

Flower Power

The Colors And Scents Of Flowers Represent A Season In Bloom

(NAPSA)—Americans are increasingly putting a fresh and floral spin on the winter holidays. In fact, according to market research by the Society of American Florists, more fresh flowers and plants are purchased during the Hanukkah/Christmas season than any other holiday.

This year, why not paint your holidays with a fresh brush, enhancing traditional symbols with flowers. For example, you can add seasonal color to wheat sheaves, the traditional harvest symbol. Persimmon, burnt orange, golden yellow, and amethyst...there is a flower for all the hues of autumn including roses, zinnias, dahlias, sunflowers, lilies, gerbera and yarrow.

You might be surprised to find that California, a major floral supplier, is flush with holiday blooms from early fall to New Year's.

"In California, many flowers are grown year-round, so it's likely a floral retailer can order some of their customers' personal favorites as well as traditional seasonal blooms," says Lee Murphy, president of the California Cut Flower Commission in Watsonville, Calif.

If you're an adventurous spirit, you'll be intrigued with California's wide assortment of specialty flowers. Golden amaranthus has a draping quality to grace a fall garland. Chinese lantern flowers inject orange accents into Thanksgiving arrangements.

You can use containers and candles to accentuate the holiday mood. A pumpkin with bronze and burgundy chrysanthemums will



More and more people are getting into the holiday spirit by adding flowers to traditional decorations.

carry you from ghostly goblins to gobbling turkeys. For a sparkling New Year's, arrange long-stemmed flowers such as pink-edged, ice-white roses in clear glass cylinders, lit by candlelight for a dinner party.

As Christmas nears, the floral palette turns to red. And there are so many reds to choose from, including wine red Oriental lilies, bright red celosia and crimson amaryllis. For all variations, from hot pink to velvety dark red, there are roses, roses, roses. Your floral retailer can help to put your personal floral signature on a holiday party or magical Christmas Day.

There are many small, decorative details that can light up your home for the holidays. A holiday-themed tin can be transformed

into a container for red anemones, white narcissus, sprigs of pine and berries. Instead of ribbon, dress up special gifts with a few stems of a favorite flower. Pomegranates, apples, berries and cones, gathered along a mantle, evoke the Yuletide. Scent the air with stems of cedar, pine and eucalyptus.

The fresh beauty of flowers will keep your home blooming with holiday spirit throughout the entire season. For suggestions on selecting and caring for holiday flowers, contact your local floral retailer. For more ideas on how to decorate with flowers, write for a free copy of "Easy Steps to Flower Arranging." Simply send a SASE to CCFC, P.O. Box 4003, Aromas, CA 95004 or visit the Web site at www.cfcf.org.