

Estelle's Sautoir

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When Estelle Arpels, the daughter of a gem dealer, married Alfred Van Cleef, the son of a stonecutter, it was the beginning of a love story, like no other, and a great adventure beyond expectation!

Alfred and Estelle had a desire to create something lasting. Their enthusiasm and devoted commitment to the pursuit of beauty led them to found the Maison of Van Cleef & Arpels in 1906. Situated at 22 Place Vendôme in Paris, the Maison was known for understated elegance, refinement, and grace with a taste for innovation. Putting all of these attributes together defined the Maison's spirit of beauty.

A Sautoir is a French term for a long necklace that suspends a tassel or other ornament. This style has developed over time but probably the most popular sautoirs were woven or twisted ropes of pearls suspending a tassel. By the time of the Art Deco period (early 20's to late 30's) the sautoir adapted to the new style by becoming more geometric and incorporating diamonds and other rare gems. Many could be converted to bracelets, shorter necklaces and head ornaments with interchangeable pendants and tassels that could also be suspended from earrings or another necklace.

Estelle's Sautoir evokes the style of a sautoir from the Art Deco period. A supple cubic right angle weave fire polish necklace cord ends with two pearl, fire polish and seed bead tassels. A square cubic right angle weave and embellished pearl component slides up and down the necklace to adjust for placing over the head and adjusting to how the necklace can be worn. The sliding component can be worn close to the base of the throat or low. The tassels can be staggered or even, it's up to you. Either way, this design is beautiful and elegant. I hope that Estelle would agree.

Workshop: This is a one-day workshop

Skill level: Intermediate to advanced

Necklace length: My samples are 33 inches from the end of one tassel to the end of the other tassel.

Techniques:

Cubic right angle weave

Flat and tubular peyote stitch

Herringbone

Netting

Fringing and embellishing techniques

Materials List

11 grams 15° seed beads, main color **(A)**
3 grams 15° seed beads, 1st accent color **(B)**
5 grams Delica beads **(C)**
1 gram 11° seed beads to match the A beads **(D)**
1 gram 11° seed beads to match the B beads **(E)**
1 gram 11° seed beads, accent color **(F)**

16 baby 3mm metal flower spacers in a color to blend with seed beads
57-60 pieces of 3mm Swarovski pearls
3 pieces of 12mm Swarovski pearls
*1800 – 1900 pieces of 2mm Czech fire polish beads **(FP)**. These beads usually come on strands of 50 pieces so you would need 36 – 40 strands.

Nylon beading thread in a color slightly darker than the fire polish beads so that the thread doesn't show as much. My samples are made with One G thread.
Microcrystalline beading wax

*These Fire Polish beads are not the "True 2's" these are called 2mm but they really are about 2.5mm.

Tools

Two size 12 beading needles
One size 13 beading needle for tight spots
Small, sharp scissors and a thread burner
Beading surface of choice
Lighting and magnification (if needed)