

ATHOME

Inspiring ideas for your Christmas tree

For many Canadians, holiday home décor hinges on one very special tradition: the Christmas tree. Nothing symbolizes the spirit of the season better than spruce, pine or fir branches decked out in lights, ornaments and other festive embellishments.

According to Shelli Gardner, cofounder and CEO of crafting and décor company Stampin' Up!, the beauty of Christmas trees is that no two are alike. People decorating a tree have endless opportunities to get inspired, she says, especially with exciting new trends to watch in 2012.

“From classic decorations that have been passed down for generations, to trendy modern-day ornaments, there are countless ways to put a unique touch on a Christmas tree,” says Gardner, “it all depends on individual taste. I'm a big fan of handmade ornaments, which are becoming more and more popular. They're an exciting and creative way to put a personal touch on your tree this year, whether you're a beginner or a more experienced crafter.”

Add a taste of the past

Centuries ago, celebrants draped their Christmas tree branches in edible decorations like fruits, nuts, popcorn and cookies. These all-natural trinkets eventually gave way to the glass, plastic and wood ornaments that are most commonly used today.

This year, why not bring the past to the present by adding a rustic touch to your tree with ornaments made of dried fruit and spices? Many home décor and lifestyle Web sites offer an array of unique do-it-yourself ideas, including ornaments made with dried oranges, cloves and cinnamon sticks, as well as homemade decorative lanterns created with twigs, fruits and wires.

Add a personal touch

Handmade ornaments created with cardstock, ribbon, punches and other accessories can have a definite 'wow' factor, with the added benefit of being truly one-of-a-kind.



Crafting companies like Stampin' Up! have introduced kits and coordinating accessories that make it easier than ever to create stunning decorations at home. For example, the nine-piece Ornament Keepsake Stamp Set includes a variety of festive ornament-shaped stamp designs that coordinate with punches, ribbons, and other embellishments. Using a red or green ink pad, simply stamp the ornament shapes onto white paper, cut them using the Holiday Ornaments Framelits Dies, add some scalloped tulle ribbon and

glittery embellishments, and let your creative juices flow.

Best of all, handmade ornaments can be a festive opportunity to gather with family and friends for an afternoon of crafting. For expert guidance, consider gathering a group and participating in a holiday ornament party. Independent Stampin' Up! demonstrators in communities across Canada, hold parties designed to help build crafting skills. You can find a local demonstrator online at www.stampinup.ca. (NC)

ANCASTER DISTRICT 42

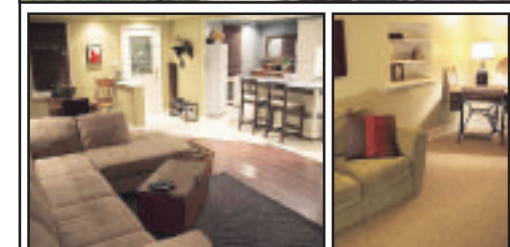
21 FLORESTA CT, ANCASTER
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Mark Winn
Sales Representative
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Phyl Farrauto
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