

Dress the table in glitz and candle glow

If you're hosting a Thanksgiving dinner, you have a lot to think about between now and Nov. 26 — like how you're going to dress the turkey, yourself and your table.

While I can't help you with stuffing recipes or what to wear, I can offer these decorating tips, courtesy of folks at shops in Birmingham and Rochester.

"I like to use lots of candles," said Diana Winkworth, one of the owners of Festivities, a downtown Birmingham shop that specializes in ideas and items for home entertaining.

"I just think everything looks better by candlelight," she said. For a casual look, she suggests interspersing votive candles with gourds, colorful leaves and

wheat along the center of the table — either directly on the tablecloth or on a festive table runner or platter. With the help of the "pineapple candle adapter" that her shop sells, you can turn a pumpkin, pineapple or any fruit or vegetable that's big enough and steady enough into a unique candle holder centerpiece.

The adapter (\$15) is a green, metal, leaf-shaped candle holder with a spike that fits down into its base. Stick the spike into the top of the fruit or vegetable, then put a candle in the holder. For a glitzy effect, you could rub gold leaf on the adapter, she said.

If a formal look is what you're after, consider using brass candle sticks with candle shades and followers, she said.

The shades (\$5.50 to \$30) are like mini lampshades and disperse the light for a warm glow. The followers (\$6.50) attach to the candle and the shade. As the candle burns down, the follower follows it down, lowering the shade.

Festivities is located at 337 Hamilton Row in Birmingham. For more information, call (248) 647-7772.

Dean Mooney, a member of the American Institute of Floral Designers and owner of Twiggs & Blooms floral shop in Rochester, said, "I'm finding that there are two trains of thought when it comes to holiday centerpieces.

"There are those people who like fresh arrangements and those who like artificial ones that they can bring out year after year and refresh with new ribbons or other decorations, and they'll want to refresh them, because what was popular last year isn't necessarily what's hot this year," he said.

So what is hot this year? "Glitz is really popular at the moment," he said. "Anything metallic or gold, and mixing different metallics and gold, not just using one or the other."

So, if you have silver flatware and a silver edge to your china, don't be afraid to use gold chargers under your plates, he said.

"Another thing that's popular is a bountiful look," using lots of fruits and vegetables as decorations, he said.

Some of his favorites to use are broccoli and Brussels sprouts (he puts them on wire picks and uses them in flower arrangements), artichoke and kohlrabi, flowering kale for its purple color, gourds, pumpkinkins, grapes and red and green apples. They can be strewn about the center of the table, put in a cornucopia, in a bowl or on a platter.

If you have a narrow table, consider laying a fresh or artificial garland in a serpentine fashion along the center and adorning it with nuts, berries and other fruits.

Finally, he said, don't be afraid to use fall colors on your table, even if your china has springtime colors like pale blue and pink in it. The colors don't have to match.

"I like to use this example," he said. "When you look at a fall sunset, what do you see? Blues, purples and pinks, and maybe some orange streaks here and there, and it all works together beautifully."

Twiggs & Blooms is located at 331 Main Street in Rochester. Call (248) 652-0144 for more information.

Artisans create gifts from the hand

BY LINDA BACHRACK
STAFF WRITER

Though it might be tempting to send your niece a check stuffed into a little paper wallet or to flip through a catalog and order a cozy chenille robe for grandma, think for a moment how special it is to receive a thoughtfully selected gift from the hand.

A handcrafted original makes a one-of-a-kind keepsake, and the metropolitan area is home to hundreds of talented artisans. Some who steal the spotlight were featured at the 1998 Nutcracker Holiday Boutiques, presented by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's Hall Volunteer Council at the Hyatt Regency in Dearborn.

The well-edited collections included Pewabic pottery, collectible dolls, handmade candles, woven scarves, quilted angels, antique timepiece jewelry and hand-wrought silver. A portion of boutique proceeds benefited the DSO. For those of you who are looking for artful creations, the following Nutcracker participants will fill the bill, distinctively.

MARGI MASON traditionally turned her kitchen into a mini candy factory every year at Christmas time, cooking up brittles for friends and neighbors.

Soon, the sweet gift became so well known, she started taking orders and finally began her own Royal Oak based company — Mrs. Mason's Luscious Temptations.

"It's our ingredients and patience that make our Luscious Temptations distinct," says Mason. "Other brittles contain corn syrup for fast cooking. Not ours. We use pure cane sugar, which we cook slowly and carefully,

giving our brittles a true 'brittle' texture."

Her mouth-confections have such passionate names as "True Love" and "Heart & Soul." True Love is a buttery brittle blended with tart cranberries and topped with white chocolate.

Heart & Soul contains pecan nuts and raisins. There's also a white chocolate macadamia, a coconut pecan bark, a water-like toffee sandwiched between layers of dark chocolate and a chocolate buttermilk, to name a few.

