

Project Corner #31, June 2002

Challah Cover

7.5"

Rectangle Challah Cover A Print 2

10"

embroideryarts

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in collaboration with:
kolot Jewish Voices
www.kolot.com

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Directions for embroidered Challah Cover Project / June 2002

(This project utilizes letters from our Hebrew lettering set, along with a flower border design from Cactus Punch - see materials list for order information.)

The instructions for this project are provided courtesy of Maria Goldrich and Kolot.com, a forum for sharing Jewish traditions from around the world. The site has links to cookbooks, craft books, history books, etc.

For more information, please visit Kolot at : <http://www.kolot.com>

Step 1. Print the templates and instructions.

These are .pdf files, and require Adobe Acrobat Reader software in order to view and print.

Step 2. Review instructions and materials required (materials list at the end of these instructions).

Step 3. Create a design.

This project is ideal for embroiderers with large hoops.

The design we created is 11 1/2" (290mm) wide. We merged individual letter files together within our embroidery software program, rotating each one slightly to arrange them on a shallow downward arc.

Next, we rotated the Tulip Spray design from Cactus Punch until it created a compatible reverse arch for the right side. This design was then highlighted, copied, and the copy pasted on the right side. The copy was then mirrored horizontally, so that it created the companion to the left side version. Both halves were moved around on screen, with a small gap at the center, until their position seemed smooth with a slight upward arc. All positioning were done visually.

The new design combination is then saved under a new filename.

It would be possible to embroider a similar design in sections, for use in a smaller hoop, but the positioning will be more difficult. The design could be created in smaller sections, and carefully aligned along a guideline drawn on the fabric with a chalk tailors marker, then brushed away after the embroidery is completed.

Step 4. Prepare the Fabric.

If the fabrics can be washed by machine or hand, wash and dry them according to the manufacturers' instructions. Otherwise, proceed without washing the fabric.

Print two copies of each of the template pages, insuring that your printer is set so that each rectangle is 10" (25.5 cm) long. Trim the printed pages along the black outlines, then tape the four sheets together to create a pattern that is 15" (38cm) wide x 20" (51cm) long.

Use this pattern to cut two pieces of fabric: a cover fabric panel, and a lining fabric panel.

Step 5. Hoop the Fabric.

We chose black velvet for our cover fabric, which makes a very special project.

If you have never embroidered on velvet, there are several things to keep in mind.

* Velvet marks easily, and improper hooping will leave a hoop mark that is very difficult to remove. Hoop the fabric with normal tension in the hoop, and don't tug or stretch the fabric tighter after hooping.

* If you have hoops with adjustment screws, loosen the screws to allow the inner hoop to be easily engaged with the outer hoop, then tighten slightly - don't overtighten and crush the velvet.

* Some embroiderers wrap both halves of the hoop with paper bandage tape, available at pharmacies. Another good method for protecting the velvet from marking is to hoop a layer of medium-weight tear-away stabilizer on top of the fabric, then carefully tear away the stabilizer, creating a window close to the edge of the hoop.

* Don't leave the fabric in the hoop any longer than necessary. Unhoop the fabric immediately when the embroidery is finished.

We hooped the velvet along with one layer of medium-weight tear-away stabilizer as a backing.

One layer of Solvy (light-weight water soluble topping), laid on top of the fabric, will give better definition to the edges of the design, and prevent the fibres of the velvet from poking up through the satin stitches.

Step 6. Embroider the design.

Put the hoop on the machine, and insure that the needle is positioned in the center of the horizontal and vertical dimensions of the fabric. (Note: if you are using a smaller hoop, carefully position the needle so that it will correctly place each section of the embroidery along the arc drawn with tailor's chalk.)

The design is oriented so that the width of the design corresponds to the long side of the fabric.

Embroider the design, remove from the hoop, then carefully remove the water-soluble topping, and the tear-away backing, with tweezers.

Step 7. Sew the Challah Cover.

Pin the cover and lining together, with the wrong sides of the fabric facing each other.

Baste the pieces together with stitches that are 1/4" (6mm) away from the edge. Finish the edge with machine-made zigzag stitches or hand-sewn blanket stitches.

Pin the trim to the top surface of the cover. Leave a narrow band of trim hanging over the fabric edge. If the trim is of a type that does not fray easily, bring the end of the trim to just meet the end of the trim that is already pinned down. Cut off the excess trim and pin down the final end. If the trim is of a type that will fray easily, turn 1/4" (0.6cm) of each of the ends under. Cut off the excess trim and pin down the final end.

Sew the trim to the fabric with a seam close to the inside edge of the trim. If you are using a sewing machine, use a straight stitch. To sew it by hand, use a backstitch.

Congratulations! Your project is complete.

Materials

You will need:

1. Cover Fabric - 5/8 yd. (0.6m) cover fabric, at least 35" (89cm) wide
2. Lining Fabric - 5/8 yd. (0.6m) cover fabric, at least 35" (89cm) wide (the lining can complement or contrast with the cover fabric, but the care instructions, such as hand washable or dry clean only, should be compatible)
3. 2 1/4 yd. (2m) trim, at least 5/8" (15mm) wide. (We used a two-color trim, antique gold and red, manufactured by Trimtex, as part of their Carolace line.)
4. Thread to match the lining.
5. Thread to match the trim.

Tulip Spray design for decorative border embellishment:

This design can be purchased online from CACTUS PUNCH. The design is called Tulip Spray, left, product number SIG6229. It is part of a design pack called Antique Linens (Signature 62) with designs by Cindy Losekamp. (Note: this pack contains a design called Tulip Spray, which has both sides joined together. Since we wanted to be able to adjust the angles and placement of the two halves, we only purchased one side of the design, then copied and mirrored it to create our border.)

<http://www.cactuspunch.com>