



**Virginia Green Industry Council**

For Immediate Use
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## **DECORATING WITH HOLIDAY GREENS**

The traditional use of holiday greens such as fir, pine, holly, ivy and boxwood never goes out of style, according to Lin Diacont, President of the Virginia Green Industry Council. Certain greens create classic, traditional decors. Holly and ivy create the traditional English look; boxwood and magnolia leaves are synonymous with Colonial Williamsburg decorating; and white pine and fir are natural selections for a New England setting. Della Robia wreaths and swags which mix fruit amidst various greens have been used for years in many homes to add an elegance to dinner tables, doorways, and fireplaces.

The rich classic holiday theme is further enhanced using greens in topiary trees and other geometric shapes. Boxwood and yew are usually used. Small clusters are trimmed and inserted in floral foam such as oasis to form globular and conical forms. Small white lights are often entwined throughout the foliage. Those wishing a more “country” theme, will add clusters of dried flowers, small ribbons, and artificial fruits and birds to these arrangements. Another country approach is to arrange the greens in a grapevine wreath or swag. Or fill a large pretty basket with a variety of greens and holly berries for a casual but warm arrangement. A plaid ribbon bow finishes the look.

Another popular decorating theme is to use greens with natural materials and subtle accessories, Diacont said. Dried fungi, bark, nuts, berries and pine cones can be mixed with such accessories as deer and birds.. Paper ribbon and raffia complete the feeling of an ecological arrangement.

A more contemporary theme is achieved with a variety of foliage which accents the design. When an assortment of juniper, pine, and cedar are used together in arrangements, the textural variations and colors blend and create an interesting and special arrangement. Yellow and gold tipped foliage, like a few branches of certain junipers, can be mixed with glass, copper or brass ornaments. Variegated foliage such as holly and some ivy can create a strong interest when combined with spirals of silver or gold wire. Metal mesh ribbons complete these artistic modern style arrangements.

Diacont emphasized that simplicity is important in creating an elegant arrangement. Many times one or more red or white candles rising from a base of greens, especially pine boughs or fir will be sufficient to decorate a dining or end table. A cluster of red apples, a pair of red cardinals, or just a full red velvet bow is often all is needed in an entry hall. An arrangement of all holiday foliage will be enhanced with glittered branches or clusters of baby’s breath. Their sparkling or iridescent surfaces add life and color, especially when combined with candles.

Using fresh-cut greens during the holiday season is a tradition that is not likely to go out of style.

The Virginia Green Industry Council is the voice of the horticulture industry in the Commonwealth and is dedicated to enhancing the beauty of the state’s environment, the well-being of our citizens, improving our state’s economy, and improving the health and wellness for everyone in Virginia. The Council is made up of providers of horticultural products and services. The Council works to provide public and

industry education, environmental guidelines and information that will keep Virginia green and growing. For more information: [www.viriniagreen.org](http://www.viriniagreen.org) 540-382-0943 E-mail: [info@viriniagreen.org](mailto:info@viriniagreen.org)