



Containers don't last forever, so grab the chance to mix it up; take your pick of materials, and have some fun.

In January, icy winds flex frigid fingers around the garden, where flowerbeds slumber, dreaming of spring. Window boxes, void of summer's hot colors, hug the house, seeming to search for warmth.

"Winter is a real opportunity to do something fun, when things are really drab," says Barbie Tafel Thomas, a landscape designer with Webb-Thomas in Louisville. "You can also use things that would never work any other time of year," she says. Whether you incorporate fresh fruit, small bushes and flowers, cut greenery, or dried material, your planters will take on a full, abundant look reminiscent of summer's substance.

"When you're having a party, pull out all the stops, and do up your window boxes with fresh produce," Barbie suggests. The containers pictured at left show how festive this can look. Barbie first filled the boxes with cut pine boughs to provide a soft-textured base. She added cypress and holly for diversity, and then arranged the fruit. As always in good design, one element should be the focal point. Barbie chose a pineapple to center attention in each box, then built the arrangement around it. Clustered on each side of the main attraction, Chinese cabbage and artichokes add volume as well as additional green textures.

Winter fruit provides glorious color. Sunshine shades dominate citrus, and apples bring a drop of ruby red. For maximum impact, Barbie used citrus as the dominant color family and clustered each type of fruit. "The thing about lemons and oranges is that they're not terribly expensive in winter. They will

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