

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

Design No. 4: Pair of Candles



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. 4: A LONG AND LOW HOLIDAY CENTERPIECE WITH A PAIR OF COLONIAL CANDLES

This publication features a long, low holiday centerpiece constructed with premium evergreens sourced from the Pacific Northwest, including noble fir (*Abies procera*) and eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*). The arrangement is centered with two colonial-style candles and accented with candy-stripe ribbon, holiday ornaments, carnations (*Dianthus caryophyllus*),

hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), and hypericum (*Hypericum androsaemum*) for a festive, traditional look.

Colonial candles are so named because they are in the same form as those poured into handmade, cylindrical tin molds. You may also use taper candles, which are made by dipping string repeatedly in wax. Taper candles have a tapered silhouette, wider at the base and narrow at the top.

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.

The design approach emphasizes:

- ▶ Twin candles bringing light and motion to the centerpiece
- ▶ A long, low-profile design well suited for seated dinner parties
- ▶ Fragrant, long-lasting evergreens
- ▶ Traditional and trendy flowers and accents

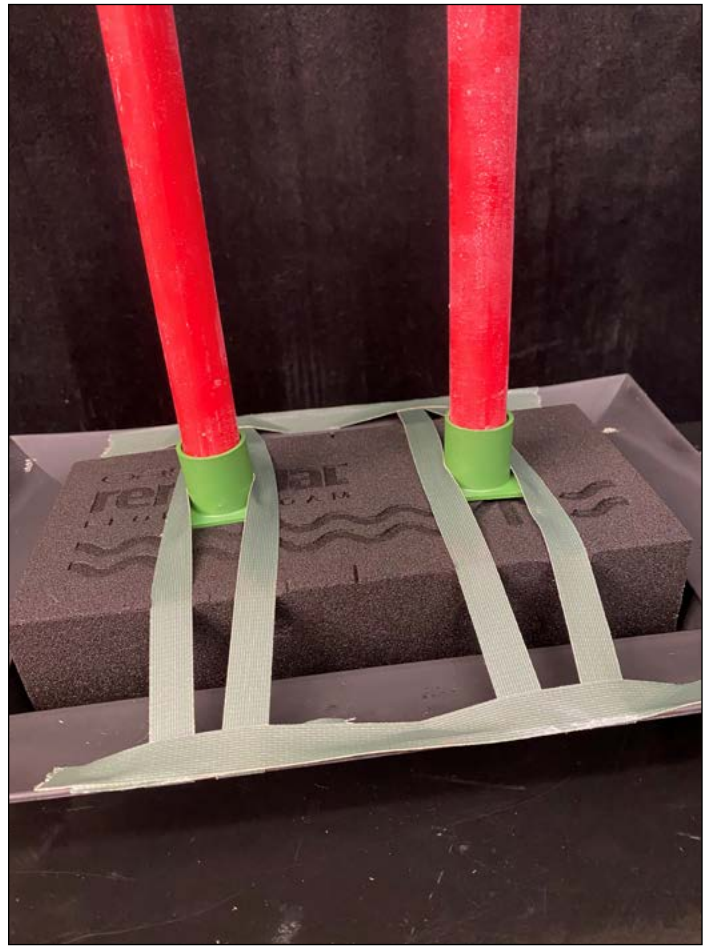
Consider adding this design to your holiday floral marketing mix. It is appropriate for corporate gift-giving, luxury event celebrations, and high-end table settings. Remember, people express love and gratitude openly at Christmas. Why not help your customers “say it with flowers”?

DESIGN INSTRUCTIONS



Materials

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1 | plastic utility container |
| $\frac{3}{8}$ brick | OASIS Renewal Floral Foam |
| 2 | 12-inch-tall colonial candles |
| 2 | 1-inch-wide candle picks |
| 1 box | assorted ornaments |
| 1 bundle | wired wood picks |
| 1 roll | waterproof tape |
| 1 roll | #40 candy-stripe ribbon |
| 1 roll | #40 red velvet ribbon |
| 1 bough | white pine (<i>Pinus strobus</i>) |
| 1 bough | noble fir (<i>Abies procera</i>) |
| 1 branch | blue-berried juniper |
| 3 stems | green hydrangea (<i>Hydrangea macrophylla</i>) |
| 4 stems | red carnations (<i>Dianthus caryophyllus</i>) |
| 5 stems | red hypericum (<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>) |



Mount the candle-holding picks in the center of the hydrated floral foam. Next, be sure that the container rim is dry. Waterproof tape will not adhere to wet or dirty surfaces. We recommend half-inch-wide waterproof tape for this design. Use it to hold down the flanges of the candle holder. Add an extra length of tape to hold down the tabs of the first tape applications. Add fresh flower food solution to the container.



