Hand-made jewelry adds personal touch to season's gifts

Favors for your holiday party, remembrances for everyone in your class or little "thank-you's" for all who've served on your committee are readily at hand when you make your own jewelry.

Materials need not be expensive. For instance, plant materials like the ends of juniper branches that you might find in your own backyard, make delicate pins when you spraypaint and glue them to pin backs. Each one also is different.

Nature's artistry will show if you take a leafless but branched twig, paint it and glue on red berries or a tiny wooden robin. This fragile look is almost sure to please the woman who likes to accessorize her clothes with seasonal touches.

Wooden birds and other ornaments often come with a sharp pin to hold them to background material, but you should add a dab of strong cement available at craft and hobby stores.

Blueberry twigs have shapes that lend themselves to pin-making. You should paint them in colors, or gold or silver, and attach a pin back to the side of the twig that's the flattest.

Holiday jewelry need not look like Christmas, or the holiday it's meant to commemorate. Painted with a metallic paint, it can be worn anytime. Twigs and mounted sprigs of evergreen, however, seem to suit cool weather best.

You can suggest Christmas by gluing three small gold balls to a sprig of spruce and attaching it to a pin. When you paint spruce or pine, though, it's best to use a small brush.

A gold spruce-spray pin can be attractive when you tie a metallic cord ribbon at the top, but you should follow your own imagination when you select materials. A walk around the neighborhood can turn up a variety of usable items, like holly leaves, acorns of different shapes, and a multitude of colored berries.

Berries will last longer if you spray them with a clear lacquer. It gives a high gloss for a professional look for your completed gifts.



