

Trapped Haze Triad Beads

written by Lori Robbins

photography by Kimberly Cuevarra & Michael Robbins



This bead has three possibilities that are all usable as finished products. The first possibility is a simple spacer bead made from the Northstar Pomegranate (NS-88). The second possibility is that spacer bead with five dots of Northstar Double-Amber Purple (NS-26) evenly spaced in a star-type pattern. The third possibility is encasing those dots and finishing the bead. As you can see by the finished bracelet, all three possible outcomes look entirely different from each other in color and shape.

This bracelet was made using all three styles of beads demonstrated in this project. A fourth spacer bead was also used, made from Northstar Garnet Dark (NS-87). Additionally, sterling silver round and corrugated beads were added to balance the glass beads on the head pins and Bali silver ornate beads were added to accent the design. All were fastened to a sterling silver rolo chain for strength. Bracelet was designed by Kimberly Guevarra. All glass beads for the bracelet were made by Lori Robbins.



Materials:

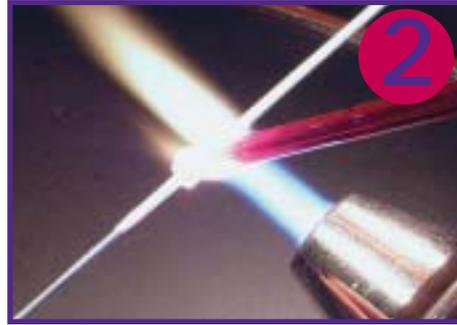
Northstar Pomegranate (NS-88)
Northstar Double-Amber Purple (NS-26)
Simax Clear, 5mm

Tools:

12 inch 3/32" 320L TIG welding rod (mandrel)
Alice's kiln wash/bead release mixed in blender
until ultra smooth
Large, 10-inch tweezers



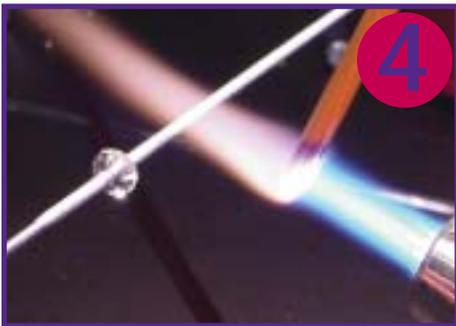
Prepare all rods by pulling new or bad ends off. Be careful not to boil tips.



Heat the Northstar Pomegranate (NS-88) rod in a neutral flame until end is saggy. Touch end of rod to the mandrel in the flame. Quickly lower mandrel out of the flame, but leave the rod in the flame and wrap two to three times around mandrel to your liking. (The Northstar Pomegranate (NS-88) bead will be clear at this point. The color will strike in the kiln.)



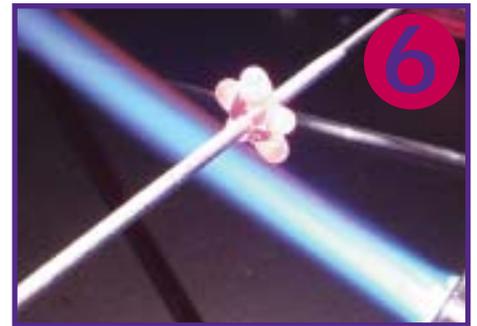
Melt outer surface of bead to make smooth. Bring the bead to the top part of the flame so that the flame licks the bottom part of the mandrel. It is important to keep the mandrel out of the direct flame for extended periods of time, or the mandrel will melt through, even with 320L rods. (Note: It is at this point that you can round off your bead and finish it as a spacer.)



Keep working bead in the outer reaches of the radiant heat of the flame as not to let it cool all the way down. Heat the tip of the Northstar Double-Amber Purple (NS-26) rod.



Place five good sized dots evenly around the bead base. Make certain these do not touch each other.



Melt dots in so they are secure to the base of the bead with no undercuts. DO NOT melt dots all the way into the surface of the bead. Allow bead to cool slightly – approximately twenty seconds.



Increase the propane to the torch so that you have a reduction flame. Spin bead in this flame until a dark, grape/purple color appears on the dots. (Note: Stopping at this point will give you a second style of bead.)



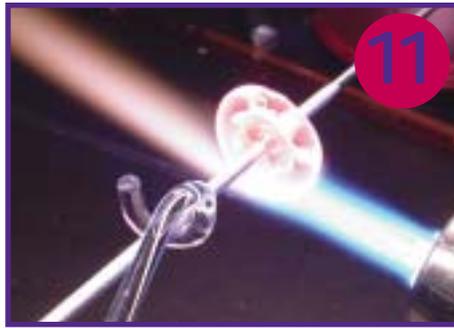
Bring torch back to a neutral flame. Using the 5 mm Symax rod, heat the end and place on the full face/top of a dot.



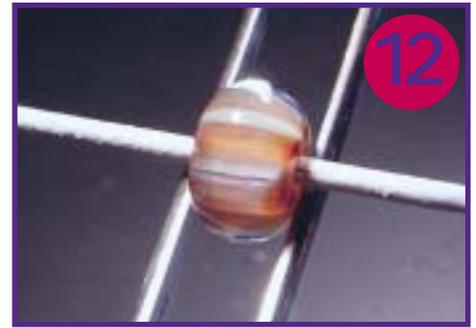
Continue bridging the dots by laying the glass over the tops without "pulling" the glass – just let the glass soften and bridge over the dots.



Continue applying glass over the first layer for a total of two layers.



Melt in all layers of the bead. Wait until all air is squeezed out before using any tools to shape it so the air won't be trapped under the clear glass. I find it helpful to use a mandrel balancer for more control so I don't burn through the mandrel.



Shape the bead evenly, using the smooth, inner part of the tweezers like mashers as needed to align the sides of the bead, and the flame and gravity as needed to balance the bead around the mandrel.



The bead is now yellow/gold in color.



Wait thirty seconds. In the neutral flame, rotate bead in the far reaches of the flame until the Northstar Double-Amber Purple (NS-26) strikes and becomes plum-like in color. Take out of flame and wait another twenty seconds.



Put back into the far reaches of the flame to strike again until the trapped haze from the reduction of the Northstar Double-Amber Purple (NS-26) dots starts changing into a myriad of colors.

16 **Finishing the beads:** Once all beads are made and air-cooled, remove them from the mandrels. Place them in a kiln from a cold state. Ramp the kiln to 1050 degrees Fahrenheit as fast as the kiln can go. Hold for 25 minutes. Ramp down to 800 degrees within two hours. Turn kiln off.



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