Create a long, low profile using the recommended mix of evergreens. Pine extends the design's lines, while juniper is best used toward the center to create mass. Check the container and add fresh flower food solution if needed. The arrangement can be refrigerated for a month or more at this stage.



Add the ribbon and ornament trims next. Then, add fresh floral materials and mist the design with a finishing spray. Add a tag to the design advising recipients to add water to the container and never to leave burning candles unattended.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION BOUQUET

Leftover evergreens make a fragrant and timely bouquet with just a few stems of fresh flowers in a festive cellophane sleeve and jaunty ribbons. The sleeve is recycled from premade consumer evergreen bunches. Remember to suggest value-added items like this as gifts for performers at Christmas concerts, ballets, and end-of-year presentations..



PRODUCTION AND RETAIL NOTES

- ▶ This design appeals to customers who seek a **cheerful, traditional** look.
- ▶ It can be **mass-produced** and refrigerated up to one week before delivery.
- ▶ Twin candles provide wintertime **glow**.
- ▶ Trims and colors can be changed to **customize** the design.

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) = \$70

Be sure to compare to your COGS for accuracy.

Option A. 3:1 Markup

- ▶ Formula: Retail = $R \times 3$
- ▶ Calculation: $\$70 \times 3 = \text{\$210}$
- ▶ Use with:
 - High production volume
 - Competitive holiday pricing
 - Short selling window

Option B. 4:1 Markup

- ▶ Formula: Retail = $R \times 4$
- ▶ Calculation: $\$70 \times 4 = \text{\$280}$
- ▶ 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: $\$70 \times 5 = \text{\$350}$
- ▶ 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.

- ▶ Candy Cane Candlelight Centerpiece
- ▶ Holiday Glow Evergreen Arrangement
- ▶ Crimson Pine Christmas Centerpiece
- ▶ Festive Evergreen Candle Duo
- ▶ Yuletide Twin Flame Centerpiece

SUMMARY

This holiday centerpiece demonstrates how sustainable mechanics, premium florals, and festive accents can be combined in a design that aligns with emerging consumer interest in sustainability while preserving the craftsmanship and economic realities of professional floristry. The long, low design makes an elegant focal point for holiday tables, mantels, and winter celebrations.

This design is appropriate for

- ▶ Retail holiday collections
- ▶ Corporate gifts
- ▶ 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.

Add festive warmth and classic holiday charm to your table with the **Candy Cane Candlelight Christmas Centerpiece**. This handcrafted Christmas arrangement features fresh evergreen foliage including pine and fir, accented with bright red carnations, seasonal berries, and cheerful candy-cane striped ribbon.

Two elegant candles rise above the lush greenery, creating a warm glow perfect for holiday dinners, Christmas parties, and winter gatherings. Textural elements such as holiday ornaments and seasonal blooms add depth and visual interest while maintaining a traditional Christmas color palette.

Designed in a long, low profile, this centerpiece fits beautifully on dining tables, buffet tables, mantels, or entry tables without obstructing conversation.

- ▶ Crafted with a sustainable floral foam product
- ▶ Fresh evergreen Christmas centerpiece with pine and fir
- ▶ Two red candles for warm holiday ambiance
- ▶ Candy-stripe ribbon accents and festive ornaments
- ▶ Seasonal flowers and berries for rich texture and color
- ▶ Ideal for Christmas table decor, holiday entertaining, and winter gifting

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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Publication 4202 (POD-07-26)

By **James M. DelPrince**, PhD, Associate Professor and Horticulture Specialist, Coastal Research and Extension Center; **Julie Campbell**, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of Georgia; **Cole Etheredge**, PhD, Associate Professor, Plant and Soil Sciences; **Tricia Knight**, PhD, Research Professor, Coastal Research and Extension Center, and Director, Coastal Horticulture Research; **Wanda Norton**, Extension Program Assistant, Coastal Research and Extension Center; **Alyssa Palmer**, Instructor I, Plant and Soil Sciences; **Irina Sheshukova**, Instructor/Extension Floral Design Specialist, Kansas State University Extension; and **Karen Stauderman**, Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent III, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Volusia County.

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Produced by Agricultural Communications.

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Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. ANGUS L. CATCHOT JR., Director