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## Get Creative With Cranberries

Ruby red cranberries lend a festive touch to salads, entrees, breads, sauces, and desserts. They also add a festive air to holiday crafts and decor.

Need a quick centerpiece? Open a bag of fresh cranberries, add them to a vase and fill with water, insert a bouquet of fresh flowers.

Make a cranberry float by floating cranberries around a floating candle in a water-filled glass dish.

How about a cranberry garland? Traditionally strung with popcorn, cranberries also make a colorful garland on their own. Hang from mantels or wind through a chandelier. To make stringing cranberries easier, wax the needle and thread with bee's wax or use dental floss.

To keep the garland fresher longer, spray shellac on the cranberries after stringing

them. To avoid staining, do not place on lightly painted surfaces or lines.

For more tips and recipes, visit the website [www.oceans-pray.com](http://www.oceans-pray.com).

### RUSTIC APPLE CRANBERRY SAUCE

- 1 pie crust
  - 21-ounce can apple pie filling
  - 1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries
  - ¼ cup chopped walnuts, optional
  - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
  - 1 teaspoon sugar
- Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Unwrap piecrust; press seams together firmly. Place in 9-inch pie plate. Combine all ingredients, except sugar, in medium mixing bowl; mix well. Spoon fruit mixture into pastry-lined plate. Fold edges of pastry over



**Need a quick centerpiece? Fill a punch bowl or other wide-mouthed, low bowl with water. Add cranberries and float candles amidst the berries, then light.**

fruit, pleating so crust lies flat. Sprinkle sugar over crust.

Bake 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees. Bake 40-45 minutes or until fruit are bubbly and crust golden brown. Makes 8 servings.



**Rustic Apple Cranberry Tart adds a festive touch to holiday tables.**

## Poinsettia Care, Tips

HUNTERDON, N.J. — Poinsettias are no longer just red or white. Pink, coral, purple, red with pink flecks, pink with red flecks, pink-red-white marble are just some of the color variations that have been developed. Some have yellow or white variegated foliage and others ruffled or incurved bracts of the.

Poinsettias are not poisonous if eaten, a conclusion based on many studies; however, some

individuals may be sensitive to contact with the latex sap.

A poinsettia "blossom" is actually composed of bracts, the large colorful "petals" that are actually modified leaves, and the true flowers that are held in cyathia, the small green structures that comprise the center of the poinsettia "blossom." A close look at the cyathia may be one clue to choosing a poinsettia that is closer to the beginning of "bloom" than the end.

If the true flowers bearing yellow pollen are prominently visible in most cyathia or if the cyathia have dropped, the "bloom" may be passing or past peak. Poinsettias do not like cold (below 50 F), not even a short exposure during transport from shop to home. The seller should provide some protection a sleeve-for the plant, and it should not be transported or left in a cold automobile trunk. Cold can cause leaf and bract drop and bract discoloration so avoid cold temperatures, even drafts once the plant is at home. Remove the plant from the sleeve or other protection sooner rather than later. Poinsettias enclosed too long develop epinasty, the drooping of leaves and bracts, which will usually disappear in a few days under good growing conditions. Don't buy poinsettias that are stored or displayed in sleeves.

Poinsettias need regular watering (drying out will cause premature leaf loss) but the potting mix should dry to the touch before re-watering. Give them a bright location but no direct sun while they are in bloom to avoid excessive drying or high temperatures. Ideal temperatures are 70-75 degrees during the day and 60-65 degrees at night. The plants might benefit from fertilizer after a month or so, especially if the plan is to keep them beyond the holidays as houseplants.

For more information on poinsettias, visit the Poinsettia Pages of the University of Illinois Extension website at [www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/poinsettia](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/poinsettia).



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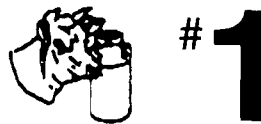
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