

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

Design No. 1: Rustic Charm



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. 1: A HOLIDAY CENTERPIECE WITH RUSTIC CHARM

This publication demonstrates a holiday centerpiece that uses several Earth-friendly elements, allowing florists to advertise and sell a more sustainable floral design. First, we recommend a locally made beeswax candle. While higher in cost, these candles have a longer burn time and give off a soft honey scent. They are often produced by local beekeepers. The design uses OASIS Renewal Floral Foam. While not home-

compostable, this product is **certified “OK biobased” by TUV Austria** and has a lower carbon footprint than traditional floral foam.

An important component of this design is the use of a measured quantity of mixed evergreens. Wholesale florists often sell pre-bunched foliage bouquets, including evergreen bouquets. These products help busy florists control the cost of goods sold by tailoring value-added products, like our centerpiece, to their holiday floral offerings.

We used a glass container that was covered with bark at the manufacturer level. If not available, consider covering a glass cylinder with bark sheets, bark paper, burlap, or other textural material.

The design approach emphasizes:

- ▶ A woodsy feel
- ▶ An approach toward sustainable floristry
- ▶ A nice balance of formal and informal elements
- ▶ An emphasis on locally produced materials and flowers
- ▶ Quick turnaround with the addition of fresh flowers for same-day delivery

Consider adding this design to your holiday floral marketing mix. It is appropriate for holiday parties and gift-giving. Upgrade the design by adding a variety of fresh flowers or holiday ornaments.

DESIGN INSTRUCTIONS



Materials

- 1 beeswax taper candle, locally made
- 1 pack wooden picks, 3 inches
- 1 roll stem wrap
- 3 pine cones, medium
- 1 bark-covered container, 5 inches tall by 5 inches wide
- 6 cinnamon sticks
- 1 roll #9 plaid ribbon
- 2 rubber bands
- 3 strands raffia
- 6 stems white stock, locally grown if available
- 1 bunch mixed evergreens
- 1/3 brick OASIS Renewal Floral Foam



Cut three notches into the base of the candle. These will form a channel to help secure wood picks to the base of the candle. Use stem wrap or other tape to firmly hold the picks in place. .



Finish wrapping the picks in place so that they are secure.



3

To properly hydrate the foam, follow the manufacturer's instructions. Insert the prepared candle into the center of the floral foam mechanic. Add fresh flower food solution to the container.



5

Cut a notch into the ribbon. This removes excess ribbon so that it can be bound with a wired wood pick.



4

To make the loop, gather ribbon into an S-shape, like ribbon candy.



6

Bind the ribbon loop onto the wooden pick.



Bind three cinnamon sticks together with a rubber band. Draw the wire of a wired wood pick through the band, then cover the rubber band with raffia. Raffia easily disguises the rubber band because the two are similar in color. These and the ribbon trims can be made weeks or months ahead of time and will be ready to fill holiday orders.



Add the contents of a sleeve of mixed evergreens. In our example, the sleeve held Douglas fir, cedar, and pine. Place the pine cones and ribbons in a triangular pattern. Place the cinnamon sticks on opposite sides. The design can be sold at this stage or stored in refrigeration for a month.



We added six stems of white stock to the design. A cool-weather crop, stock flowers may be produced near you, but if not, floral suppliers will have them. Add a tag to the design cautioning recipients never to leave a burning candle unattended.

PRODUCTION AND RETAIL NOTES

- ▶ This design appeals to customers who seek a **rustic** look.
- ▶ It can be **mass-produced** and refrigerated, with greenery, for up to one month.
- ▶ If a similar container is not available, create one using bark or textured paper.
- ▶ Flower colors/varieties can be **customized** to suit client tastes.

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) = \$46

Be sure to compare to your COGS for accuracy.

Option A. 3:1 Markup

- ▶ Formula: Retail = $R \times 3$
- ▶ Calculation: $\$46 \times 3 = \text{\$138}$
- ▶ Use with:
 - High production volume
 - Competitive holiday pricing
 - Short selling window

Option B. 4:1 Markup

- ▶ Formula: Retail = $R \times 4$
- ▶ Calculation: $\$46 \times 4 = \text{\$184}$
- ▶ 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: $\$46 \times 5 = \text{\$230}$
- ▶ Use when:
 - There is limited availability/when materials are out of season
 - Logistical challenges limit delivery access
 - Expectations require careful management
 - A luxury market is emphasized

MARKETING

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

- ▶ Winter Woodland Glow Centerpiece
- ▶ Evergreen Hearth Candle Centerpiece
- ▶ Evergreen Lodge Candle Centerpiece
- ▶ Fireside Evergreen Table Arrangement
- ▶ Rustic Pine and Candle Holiday Centerpiece

SUMMARY

This holiday centerpiece demonstrates how a **pre-made bouquet of fresh evergreens, locally made candles, and locally grown flowers** can keep production and material costs in control while offering a sustainable floristry approach. The approach aligns with emerging consumer interest in sustainability while preserving the craftsmanship and economic realities of professional floristry.

This design is appropriate for

- ▶ Retail holiday collections
- ▶ Corporate gifts
- ▶ Event centerpieces
- ▶ Demonstrations and workshop training events

E-COMMERCE PRODUCT LISTING (SEO-OPTIMIZED)

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

A rustic evergreen candle centerpiece featuring fresh seasonal greenery, white florals, pine cones, and cinnamon accents arranged in a natural bark container. The warm taper candle, crafted from locally harvested beeswax, creates a soft winter glow. This woodland-inspired design is perfect for holiday tables, Christmas decor, winter gatherings, or cozy lodge-style interiors.

- ▶ Crafted with sustainable design products
 - ▶ Fresh **evergreen foliage** with natural woodland patterns
 - ▶ Elegant **white seasonal flowers** for contrast and brightness
 - ▶ Decorative **pine cones and cinnamon sticks** for rustic charm
 - ▶ **Natural bark container** enhances woodland aesthetic
 - ▶ **Handcrafted taper candle centerpiece** ideal for holiday tables
 - ▶ Perfect for **Christmas decor, winter events, and seasonal gifting**
 - ▶ Designed for **rustic, farmhouse, or lodge-style holiday themes**
- Perfect for:
- Holiday centerpieces • Christmas parties • Corporate gifts • Seasonal home decor • Winter weddings and events

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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