

Ghost Steam Teacup & Celestial Webs

A lavender-gray teacup and saucer with a warm metallic handle anchor a playful Halloween scene: a cluster of white ghost figures rises like steam, while spiderwebs, bats, moon phases, stars, tiny black crosses, gold accents and purple knot-dots orbit the cup.

Skill level: Intermediate

Suggested hoop: 8 in / 20 cm

DMC palette: 13 colors

Fabric: white or warm ivory

DESIGN ARCHITECTURE



Main focal point: lavender-gray cup and saucer with pale ghost steam.
Secondary motifs: side spiderwebs, bats, moon phases, stars/crosses and knot-dots.
Value structure: darkest in outlines, bats and faces; brightest in ghost bodies and pale celestial details.
Approach: linework first, cup/saucer second, ghost fills third, then silhouettes, knots and highlights.

CORE STITCH DIRECTORY

Motif	Stitch	Strands	Direction / technique
Ghost steam	Long-and-short + split stitch	1-2	Fill upward in softly flowing curves; work eyes and mouths in 1 strand black.
Cup & saucer	Long-and-short + split outline	1-2	Follow vessel curvature; use short directional fills and crisp dark contours.
Cup spiderweb	Backstitch / whipped backstitch	1	Lay main spokes first, then short connecting arcs.
Large side webs	Backstitch	1	Long radial spokes, then evenly spaced curved bridges.
Gold handle & stars	Satin + straight stitch	1-2	Handle follows the C-curve; star rays work outward from center.
Moon phases	Satin / long-and-short	1-2	Curve stitches around each disc/crescent; keep pale edges clean.
Bats & black marks	Satin / straight stitch	1	Dense small fills for bats; single straight strokes for crosses.
Purple & black dots	French / colonial knots	1-2	Use compact raised knots; vary size slightly for depth.

IMAGE-SPECIFIC STITCHING SEQUENCE

- Establish linear framework.** Backstitch the side webs, moon-phase guide shapes, stars and tiny celestial marks before any dense fills.
- Build cup and saucer.** Outline the cup, saucer and handle, then fill the lavender-gray body with curved stitch direction that follows the form.
- Add the cup web and decorative dots.** Keep the stitched web fine; reserve raised knots until the larger fills are complete.
- Stitch the ghost steam.** Fill the pale ghost forms with soft vertical/flowing long-and-short stitches, then add tiny black eyes and mouths.
- Complete celestial motifs.** Work bats, moon phases, stars and crosses, balancing warm gold, black and cool gray accents around the hoop.
- Finish knots and cleanup.** Add purple/black French knots, final highlights, edge corrections and secure all thread ends.

MASTER TENSION & COLOR-MATCH GUIDELINES

- Keep web backstitches relaxed so long lines do not pull the fabric inward.
- Do not pull satin stitches tightly on the cup or handle; preserve a smooth surface.
- Work black outlines before pale highlights where practical, but keep dark thread away from finished ghost fills.
- Follow the illustrated curves on the cup and flowing ghost shapes so stitch direction reinforces the form.
- Verify critical lavender-gray and gold shades against a physical DMC color card before stitching.

CORRECTED DMC PALETTE

Swatch	DMC	Color name	Usage
	310	Black	Cup/saucer outlines, bat silhouettes, ghost faces, black dots and cross/star accents.
	3799	Pewter Gray Very Dark	Deep cup shadow, darkest web/outline transitions and cool structural shading.
	317	Pewter Gray	Cup shadows, saucer shading, moon-phase midtones and web accents.
	762	Pearl Gray Very Light	Pale cup highlights, webs, soft moon highlights and light gray celestial details.
	3865	Winter White	Ghost bodies and brightest cream-white highlights.
	3743	Antique Violet Very Light	Main lavender-gray cup fill and very pale violet moon/web accents.
	3042	Antique Violet Light	Cup midtone variation, purple celestial details and knot highlights.
	553	Violet	Purple French knots and stronger violet decorative accents on the cup.
	327	Violet Dark	Deep purple knot shadows and small cool accent details.
	433	Brown Medium	Coffee surface line, warm handle shadow and subtle warm-neutral depth.
	729	Old Gold Medium	Cup handle, warm stars and golden celestial accents.
	3821	Straw	Bright gold star highlights and handle light.
	3032	Mocha Brown Medium	Soft warm-neutral shading in moons, coffee rim and muted transitions.

STITCH LENGTH, VALUE & EDGE CONTROL

Area	Length / angle	Highlight / shadow	Edge control
Ghost bodies	2-4 mm; flow upward	3865 highlight; 762 soft shadow	Split-stitch contour before fill where curves tighten.
Cup wall	2-3 mm; follow cup curve	3743/3042 light; 317/3799 shadow	Keep rim and side edges defined with 1 strand split stitch.
Saucer	2-3 mm; follow ellipses	762 top plane; 317/3799 lower edge	Work from inner ring outward for clean concentric structure.
Gold handle	Short satin across handle width	3821 outer light; 433 inner shadow	Do not over-pack; preserve rounded C-profile.
Webs	1.5-3 mm backstitch segments	762 pale; 317 darker intersections	Spokes first, then curved bridges; avoid long tension spans.
Moon phases	1.5-2.5 mm around contours	762 light; 3032/317 shadow	Outline crescents lightly before filling to keep shape crisp.
Knots / dots	1 wrap small; 2 wraps larger	553/327 purple; 310 black	Place after fills so knots stay raised and clean.

FINAL CHECK

- Clean outlines on cup, saucer, webs and moon shapes.
- Smooth lavender-gray transitions with no bulky ridges.
- Consistent 1-strand linework on webs and tiny marks.
- No visible traveling threads across open fabric.
- Balanced gold and purple accent placement.
- Ghost faces crisp inside pale fills.
- No puckering around webs, knots or dense shading.
- Thread ends secured before hoop finishing.

PROJECT NOTES

Filling vs. linework: Fill the cup, saucer, handle, ghosts, bats and moon discs; keep webs, stars, crosses and most celestial marks as linework.
Raised texture: Add French/colonial knots last; use 1 strand for tiny dots and 2 strands for the largest purple beads.

MOTIF THREAD-AND-DIRECTION MAP

Motif	Thread color	Stitch	Strands	Direction	Special note
Ghost steam	3865, 762, 310	Long-and-short + split	1-2	Upward flowing curves	Pale fill stays airy; faces in 1 strand black.
Cup + saucer	3743, 3042, 317, 3799	Long-and-short + split	1-2	Cup curve / saucer ellipses	Deepen lower and side shadows only.
Gold handle	729, 3821, 433	Satin / long-and-short	2	Follow C-curve	Brown inside shadow; Straw outside highlight.
Cup + side webs	762, 317	Backstitch	1	Spokes then curved bridges	Use short segments and relaxed tension.
Moon phases	762, 3032, 317	Satin / long-and-short	1-2	Follow circular contours	Keep crescent boundaries crisp.
Bats + black symbols	310	Satin / straight stitch	1	Compact fills / single strokes	Preserve tiny silhouette edges.
Gold stars	729, 3821	Straight stitch	1	Radiate from center	Vary ray length to match artwork.
Purple / black dots	553, 327, 310	French / colonial knots	1-2	Centered raised knots	Largest knots on cup; smaller dots around orbit.