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Virginie Fowler Elbert



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Since ancient times, seashells have provided both materials and design inspiration for a variety of arts and crafts. Shell-inspired motifs have turned up in pottery and floor mosaics, as architectural ornaments, and on furniture. The magnificent mollusks have also been used as money and decorative objects to adorn the body. This comprehensive guide by Virginie Fowler Elbert — noted author, crafter, and authority on shell lore — offers a wealth of craft ideas for using these lovely treasures from the sea.

Following a fascinating introduction to the use of shells throughout history, the simply written text provides step-by-step instructions for cleaning, preparing, and displaying shells; suggests methods for decorating boxes and mirror frames; and shows how to create fanciful soap dishes, night lights, and jewelry items — from pendants and necklaces to bracelets, cuff links, and earrings.

You'll also find easy-to-follow directions for preserving shells in resin to make paperweights, napkin holders, cachepots, and other household accessories, as well as instructions for casting shell forms from molds (an ideal way to develop multiple patterns if only a few shells are available). There's even a chapter on how to do shell printing with linoleum blocks and crayon prints to create distinctive designs for placemats, wall hangings, wrapping paper, and stationery. Reference works and an updated list of supply sources round out this profusely illustrated guide to a fun-filled and rewarding pastime.

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