

For the Love of Gems...



by Patricia Buchanan

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Dedication

For Will, Sherri and Jennifer who fill my life with love and laughter

Preface

Most animals come already adorned with magnificent plumage or amazing fur coats. Not so with humans. We must create our own magnificence, and we've been doing just that since the first ones walked this earth. Using whatever catches our fancy, including flowers, a pretty pebble or two, and even the feathers or fur of other creatures. Today's refined tools and cutting methods have given us such a dazzling array of gemstones we can now almost outshine the sun itself. Gems have become so beautiful, it's difficult to choose just one so they are all my favorites.

My love of crafting began with my grandmother who was always crocheting some lovely thing or another. When she wasn't working, she was "making." She passed that love of "making" along to me, and it's still with me today.

After starting a family, I made my own maternity clothes, pajamas for my children, Halloween costumes, and more than a few stuffed animals. I dabbled in painting with acrylics, scrap booking, calligraphy, ceramics, gardening, wire wrapping and even metalsmithing. While there is effort involved in learning new things, there's also a lot of social interaction that's good for the soul. A great deal of encouragement from teachers and fellow students as well as sharing of techniques that make the "making" easier. There's also lots of laughter because things don't always go as planned - especially when you're first learning. I keep a few of my early "makes" just to remind me of how much I've learned and to be grateful to those who taught me.

After retiring, my husband Dave and I spent several years doing jewelry shows up and down the east coast, reselling sterling and gemstone jewelry. Dave had always wanted to own his own business and I loved jewelry, so we created Bracelets and More, www.braceletstoo.com. There were always bead vendors at the jewelry shows, and that's when I developed a love of beads. There's something comforting and magical about holding an object in your hands that was created by the earth itself and that has existed sometimes for millions of years.

During our time on the road, we made many friends in the wholesale jewelry business, some of whom were lapidarists (experts on precious stones and the art of cutting and shaping them). They were hardworking, talented people who willingly shared their expertise as well as long-standing folklore about gemstones. Some of that folklore is sprinkled throughout this book and is intended for entertainment purposes only.

Creating something beautiful and useful is very satisfying and was especially helpful to me during the covid-19 shutdown. Each of the pieces in this book were made by me and a goodly number were created during the lock down. When in the midst of deciding which beads to use or what type of clasp would work best, all other thoughts and cares melt away.

If you don't have such an outlet in your life, I highly recommend finding one you like. If beading is your choice, to help you get started, many of my suppliers are listed at the end of this book and I've found them to be reliable, trustworthy vendors with quality products. Some offer free tutorials for a variety of projects and then all you have to do is practice.

The internet has allowed me to find fellow artists and vendors all over the world. It's enhanced my appreciation and understanding of many different cultures and provided me with unique beads and clasps which my customers have come to appreciate.

Catalogs are a great sources of inspiration. Study the colors and shapes they use and think about what pleases you. Observe other artists and teachers and consider why you like their work. Then try to incorporate similar elements into your own designs. Above all, be patient with yourself and know that you will usually not be satisfied with most things you create. There will always be something you'll wish you had done differently.

If you plan to sell your product, it's important to know how to photograph your pieces well. I took all the photographs in this book and, while far from professional grade, you'll notice some are better than others. My images improved after I saw a video created by a young man by the name of Luke Ayers. His video demonstrates a simple, effective way to take great photographs without expensive equipment. A link to his video is included in the list of resources at the back of the book.

If you wish to learn actual facts about gemstones, I recommend visiting the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) website. The GIA was established in 1931 and is an independent nonprofit that protects the gem and jewelry buying public through research, education and laboratory services. They can be found at www.gia.edu.

I invite you to visit www.SRAJD.com (Self-Representing Artists in jewelry Design) to join a group of amazing artists who support and encourage one another.



Mexican Fire Agate Necklace with Honey Jade
and Black Zircon Accents

Magnetic clasp by Nina Designs

Photo by Author

Agate is said to transform negative energy into positive energy and improve concentration and analytical abilities. It's a soothing, calming gemstone that heals inner anger and helps in strengthening relationships. Legend has it that Agate is one of the most powerful good luck stones.

Owls are considered to be symbols of wisdom and knowledge..



Rare Cheetah Agate with Citrine and Black
Onyx Accents

Photo by Author

"Life is too short to wear boring jewelry." Patricia Buchanan



Agate Beaded Necklace with Lamp work Focal, Handcrafted
Bail and Clasp

Small jewelry tag by The Charm Factory

Lamp work Owl Bead by glass artist, Laila Strazdina

Photos by Author



Apatite

*enhances one's insight,
creativity and
learning abilities.*

*Owls are
considered to be
symbols of wisdom
and knowledge..*



Apatite Beaded Necklace with Lamp work Focal
Lamp work Owl bead by glass artist, Viktorija Vait
Photo by Author

"Beauty begins the moment you decide to be yourself." Coco Chanel

Amazonite is said to be a stone of truth, honor, communication, and integrity. It's also thought by some to enhance intuition, creativity and intellect.



