

A Couple of Things to Keep

Yule Candle Basket

by Laurel

Here's a lovely holiday decorating idea to welcome back the sun. Feel free to adjust the materials used to suit your needs and tastes. And with a little change of flowers, this basket could easily become a decoration for Imbolc.

Materials Needed:

basket (mine is approx. 12" long by 7" deep by 3 1/2" high)
3 small candleholders that will all fit in the basket
glass Christmas balls, assorted sizes and colors
12 or so silk poinsettia flowers
6 or so silk holly sprigs
2 red 12" candles
1 green 12" candle



1. Place the candles into the holders and place in basket. I like to use a middle holder that is slightly taller than the other two for the effect it gives.

2. Add the glass balls around the candles. These are your filler, so feel free to let some of their colors peak through the flowers.

3. Arrange the flowers and holly around the edge of the basket, letting them hang over the edge or pop up between some of the bulbs. If your basket is big enough, you can let a couple of flowers or holly sprigs peak out between the candles.

Set one on the table or in a window sill and enjoy Solstice night. Needless to say, if you light your candles - I do mine - don't leave them unattended. Also, if you substitute decorations other than the flowers and holly, pick carefully, just in case your candles ever do burn down a little low. While beautiful and seasonal, I wouldn't recommend pine cones at all, unless they're artificial ones. Natural cones are just too flammable.



The Cook's Cauldron

Contributed by Krystal



Winter Solstice Lemon Shortbread

1 cup butter, softened, not melted.
2 Tablespoons lemon juice
1/2 cup and 2 Tablespoons sugar
2 cups flour (unbleached is best)
1 Tablespoon sugar

Cream butter in a mixing bowl. Add in the lemon juice and beat together well. Slowly add sugar and flour, beating until continuously until smooth. Press dough into a 10 inch greased (buttered) pan. Bake 350 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Score cutting lines in the shortbread so it can be more easily cut when baked. Sprinkle with the tablespoons of sugar and allow to cool before serving.

Imbolc Banana Candles

1 banana for every two "candles"
1 pineapple ring for each "candle"
1 cherry for each "candle"
1 toothpick for each "candle"

Peel the banana and cut it in half. Place a pineapple ring "holder" on a plate and put one end of the banana into the middle. Using the toothpick, stick a cherry "flame" on top of the banana "candle".