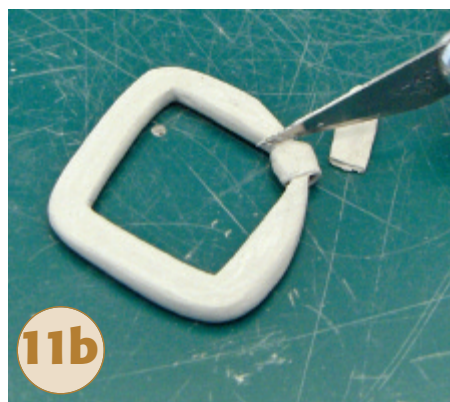
**Step 15** Roll out a tiny bit of Low-Fire Slow Dry Silver and use a straw to punch out three small circles. Paste these small circles onto the three corner joints for reinforcement. Use a punch or stamping tool to decorate them if desired.

**Step 16** Use scrapbooking punches to punch out four moons, four fleurs-de-lis and a small bunch of ovals from the Silver Paper Type. All will be adhered with overlay paste. (These shapes work for this particular design, but any small shape cutter would work well.)

**Step 17** Clean the surface of the porcelain with denatured alcohol to remove any oils or dust residue.

**Step 18** Place a tiny drop of Art Clay Overlay Paste on each cutout and arrange in a tile design on the face of the cabochon.

**Step 19** Allow the pendant to dry completely, then use a toothpick or cotton swab with alcohol to clean up any excess paste on the porcelain cabochon. Any stray clay will also be





fired onto the cabochon, possibly skewing the design's appearance.

**Step 20** Roll out a pea-size piece of Low-Fire Slow Dry Silver into a small snake. Texture one end for the decorative area the chain hangs from, which you can see from the front. For this piece, a small shell was used for the texture. Flatten the non-textured end a bit.

**Step 21** Carefully slide the snake through the top part of the pendant and loop it over a straw. Overlap the ends and use paste to adhere them together.

**Step 22** Paste any cracks and allow the bail to dry.

**Step 23** Sand smooth and paste anything that needs it, but make sure the bail and pendant top stay separate. You want these two pieces to be independent once fired.

**Step 24** Prop the pendant so it will not slump or distort the bail while firing.

**Step 25** Fire kiln unto 1,472 degrees and hold for 30 minutes. Allow the kiln to cool to room temperature before opening the door. When firing, ramp the kiln slowly to avoid thermal shock in the porcelain. It is recommended not to raise

or lower the temperature more than 1,000 degrees per hour (ramp 3 on some pre-programmed kilns.)

**Step 26** Once cool, brush the silver with a stainless steel or brass brush. If a shinier finish is preferred, burnish with agate burnisher.

**Step 27** With a very small brush, take a small amount of Pebeo paint and paint the area(s) you desire. This piece uses green as the background color and red, blue and yellow for accents.

**Step 28** Allow to air dry for 24 hours, then bake in a domestic oven for 40 minutes. Remove and cool.

**Step 29** To protect the silver, polish the piece with jewelry-grade metal polish.

### What did you learn from this project?

- Many accessories and materials can be used to create textures and details in metal clay.
- Adding low-fire colors to an Art Clay Silver project gives additional interest to the piece.
- Use agate burnisher to create a shinier finish if desired. *FA*

