



Winter Wow: Beautiful Containers for the Colder Months.

CONTAINERS

Use your container to add interest to your design. For a really inspired container look off the beaten path. Antique stores, local flea markets, even hardware stores are great places to find unexpected containers.

In the winter you should not use terra cotta pots as they will freeze and crack. Instead look for metal, wood or fiberglass which will hold up to the elements much better.



BEST GREENS

My favorite needled evergreens are the noble fir and the silver fir. Noble fir is ridiculously long-lasting, even in full sun. Silver fir gives you two colors for the price of one and is also long-lasting. The cedars are another favorite as they add grace to any container with their soft, drapery textures. Incense cedar has beautiful yellow buds at the tips, Port Orford cedar and western cedar are also nice. I don't use a lot of white pine as it doesn't last long. Princess pine or shore pine are nice substitutes. Broad-leaved evergreens like boxwood, laurel and magnolia provide nice contrast. Oregonia offers variegation which will break up the solid green palette. The broad-leaved evergreens can be sprayed with Wilt-Pruf to help them last longer.



Small shrubs are great in containers and can be used year-round. Planting the "pockets" in between the shrubs with seasonal plants saves time and money when it comes time to swap out your combinations. Arborvitae and boxwood make especially good "bones" for a windowbox. If you hope to overwinter these evergreens make sure your container is large enough, water well until a few hard frosts and choose an evergreen that is hardy to two zones colder than where you live.

DESIGN IDEAS

You can create a simple composition using an assortment of greens, keeping in mind that a mixture of different textures and forms is more visually interesting than one kind of green. A greater diversity also means that if one type of green “browns out” it doesn’t ruin the whole container.

For a more dramatic winter box add embellishments like ornaments, bows, icicles or anything that is interesting to you. Just make sure to work within a design theme and stick to a few colors to avoid a “thrown together with everything but the kitchen sink” look. For instance, add berries, real or artificial (make sure they are weatherproof!), pinecones and twigs for a Currier and Ives feel to your design.

Finally, have fun! After all, winter is just another opportunity to be creative with the wonderful variety of plant material available.

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