

Use What You Have For Holiday Decor

(Continued from Page B2)

to the dining area.

- Wrap strings of white lights around houseplants, or combine lights with greens around a bathroom mirror or a banister to add a festive touch.

Floral Arrangements

Use cheap, ugly containers to transform into the base of a beautiful floral arrangement by setting inside a wicker tray or basket.

Spray old containers, candleholders, etc. gold and texture by rubbing paint with toothbrush.

Color of container should not compete with flowers. For table centerpiece, match your china. Scale size to the table—not too small or it will get lost and not so large to interfere with conversation and serving of food.

Centerpiece must not touch place settings or dip into the water glasses. For a very long table, place candles in a multiple holder in the middle and identical flower arrangements spaced at each end. Use texture and contrast such as glossy foliage with coarse petals.

Keep dark colors low, as they appear heavier.

Use containers in a different capacity. For example, use a wicker tray as the background for an arrangement.

Christena Stamm suggests filling a clear glass jar or vase with pinecones then topping with a variety of greens and holly, and a large bow.

Some points to help make eye-appealing floral arrangements include the following:

- Use larger, darker flowers in center and smaller ones at edges.
- Make arrangement flow. Don't cram too full.
- Don't be afraid of heights. Arrangements can be taller than the guide of two and a half times the height of the container. If the arrangement looks top heavy, it is too high. Try different layers.



"For holiday decorating, be resourceful. Use what you have," said Sylvia Updegrave.

Permanent Arrangements

Say permanent, not artificial, when referring to lasting arrangements.

The key to beautiful silks is to shape the flower. Do not bend the stem, but curve gently.

Holiday Flair

Place a votive candle in candleholder or bud vase and surround with greens.

Sarah Vakili, master gardener, cautions that flowers and apples do not mix well. Apples cause flowers to wilt fast, so do not combine in an arrangement.

Spray holly and ivy with cooking spray for a glossy look. But do not spray tree as people brushing against it will get oily and it can disfigure ornaments.

Soak greens and holly in water with a bit of vinegar overnight to make them last longer and to kill bacteria.

Decorate Tree

According to Dianne Marquet, Greta McMullan, and Sandra Strouphar of Expressions in Mt. Aetna, the benefits of silk arrangements are that they can be made ahead of time and used repeatedly.

Decorate tree with sheer wide fabric woven through branches and fluffed around bottom of tree.

For a country tree, cotton batting, gingham, homespun, grapevine, and raffia woven through branches is effective.

For a more formal tree, spray old artificial flowers, weeds, and dried materials gold.

Hang a large bow at top of tree and let ribbon streamers hang down through tree.

The tree can be decorated full or sparse, depending on your preference.

Combine two ribbon patterns and insert at top or throughout tree. Set angel into tree instead of on top.

Take things you use year-round such as signs from garden and place on tree branches.

Garlands and Swags

Take apart an old grapevine wreath and twist it through greens or spray gold for a new look.

Strings of cranberries, popcorn or dried fruits such as citrus and apples slices add flair as does pinecones or dried hot peppers.

Use premade permanent garlands and attach fresh greens. You don't need to use traditional holiday greens. Try ivy or bramble branches.

Accent with pheasant feathers, astible, roses, and hydrangea.

Makes swags by wiring greens together, decorate with fruit picks, ribbon, or put single flower in center of swag. Add beads, ribbons, or preserved flowers and weeds if



Floral style comes by combining usual items in an arrangement.

desired.

Put table swag in front of table or use as centerpiece.

Place a wreath around the punch bowl or around a decorative snowman or other items you have to make an eye-catching display.

Berries and apples attach to wreaths and swags are always in vogue.

Jill Yost of Centerton Nursery said that for instant decorating,

take floral or vegetable and fruit garlands and weave through tree or wreaths.

Work in odd numbers when decorating, such as attaching three bows and five snowflakes to a wreath. Lay star garland around wreath for extra glitter.

From these ideas, you can see that there are no absolute rules when decorating. Use what you have. Be resourceful.



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