

## Decopaged Faux Leather Vases

This month we will be using brown paper bag, glue and a vase to create the look and feel of a real Italian leather bottle! Cover anything you like with this inexpensive technique. We embellished our vase with jute and yarn, you can use whatever you have on hand...We used a plain vase from the dollar store. Fill them with sunflowers for a beautiful centerpiece!



## Fun Facts about vintage Mediterranean leather bottles:



- A **porrón** is a traditional leather covered glass wine pitcher, typical of many regions of Spain. It resembles a cross between a wine bottle and a watering can. The top of the bottle is narrow and can be sealed off with a cork. Stemming upwards from the bottom of the pitcher is a spout that tapers off to a small opening. It is shaped such that the liquid inside will have minimal contact with the air, or the drinker's lips, while being ready to be used at all times. These were replacement to bota bags. The lack of contact with the lips allows a group to

partake without offending their sense of hygiene.

- A **Bota Bag** is a leather bottle, typical of Castile and the North, they were essentially nomadic, a practical invention that enabled shepherds to carry wine from one pasture to another. The leather bottle is made from a piece of hide doubled round and the ends stitched together two or more inches from the edge, leaving a piece over in which are cut holes for the purpose of passing a strap through them whereby it could be slung over the shoulders or attached to a belt. The shape remained practically the same throughout five centuries.



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**Parrones and Botas** both provided one of the most delightful ways possible for drinking wine, which is pouring it from the height of the extended arm in a thin stream straight into one's mouth, splashing onto the upper lip and the teeth. This is quite a skill, and one that requires practice and a sense of style, for not a drop must be lost in its elegant execution." In addition to the style of drinking they impose, they share another point in common: both are passes from hand to hand to be shared.

- Botas first mentioned in Neckham's Liber de Utensilibus, printed in the **twelfth century**
- The cost of leather was high in those early days; leather bottles being willed in 1395.
- The "Leather Bottel" had much favor in the eyes of both rich and poor, so much so that in the early 1600's it inspired a song, entitled "A Song in Praise of the Leathern Bottel. "

"A Leather Bottel is good,  
Far better than Glasses or Wood,  
For when a man is at work in the Field,  
Your Glasses and Pots, no comfort will yield,  
Then a good Leather Bottel standing him by,  
He may drink always when he is dry,  
It will revive the spirits and comfort the brain,  
Wherefore let none this Bottel refrain,  
For I wish in Heaven his soul may dwell,  
That first devised the Leather Bottel.

(Reproduced from the book: Drinking Vessels of Bygone Days by G. J. MONSON-FITZJOHN, B.Sc., F.R.Hist.S)

## **Let's make our own leather bottles!**

Here's a fun way to dress up a simple vase which we all have sitting on our kitchen cabinets. This project is great for making a fun fall centerpiece with fall leaves, sunflowers, etc. and they can be very masculine.

For each vase you will need:

- One glass vase, any size, shape or color
- White school glue & Water, mixed 1/1
- 1" Foam brush
- black liquid shoe polish
- acrylic clear-coat spray
- Aileen's tack craft glue
- **E-6000** craft glue

For alternatives: 1. Cover in brown shoe polish and rub around the entire vase, wipe off excess. The edges of the papers will be darker. Spray again with a clear sealant when dry. 2. Cover in colored tissue paper, napkins, doilies, or magazines. 2. Cover in white tissue and small leaves, use glitter Mod Podge and sealant.

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## Directions to making your own leather look vase:



1. Collect plain glass vases in all colors, sizes and shapes! Sometimes I display 3 or 4 of all different shapes and sizes as a centerpiece! If necessary, clean glass with a damp cloth and allow to dry.
2. Collect multiple types of brown paper; craft paper, paper bag, packing papers, etc. Rip these papers into small “playing card” sized pieces; if you are using a small vase rip your pieces even smaller. Avoid having any pieces with the straight edge of the paper.
3. Use watered down white school glue for the next step to reduce fumes of the typical Mod Podge. Start from the bottom of the vase, and cover it with a layer of glue. Work in small areas at a time. Attach thin paper pieces around the vase in all directions, overlapping slightly. Try to be random as any pattern or parallel lines will look unnatural. You want the final piece to be as smooth as possible with no glass showing.
4. You can add as many layers as you like for more opacity, glue small areas at a time, allowing it to dry between thicker layers if possible. You can also use a hair dryer to dry between layers. After it is dry, check for “holes”, cover with paper and re-dry.
5. Choose a piece of jute or twine or even yarn. Add a dot of E6000 glue and begin wrapping around the top ONLY of the vase. Make sure all edges are securely attached. Continue up ALMOST to the top of the vase but leave about a ¼” of glass vase so that you do not slide the rope off the vase when you pick it up or fill it with water.
6. When you are finished with all of your layers, cover your vase with Glitter, Matte, or Gloss Midge Podge, depending on the look you would like.
7. Let dry for 48 hours on a plastic, non-stick surface, NOT a paper surface or it will stick! Do not get wet!
8. Wrap a ribbon around the top and fill with your favorite flowers! Add to a decorative plate for a nice centerpiece!

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