

Create a Candyland Wonderland

By Carol McClenin, ABQ BioPark Horticulturist

In the Holiday 2013 issue of BioScape magazine, I gave you some pointers for preparing and preserving fresh greens to provide a base for your holiday display. Here, I'm going to build upon those greens with some of the decorating ideas I will be using in my own home this year to help you create a spectacular display of your own.

Set the Scene

It's good to create a little anticipation leading up to the house, so I'll start on my front walkway that goes under an arbor and leads to my front porch. All around the structure of the arbor, I will hang lots of evergreen garland that has been woven with tiny multi-colored gum-drop twinkle lights. Then, I will make a fanciful entryway by wrapping striped red and white waterproof ribbons and bows around the front posts to resemble candy canes. To this, I will add a tall red pot filled with very large candy cane lights on each side of the arbor steps and will finish off the look at the base of these pots with evergreen boughs and large red, blue and green colored balls all surrounded with tiny white lights.

Make an Entrance

Like a picture frame, the front porch and door provide a decorative outline for the bright, colorful display inside the house. To anchor my entrance, I'll place a short, large red pot on either side of the front door, each of which will be filled with lollipop lights surrounded by evergreen or artificial boughs and multi-colored gumdrop-shaped twinkle lights. A wreath on the door is a traditional sign that welcomes guests and tells them immediately that holiday cheer lives here!

Decorate a Candyland Wreath

- Start with a ready-made fresh wreath of mixed evergreens, 30 inches in diameter, which fills the door nicely.
- Attach a shiny, glittery ribbon that is wired on the edges to various spots along the inside and outside edges of the wreath with small floral wire. Twist, turn, and shape the ribbon as you go to make it rounded and puffy.
- Attach the largest candy-themed ornaments and sprays with floral wire.
- Position peppermint pom-pom sprays along the ribbon edges, bending them until they look perfect.
- Alternate a variety of small gingerbread and candy cane ornaments, bunching several together in various places throughout the wreath.
- Place random clusters of smaller ornaments between the larger ornament bunches.
- Fill the wreath as much or as little as you like.
- If you want to add a bow, make a large one out of the same wired ribbon you used on the edges and attach it at the top or bottom, offset from center just a bit for a whimsical effect.



Deck the Halls

Stepping through the front door will be like walking into a sweet-filled wonderland, starting with the dining room and a table covered with a red tablecloth and a white runner. For the centerpiece, I'll make two candlestick holders with upside down candy canes tied together around a small vase with thin red ribbon. The curved end of the candy canes will stick out to form a base, and red tapered candles match nicely inside the vase. Next, I will surround these candles with an assortment of tall, skinny and rounded apothecary jars filled with red and white candies and accent everything using green holly with red berries (available at your local garden center). I'll match the top of the sideboard into the theme with more apothecary jars filled with red, white, and green candies and frosted white cups to be filled with goodies.

To get my tree (or trees) in on the act, I'll find an assortment of ribbons in colors and designs to match the other décor, along with candy-themed ornaments and lights and color-coordinating pieces to fill in the gaps. In this way, you can tie in as much of the rest of your house as you like. When you think you are finished, walk through to identify any holes and decide how you like the overall look. Above all, it's most important that your newly-decked halls bring a smile to your face! Have a wonderful holiday season and a joyous and prosperous new year!

Mouse Clicks

- [Real Simple decorating ideas](#)
- [Holiday theme ideas](#)

Sources for apothecary jars

www.worldmarket.com

www.bulkapothecary.com

Video Clicks

- [How to make bows and decorate wreaths](#)
- [Decorate a grapevine or pinecone wreath](#)

