

in the garden **BY STEPHEN AND KRISTIN PATEGAS**

Holiday Color In and Out



Kristin and Stephen Pategas

As the end of the year approaches, look for those complementary colors that elicit compliments. (We've always wanted to use those two often misused words together in one sentence!). Red and green are the complementary colors of choice for the upcoming holiday

season. Found opposite each other on the color wheel, these colors as paints mixed together turn brown. It's a pleasing color for our subconscious mind's eye and the key to the overwhelming success of this and other complementary color eye-catching combos. The other two primary color complementary pairs are yellow and purple and orange and blue (Go Gators!). See the front cover masthead for a color wheel that shows the complementary (or contrasting) colors across from each other.

When any complementary pairs are placed next to each other they make each other appear brighter and more intense.

They engage the viewer and create a balance in the visual experience. That's what adds that extra pizzazz to the combinations and makes many holiday displays so striking.

The classic choice for a holiday red and green theme is the poinsettia which is native to Mexico and Central America. This long-lasting indoor plant can also survive outdoors although it suffers during cold winters.



For longevity select tight flower buds without pollen showing

away from temperatures above 70 degrees and move them away from a fireplace when it's lit. Avoid temperatures below 50 degrees and soggy soil. However keep the soil moist to the touch, drain those saucers after each watering, and provide bright light. Try to have yours in place by December 12th to celebrate National Poinsettia Day.

If you wish to tone down the contrasting colors a bit, add white blooming plants or those with silver or gray foliage. Green foliage with red or white flowering plants for the cool season include: cyclamen, geranium, kalanchoe, begonias, and petunias. The houseplant anthurium with large glossy green leaves has long lasting red spathes.

White accents for the holiday season are also

Note that it is not poisonous although its sap may be an irritant to some people. Many different cultivars are available and some aren't even red. When selecting them for your colorful display, look at the flowers in the center of the clusters of red bracts. When they are tight with unopened buds they will have a long life ahead. For longevity keep poinsettias

found in spathiphyllum, snapdragons, pansies, alyssum, and stock. Silver foliage occurs on artemisia, Silver Falls dichondra, licorice plant, French lavender, Texas sage, silver plectranthus, and dusty miller.



Kalanchoe is a low water use succulent that is frost tender

Use a rosemary topiary decorated with red ornaments and ribbon for a visual and fragrant accent. We are sure the compliments will flow when the colors that complement each other add holiday cheer to the season. Wow, twice in one article. What a way to end the year!

In the New Year please join us February 17th at Harry P. Leu Gardens for our Contain It! Color and Drama in Container Gardening program. Registration required 407-246-2620. 🌿

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