Fresh Greenery, Heirlooms Set Festive Holiday Table

Let these ideas spark your own imagination and creativity for presenting holiday foods!

- · Line tins or wicker baskets with antique lace napkins or tea towels. Add freshly baked muffins or breads and top with a sprig of baby's breath. Tuck in a ramekin of flavored butter.
- · Bring added warmth and color to a holiday spread. Cover a buffet table with a star quilt sprayed with a protective fabric coating to guard against spills.
- Holiday cookie cutters or small grapevine wreathes can double as napkin rings at individual place settings. A simple bow tied through each one will add a festive
- Create a centerpiece all your own. Stack an heirloom cake pedestal with miniature pumpkins, squashes, gourds, pomegranates and dried artichokes. Tuck small twigs, dried leaves or fresh sprigs of fragrant herbs between the vegetables and fruits.
- An array of glass candlesticks of differing heights makes an interesting centerpiece. Add fresh flowers, fall foliage or Christmas greenery at the base. Be careful to place decorations away from burning candles.
- Spray the tips of pine cones lightly with gold paint. Scatter them among holiday offerings on a buffet table.

- Unusual containers such as an antique fan-shaped vase can be used for serving sauces, fruit preserves or whipped cream.
- Dress up a pitcher of eggnog or sparkling apple cider by adding a few fresh or silk flowers. Tie the flowers to the handle or bottle with a piece of decorative twine or ribbon.
- Garnish holiday fare with edible seasonal flowers or fresh herbs such as thyme, rosemary or purple basil. Butter pats look especially festive adorned with a tiny blossom or sprig.
- Dress up the base of a holiday cake. Wrap shimmering ribbon around the bottom and tie in a simple bow. Add a shiny ornament or holly sprig for the finishing touch.

- · Place wedges of assorted cheese on fresh lemon or grape leaves. Accompany with clusters of grapes, apple slices and chutney.
- · Weave holiday ribbons through a grapevine wreath and nestle a favorite holiday cake, such as buttery cranberry pound cake, in the center.
- Warm up guests with a mug of hot mulled cider. Float clovespiked apples in a large earthenware bowl or crock filled with the warm cider.
- For a touch of spice, sprinkle sweetened whipped cream with ground cinnamon, nutmeg or allspice—a great topper for eggnog, hot chocolate or coffee.

 Cover boxes or coffee cans with decorative paper or twine and line with colored tissue, cellophane or foil. Tuck favorite butter cookies inside and tie with a pretty plaid ribbon.

 Decorate a tree with edible ornaments. When baking cut-out cookies,

poke a hole near the top with a drinking straw. Bake and decorate as

desired. Thread a narrow ribbon through the hole and tie a knot at the

 No time to frost a single layer cake or brownies? Place a doily on top of the cake. Sprinkle confectioners' sugar over the top and carefully remove the doily to reveal the pat-

• A large, buttery

shortbread cookie can

become the centerpiece

for a holiday dessert

table. Bake dough in a

round cake pan, cool

and place on a decorat-

ed round plate. Tie a

ribbon around plate for

• Make a simple but-

tercream frosting and

spread between two butter cookies to form a sandwich cookie. If

desired, roll edges in

finely chopped nuts,

grated semi-sweet chocolate or colored sugar.

cream—Combine 2

cups confectioners'

sugar and 3 table-

spoons softened butter.

Add milk or cream, 1

tablespoon at a time, io

reach desired consistency for spreading or

glazing. Stir in extract

and/or food coloring, if

desired.

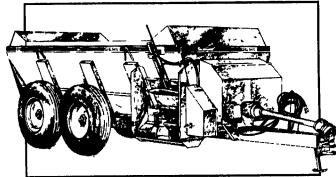
· Quick Butter-

a festive look.

end.



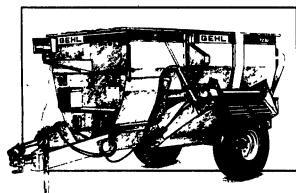
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