

Celebrate season throughout home

By Tara Marion

As the holiday season approaches, people look to add festive touches to every corner of their homes. Everyone knows the deck the halls with boughs of holly, but what about areas like the general living area, kitchen and dining room and bedroom?

There are many ways to add holiday accents throughout your home. If your rooms are already done in a decorating theme, carry out that theme with more of a holiday look, said Lori Adkins, visual display coordinator at Heirloom Furniture, in Galesburg.

General living area

If your general living area is done in a lodge look, for example, you could hang lots of natural looking pine swags and garlands over pictures, on mantles, around ceilings or in baskets, Adkins explained. Another way to extend this theme is to have a small grove of three slim trees at different heights instead of one small Christmas tree in the corner.

Lights and ornaments do not have to be confined to the Christmas tree, said Lorelee Koopsen, president of Koopsen's Total Decorating Center, 222 N. Kalamazoo Mall. Lights also look festive around ceilings and windows and on plants. The same goes for ornaments. "Little bulbs are fun on plants," she said.

Any accent pieces you can change—pillows, curtains, rugs, wall prints—give a quick makeover to the general living area, said Sherry Nieboer, manager of Hodgson's Home Accents, 275 Romence. If you have a floral print on your wall, for example, change it to something wintery, like a bird print with snow.

Holiday throws and shawls come in a variety of prints and colors to drape over furniture.

Koopsen said these work best on plain pieces of furniture that will not have other fabrics competing with them.

If somebody has burgundies, blues and greens, these things insert pretty easily, but if you have summer colors, you have to go with less color-oriented things," added Nieboer.

Kitchen and Dining Room

Centerpieces can be the center of attention on the kitchen or dining room table. There are all kinds of colored balls, covered in anything from seeds to leaves to prickles, that can be put in a bowl for decoration. If you have silk flower arrangements on your table, replace them with fresh pine sprigs or poinsettias. Another option is to fill a salt-glazed pottery bowl with shiny red apples, Adkins said.

She also suggested decorating with items you probably have on hand in your kitchen. Decorate a small tree with old cookie cutters. Display pewter or holiday dishes on hitch shelves or plate rails. Put baskets with greens on cupboards or window seats. Use woven placements to show off the warm glow of your wood table.

Tablecloths and table runners are popular because they are simple and come in a variety of colors.

"You can throw on a table runner with a couple of candlesticks, and your table looks like 'Wow!'" Nieboer said. Table runners work on dining room tables, coffee tables and sofa tables. They are approximately 1 foot wide and 30 to 60 inches long.

Tapestries are heavy cloths woven by hand or machinery with decorative designs or pictures and they can be used as floor coverings or wall hangings. Nieboer said they are often available in the style of advent calendars to celebrate holiday dates like Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanza.

Bedroom

“Snowmen can add a whimsical touch to your bedroom,” said Adkins, who suggested grouping them around a small tabletop tree or letting them march through pine boughs on your dresser.

Similarly, Koopsen suggested grouping Santa bears or other stuffed animals on the floor or in a chair.

You could also drape pine garlands over curtain rods, fill baskets with pine boughs and red berries or put a small tree in the corner.

Not unlike what you can do in the general living area, you can add pillows and Afghans to give color and warmth to your bed, quilt rack or reading chair, Adkins said.

Figurines and candles add a decorative touch to any room. Candles come shaped as pine cones, Santa Clauses, elves and anything else you can imagine and are sometimes scented. Potpourri is another way to get soothing holiday scents like cinnamon, nutmeg, pine and roasted chestnuts in the bedroom.

This year, do more than just get boxes out of storage and decorate a tree. Try some of the above ideas for decorating in your general living area, kitchen and dining room, and bedroom.