

Evergreen Edge: An Extension Guide for Christmas Holiday
Arrangement Planning, Marketing, and Production

Design No. 2: Long and Low



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION

THE EVERGREEN EDGE SERIES

Planning holiday lines during the summer is a smart business strategy for florists, farmer-florists, and floral designers. Because business activity often slows during the summer months, florists and retailers can use this time to design, test, and prepare holiday products before the busy fall and winter sales season begins.

This publication is one in a series to help floral professionals plan, market, and sell profitable floral designs for the holiday season. Each publication includes product images, design components, step-by-step construction guidance, and retail pricing considerations to support efficient holiday production and sales.

For additional holiday design ideas and inspiration, search "Evergreen Edge" at extension.msstate.edu/publications. Feel free to copy the images from this publication to use in your marketing efforts, including websites, social media, and print materials.

DESIGN NO. 2: A LONG AND LOW HOLIDAY CENTERPIECE WITH RED AND GOLD ACCENTS

This publication demonstrates a holiday centerpiece using Florida-grown evergreens and permanent decorative accents. This long-lasting arrangement performs well on its own without the need for fresh flowers; however, they can be added to increase the design's value and retail price. It is traditional and regal in appearance, and is suitable for rectangular or oval dining tables, head tables, and fireplace mantels.

The design approach emphasizes:

- ▶ A variety of fresh evergreens in multiple leaf patterns
- ▶ A long, low profile that does not hinder guest interaction
- ▶ Strong retail pricing flexibility
- ▶ A long-lasting arrangement with potential for a month-long display

Consider adding this design to your holiday floral marketing mix. Many customers want long, low centerpieces for their holiday tables. This same design can be displayed in front of a tabletop podium. Florists can sell several of them for use along the edge of a head table. If your business offers the service of home decoration, you can use one, two, or three of these on a fireplace mantel, and add just a few more placements to create a garland effect.

DESIGN INSTRUCTIONS



Materials

- 1 OASIS Everyday Dish, onyx
- $\frac{2}{3}$ brick OASIS Renewal Floral Foam
- $\frac{1}{4}$ bunch salal, dried, gold (*Gaultheria shallon*)
- 3 stems gold berry sprays
- 3 stems red grape clusters
- 1 roll #9 plaid ribbon
- 1 roll #40 red velvet ribbon
- 1 pack wired wood picks
- 3 stems blueberry cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)
- 3 stems magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*)
- 5 stems short needle pine (*Pinus clausa*)
- 5 stems Gunni eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus parvifolia* 'Gunni')
- 3 stems cedar arborvitae (*Thuja orientalis*)

A standard magnolia leaf cluster may be too large for this centerpiece, but you can use individual leaves effectively. To secure them into the floral mechanic, cut two notches from the leaf base, leaving the leaf stem (petiole) and midvein in place. Insert the new stem into the foam, and the leaf will take up water.



Build the design using line materials to extend the pattern and mass materials to provide visual weight. Add the lighter materials toward the latter part of the design process. Check the design from all angles to ensure proper form and symmetry. Add fresh flower food solution to the container and mist the design with a finishing spray. You can store this design in refrigeration for up to one month.

Professional Tip: Insert each stem at least 1 inch deep into the floral foam. This will help ensure a secure anchor and reduce the risk of stem movement during handling, storage, and delivery.

A benefit of using wooden picks in floral foam is that the dry wood takes up water and swells. The slightly enlarged pick anchors well into fresh flower foam. When attaching the berry sprays to the wooden pick, be sure to make the first wrap around the berry stem alone, then continue wrapping the wire around the stem and pick combination. This method will keep the berry placement steady and secure.



Add ribbon and berry trims to the design for more color and flair. Moisture in the form of mist or humidity may damage the lacquer of some berry sprays. Take care to test any berries and trims for colorfastness before use. It is possible to add these items just before sale and delivery.

PRODUCTION AND RETAIL NOTES

- ▶ This design appeals to customers who seek a **traditional** look.
- ▶ It can be **mass-produced** and refrigerated for a month.
- ▶ Sell these designs in multiple applications for home decorating accounts and events.

*Trim colors can be **customized** for corporate or event clients.*

RETAIL MARKUP FORMULAS

Florists use a variety of methods to assign retail prices based on overhead, materials, and labor costs. In this example, we present three formulas to consider in the retail pricing of this design.

