

HOLIDAY DECORATING WITH DRIED FLOWERS

In the last issue of D&D, I discussed drying flowers from your garden and using them to create beautiful, long lasting creations for your home. With the Christmas season fast approaching, now is the time to use any left over flowers for seasonal decorating. Dried roses, hydrangea blooms, yarrow, silver king artemesia, as well as rose hips, pine cones, all sorts of pods and dried vines are just a few garden offerings that can be used to create magnificent Christmas creations. Annabell hydrangea in particular produces an abundance of large delicate blooms which are tan coloured when dried. Any blemished or discoloured florets can be artfully camouflaged with gold spray paint. Here at Cedar Rose we use a good quality spray paint created specifically for flowers. It coats beautifully, dries quickly and if used sparingly, gives flowers, pots, pine cones, etc a festive but subtle metallic shimmer. The key is to coat very lightly. These blooms can then be wired and tucked into artificial garlands, grapevine wreaths, centre pieces even on the Christmas tree. To be on the safe side, always keep dried flowers away from any source of heat - this includes mini-lights.

Silver or copper sprays are also available if these better suit your colour scheme. Red & gold still seem to be most popular choice in Christmas decorating. Burgundy with gold is also still very 'in' but this year's hottest seasonal colour combination is burgundy and copper. Whichever you choose, try to stick with one colour scheme. This will tie everything together as does using the same flower eg. dried hydrangeas in several places throughout the house. Dried roses, yarrow, lavender, baby's breath are just a few excellent choices for this. For a natural look, try making tree corsages - wire and tape an assortment of dried material into several small bouquets, tie on a small bow and attach to branches of the Christmas tree.

This is also the time to harvest fresh greens such as pine, cedar, hemlock and fir for use in fresh arrangements - more information on this topic can be found on our website www.cedarose.ca - Holiday Decorating Using Fresh Greens.

Dried and preserved flowers can be combined with fresh greens in arrangements as long as floral picks are added to the stems. This keeps them away from the wet floral foam and helps to prevent mold from forming on the dried flowers. Avoid misting these pieces for the same reason. Some fresh arrangements benefit by being misted daily. Unfortunately this will ruin any dried or preserved material especially roses. Better to keep the floral foam wet instead. Speaking of which don't discard those beautiful preserved roses when Christmas is over. Simply remove the dried or preserved flowers from the arrangement, allow any moisture to dry from the picks, stems for a few days, then wrap in tissue along with your gold (silver or copper tinted) hydrangea blooms and pack away in a dry tightly sealed box until next year. Or better still reuse now in swags, topiaries etc. The fresh greens which are by now likely brittle and brown are best discarded in the trash. If these have been spray painted don't use them in the garden or compost. The floral foam also cannot be reused but save the container, ribbon, cones etc. These can usually be reused next year.

For these and other Christmas gift and decorating ideas, visit the Cedar Rose. You will

be inspired!

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... Annette, Nov/Dec