Amazonite Necklace with Accents of Fossilized Agate, Aquamarine, Aventurine, and Sterling Silver

Photo by Author



Amazonite Pendant Necklace with Freshwater Pearl

Private collection

Photo by Author



Amazonite Bracelet with Sterling Silver Accents

Photo by Author

Aquamarine is a symbol of good luck and protection. Some call it the mermaid stone, as it was thought to bring good luck to sailors and guarantee them a safe voyage.



Aquamarine Faceted Nugget Necklace with Tiffany Style Glass Focal and Sterling Silver Accents
Photo by Author



Aquamarine and Lamp work
Necklace
Private collection
Photo by Author

I have enough jewelry.....said no-one ever!



Aquamarine Bracelet with Labradorite

Private collection: Lee Snyder, Lima, OH

Photo by Author



Lamp work Heart with Aquamarine Beaded Chain and Sterling Clasp

Lamp work heart by glass artist, Stephanie Gough

Private collection: Christine Smoot, Fayetteville, NC

Photo by Author



Aquamarine Nugget Bracelet with Lamp work Focal and Sterling Silver Accents

Lamp work focal by glass artist, Stephanie Dielman

Private collection: Michele Tranguch Ellis, Fayetteville, NC

Photo by Author



Aquamarine Nugget Necklace with 14kt
Gold- Filled Accents

Photo by Author



Aquamarine, Sterling and Lamp work
Bracelet

Private collection

Photo by Author

"In order to be irreplaceable, one must always be different." Coco Chanel

Baroque pearls symbolize wisdom and attract wealth and luck as well as protection. They are also thought to symbolize the purity, generosity, integrity and loyalty of the wearer.



Coral Necklace with Removable Baroque Pearl Enhancer

Photos by Author





Baroque Pearl Necklace with Lamp work Bead Accent

*Lamp work bead by glass artist, Pearly Karpel
Private collection: Audrey Claussen, Cary, NC
Photo by Author*



Baroque Pearl and Turquoise Bracelet

*Sun Charm by Nina Designs
Private collection
Photo by Artist*

Citrine is thought to attract wealth and became known as the merchant's stone since merchants would often keep one in their cash box.



Citrine Nugget
Necklace with
Removable Baroque
Pearl Enhancer
*Magnetic clasp by Nina
Designs*
Photo by Author

"Jewelry is like the perfect spice - it always complements what's already there"
Diane von Furstenberg

Carnelian boosts ambition and the courage needed to overcome difficulties.

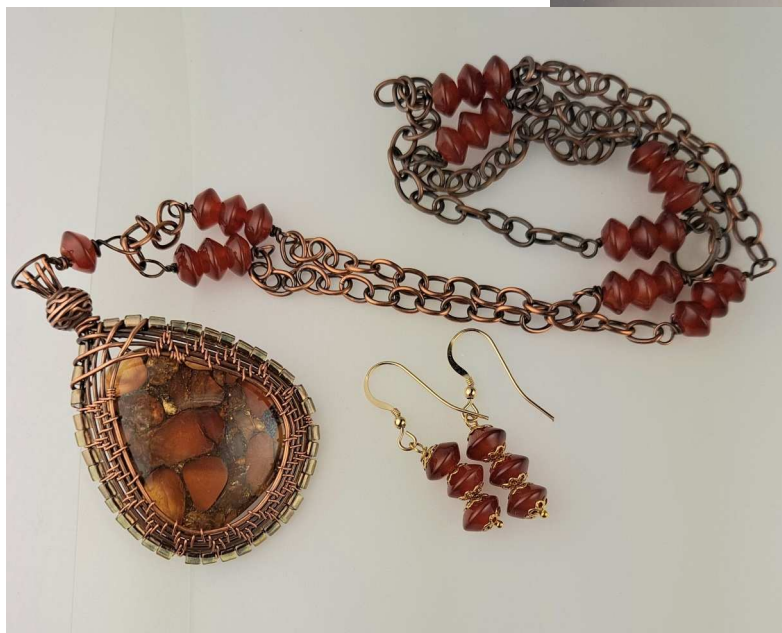


Faceted Natural Carnelian Necklace with
Citrine Spacers

Photo by Author

Natural Carnelian with Onyx and
Sterling Silver Accents

Photo by Author



Carnelian and Copper Necklace and
Earrings

*Private collection: the Reverend Wanda
Werking, Lima, OH*

Photo by Author