Total cost of goods sold (COGS) = \$50

Be sure to compare to your COGS for accuracy.

Option A. 3:1 Markup

- ▶ Formula: Retail = $R \times 3$
- ▶ Calculation: $\$50 \times 3 = \mathbf{\$150}$
- ▶ Use with:
 - High production volume
 - Competitive holiday pricing
 - Short selling window

Option B. 4:1 Markup

- ▶ Formula: Retail = $R \times 4$
- ▶ Calculation: $\$50 \times 4 = \mathbf{\$200}$
- ▶ Use when:
 - Skilled labor and design expertise are emphasized
 - Moderate customization and consulting are needed
 - Comparing to many independent retail florist settings

Option C. 5:1 Markup

- ▶ Formula: Retail = $R \times 5$
- ▶ Calculation: $\$50 \times 5 = \mathbf{\$250}$
- ▶ Use when:
 - There is limited availability/when materials are out of season
 - Logistical challenges limit delivery access
 - Where expectations require careful management
 - A luxury market is emphasized

MARKETING

Give this design a catchy name! Here are a few suggestions.

- ▶ Southern Evergreen Elegance
- ▶ Merry Magnolia Centerpiece
- ▶ Christmas Hearth Centerpiece
- ▶ Classic Christmas Greens

SUMMARY

This holiday centerpiece demonstrates how freshly cut, southern evergreens in traditional styling can please customers while maintaining strong profitability. A long, low table centerpiece can be the focal point of the dining room and once set, can remain in place for the entire holiday season. This design appeals to consumers who value traditional holiday styling and are seeking professionally designed seasonal décor.

This design is appropriate for

- ▶ Retail holiday collections
- ▶ Custom home decoration
- ▶ Event centerpieces
- ▶ Extension demonstrations and professional training

E-COMMERCE PRODUCT LISTING (SEO-OPTIMIZED)

Use some or all of this text to describe this design on your website.

- ▶ **Long-lasting freshness** using fresh cut evergreens!
- ▶ **High visual impact** following a long and low profile!
- ▶ **Traditional holiday styling** with southern evergreens and festive accents!
- ▶ **A unique, handcrafted design** exclusive to our shop!

Perfect for:

Holiday centerpieces • Christmas parties •
Corporate gifts • Seasonal home décor • Winter
weddings and events

Magnolia Evergreen Christmas Centerpiece

Bring natural elegance to your holiday table with this Magnolia Evergreen Christmas Centerpiece. Designed with fresh seasonal greenery, the arrangement features fragrant pine, cedar, and magnolia foliage accented with bright red berries and festive ribbon. The rich textures of magnolia leaves and layered evergreens create a full, natural look that celebrates the beauty of winter.

This centerpiece is designed in a low, elongated style that works well for dining tables, buffets, mantels, or entry displays while allowing guests to comfortably see across the table. The arrangement highlights traditional Christmas colors and textures while maintaining a refined, woodland-inspired aesthetic.

Each design emphasizes the use of fresh botanical materials and seasonal foliage, making it both visually striking and representative of classic holiday floristry.

Features

- ▶ Fresh seasonal evergreens including pine and cedar
- ▶ Magnolia foliage with rich green and bronze tones
- ▶ Red berry accents and festive ribbon details
- ▶ Low-profile design ideal for holiday dining tables
- ▶ Suitable for Christmas gatherings, seasonal décor, and gift giving

Perfect for holiday entertaining or as a thoughtful seasonal gift, this centerpiece brings the warmth and fragrance of winter greenery into any home.

LEARN WITH EXTENSION: MSU EXTENSION PROFESSIONAL FLORIST PROGRAM

The Mississippi State University Extension Service presents Professional Florist, a nationally recognized, non-credit certificate program that supports skill development, business competency, and professional growth within the floral industry.

Professional Florist provides applied training in retail floristry, emphasizing core design principles, flower and foliage care, basic mechanics, pricing fundamentals, and customer-focused production practices. The program offers four certificate options: Professional Floral Designer, Wedding Floral Design, Manager, and Entrepreneur. It is well suited for new florists, career changers, and Extension audiences seeking practical, market-ready skills aligned with commercial floral operations. Learn more at <https://msuext.ms/professionalflorist>.

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