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Designer Nina Cooper explores using charms to create theme necklaces with lots of hidden meaning.

Story Telling With Silver Charms



The idea of collecting charms appeals to many women. Fortunately, there are many ways to use charms in addition to the classic charm bracelet your grandmother wore. Telling stories with charms creates jewelry that is both personal and memorable. Begin by choosing a theme such as a place, hobby or memory. Nina chose a Woodlands theme and gathered an assortment of charms representing the plants and animals of the forest.

If you look closely, you will see several techniques used in this necklace that create a more sophisticated look. First, she used gemstones and leather to add color and texture to the piece. She also added several gold beads and charms for contrast with the silver. In addition, she turned some of the charms into links by wire wrapping additional charms onto open spaces. (*Like the textured tree of life*

pendant with leaf and acorn charms dangling below). Finally, she created a sense of depth and movement by staggering the lengths of each segment of the piece.

Design tips:

- When creating large statement pieces like this necklace, lay out all your elements before wire wrapping them together. Doing this will allow you to move things around before committing.
- Any element in this necklace can be used to create matching earrings.
- You can deconstruct any of the segments in the necklace for a simpler version – try isolating just one branch or one long dangle to create an everyday favorite.

Assembly Notes for the Woodland Necklace:

- When making a necklace with multiple sections, finalize each section before connecting them all together. This will make it easier to wire wrap the charms/dangles on to the individual branches.
- When wire wrapping the leather onto the ends of the necklace, a longer piece of wire will make it easier – that way you have enough wire to hold on to while wrapping.
- Wire wrapping the leather like this has a really polished effect, but it can sometimes be too fussy, so you could consider just knotting the leather onto the jump ring.
- When you're working with charms that have a front and back, double check that all the charms are facing in the right direction before you close the wire wraps.

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Guest:



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