



# Super Elegante

## MERCADO BAG

I'm a sucker for oversized Mexican tote bags that are sold at open-air markets (that's *mercado* in Spanish). The colors are so wild and bright, and the designs are simply striking. But I also adore oilcloth (laminated fabric). So what's a crafty chica to do? Merge the two! This roomy bag, which is all about contrast, is inspired by the vibrant displays of fruits and veggies at the market. But I'll bet this bag will be used for much more than just grocery shopping! This bag will measure 18" (45.5cm) across, 15" (38cm) tall and 7" (18cm) deep. Feel free to snip away any overage. The idea is to create a mosaic/patchwork type of bag that shows off all the happy colors of the oilcloth!

**SKILL LEVEL** Intermediate

### MATERIALS

1 piece oilcloth, 8" x 36"  
(20.5cm x 91cm)  
12 pieces contrasting oilcloth,  
3½" x 3" each (9cm x 7.5cm)

6 pieces contrasting oilcloth,  
2" x 6" each (5cm x 15cm)

8 pieces oilcloth, approximately 2" x 4"  
(5cm x 10cm)

2 pieces matching oilcloth, 7" x 19" each  
(18cm x 48.5cm)

Pinking shears

Straight pins

1 spool of bright red thread

Heavy-duty sewing machine needle

2 pieces of black seam binding, 2" x 32"  
each (5cm x 81cm)

**NOTE** Cut all oilcloth with  
pinking shears.

### HOW TO MAKE IT

1. Pin and sew the 12 pieces of oilcloth together in sets of three (you will have four pieces).
2. Pin and sew the 6 pieces of oilcloth together in sets of three (you will have three pieces).
3. Now you will mix and match these sets to create two panels that measure 6" x 36" (15cm x 91cm) each. You can cut some in half and sew them to create a more interesting pattern, or just sew them as is, so both panels are equal in design style. **Tip:** Don't get intimidated by the measurements. All you're doing is creating two panels made from oilcloth scraps—each one needs to measure about 8" wide (20.5cm) and 36" (91cm) long.
4. Now you will have three long panels—two with patchwork-looking designs, and one with a single pattern. Pin and sew these three pieces together so they overlap. Use a variation of zigzag and straight stitch to add dimension.
5. Pin and sew together the 8 pieces measuring 2" x 4" (5cm x 10 cm) so you have two sets. Sew one on one end of the panel, and one on the other to make the top border of the bag.
6. Take the two pieces of remaining oilcloth and pin each one along the outside of the panel to make the sides. You'll have to fold the panel twice. Sew in place, first using straight stitch, and then again using the zigzag. This will make your bag extra sturdy!
7. Sew the handles in place on each side of the bag. To make them extra secure, sew them on by creating a square shape, and then an "X" inside the square.

**TIP:** Oilcloth can be kind of sticky, so pick up a bottle of Sewer's Aid and rub a bit under the presser foot, on the needle, and on the plate. This will help the fabric glide through with ease.