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Bromeliads go home for the holidays

(San Diego, CA) -- Deck the halls with...bold Bromeliads? If festive and warm is what you want, decorate with Bromeliads this holiday season. Unlike traditional Poinsettias, easy going Bromeliads are versatile and long lasting enough to enjoy beyond the holiday season. And their vivid color can't be beat for cheerfully lighting up a room.

When it comes to indoor decorating, Bromeliads are better suited for indoor decorating than any other plant. These relatives of the Pineapple require little maintenance, so if you get caught up in the pace of the season or everyday life you don't have to worry about wilting plants.

"Bromeliads are like goldfish—they don't require much. Just feed and water them once in a while, and they thrive. And they're phenomenal in low light areas, so they're perfect for interiors," says Dutch floral designer and educator René van Rems AIFD, founder of René van Rems International in Vista, California.

Out of about 3,000 species of Bromeliad, there are more than 100 varieties available for the home and garden at retail stores and garden centers. *Guzmania* is one of the most popular, according to Kent's Bromeliads, the largest Bromeliad grower in the United States.

"*Guzmanias* are very fashionable as a house plant and is really catching on with indoor decorating. It has a real presence and comes in many vibrant colors, including some incredible reds that are perfect for the holidays," says Michael Kent, who runs the Vista, California-based family business with his brothers Larry and Jeff Kent.

Guzmanias are tall with shiny leaves. Colorful bracts (leaves) shoot up from the center of the plant. Like all Bromeliads, the color comes in the foliage, not the flower — one reason color lasts for months at a time.

Bromeliads can be adapted to fit any décor, so when the holidays are over you can continue to liven up your home for several months.

"The Bromeliad is very versatile. It can look contemporary, retro or even country. You can dress it up for the occasion. It's a true chameleon," says van Rems.

How to Add Holiday Cheer to Your Home with Bromeliads

To embellish your holiday with Bromeliads, René van Rems recommends starting with the décor at hand and taking it from there.

1. *See Red...and Green and White* – You have a lot of colors to choose from with Bromeliads. For the holidays, red, green and white are ideal. *Guzmanias* come in a variety of reds, and you can even choose a variety that has green and white variegated leaves. Or, decorate with white *Guzmania Pax* or *Guzmania Snowball*.
2. *Wrap it Up* – You have a beautiful Bromeliad; now put it in a holiday mood with a fitting container. To complement youthful Ikea-type furnishings, consider a metal ice bucket. Another contemporary option is a glass cube. Bromeliads even work with country décor when placed in a basket. And, because Bromeliads have a small root system, you can place them in smaller pots that really allow the plant to show off.
3. *Dress for the Holidays* – For charm and whimsy, hang a few miniature ornaments or handmade snowflakes from the leaves. Cover the soil with shiny ornaments. Or sprinkle artificial snow on top of the soil; add some tiny skiers if you want. Then, wrap the container in gold or red and tie it off with pretty holiday ribbon.
4. *Find the Right Place* – Now, it's all about location. You can place Bromeliads just about anywhere, except in full sunlight. Study your interior and try your Bromeliad creation in different places. Try putting three next to each other in a row, or bunched together at staggered heights. Bromeliads also make stunning centerpieces, so consider topping your dinner table with an arrangement of a Bromeliad and another festive plant or two.

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