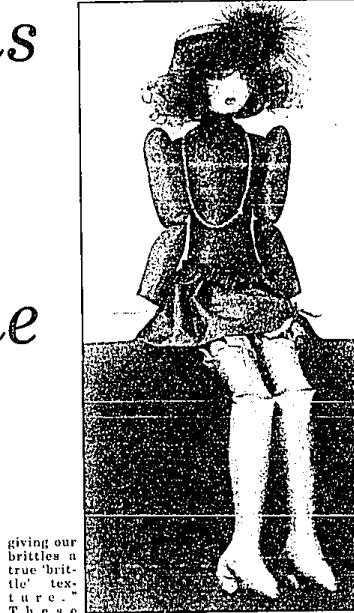
The candles come packaged in gift bags or boxes that are so beautifully designed, they were nominated for an award of excellence. Find Mrs. Mason's candles at Nordstrom, The Fruit Tree in Grosse Pointe Woods, Sweet Retreats in Milford and The Dandy Lion in Rochester. Or call to order, (248) 557-3133. Prices start at \$3.25 for a 2-ounce bag.

PEWABIC POTTERY tiles make special and unique holiday gifts. The pottery's Earthly Treasures Holiday Invitational continues through Dec. 31, with gallery hours from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 12-4 p.m. on Sunday. A porcelain reindeer is one of the new holiday designs.

OLD CURIOSITY SHOP Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson, Detroit. Also, find the tiles at the DIA Museum Shop in the Somerset Collection or Twelve Oaks mall.

JANO GARBINSKI, of Redford Township, stood in front of the rows of flapper dolls at Recycled Time, contemplating their velvet and satin dresses, their sparkly necklaces and the color of their hair and eyes. "I collect these dolls," said Garbinski. "I buy one here every year." She finally decided on a sassy red velvet. She slipped a strand of beads off one of the other dolls and fashioned it around the neck of her selection, making a flattering trade. "People do that all the time," said craftswoman Kathleen Krevesky. "It's great. It personalizes their doll."

Krevesky's flexible, long-legged flapper dolls and her pins made from antique timepieces and watch parts are the mainstay of her business. To attract attention and display her work, Krevesky, of Dearborn, places Sophie (or is it Thelma or Ruth?) outside of her booth. Sophie, a cigarette dangling from her crimson lips, is dressed in a ratty, fur-trimmed coat and a red cloche that barely contains her wild, frizzy hair. A pair of rolled-down stockings peek from beneath her coat. But Sophie is bejeweled, from lapel to hemline, in Krevesky's Recycled Time creations. She makes quite an eye-catching model. Call (313) 593-1058 for information.



Peggy Bonbrisco, of Grosse Pointe Woods, crafts distinctive gifts from antique quilts. Her quilted angels and Santas were hits at this year's boutique. New to the line this season is a flat, wooden quilt-clothes snowman that hangs neatly on a front or back door. Call (313) 885-6107 for information.

Capitalizing on the smokin' hot cigar craze, Kelly Doyle and Ryan O'Day, a brother and sister team from West Bloomfield, create cigar boxes that hang neatly on a front or back door. Call (313) 885-6107 for information.

ANN KLEVGAARD raises silver-smithing to new heights with her delicate hand-knit and silver coil necklaces. She also has won awards for her silver nesting salt and pepper shakers. Her collection includes freshwater pearl and silver earrings and a unique oil-burning menorah. Many of her pieces reflect philosophical and historical meanings. Klevgaard, from Dearborn, can be reached at (313) 277-3463.

BLOOMFIELD HILLS resident and Michigan Bach Festival director Curtis Posuniak began designing collectible hand-blown glass ornaments a few years ago, limiting his keepsakes to busts of classical composers. This year, he's added Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt and Tchaikovsky to his creations, as well as a limited-edition Old Curiosity Shop, a Christmas tree, angel, town hall, Santa and a poinsettia ball ornament. The themed ornaments, called Classics by Kurtis, are crafted in Poland using old-world European-style techniques. They're available at Saks Fifth Avenue, the Ritz-Carlton and Thom Loeffler in Birmingham.

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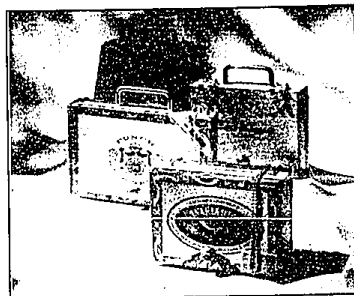
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Boutique beauties: (left) Kathleen Krevesky's flapper doll; (above) YADO cigar box purses; and (below) Curtis Posuniak's old-world glass ornament make thoughtful, one-of-a-kind gifts. (Below left) Ann Klevgaard's silver coil necklace. Staff photos by Jerry Zolynsky.



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ADDED ATTRACTIONS

talk around 6:45 p.m. His book provides an insider's view of the world of politics and diplomacy during his tenure as ambassador to Canada. 6-8 p.m. 34300 Woodward, Birmingham.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27

PEN AND PICTURES
Photographer Monte Nagler signs his new 1999 black-and-white landscape calendar at The Colorado Pen Company at Twelve Oaks mall in Novi. Colorado Pen will offer a 10 percent discount on any Cross pen. 1-4 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28

NOSH WITH ST. NICK
Neilman Marcus presents Breakfast With Santa. 9

a.m. \$14. Reservations required. Breakfasts continue on Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 20. Sunday breakfasts at 10 a.m. Call the NM Café, (248) 643-3300 ext. 2470.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

A DOLL OF A SHOW
Village Hidden Treasures in Farmington presents a Gotz doll fashion show featuring seven 1998 Getz Play Dolls and seven local young models who will dress in identical outfits to their doll-hosts. Buffet luncheon, free gifts, door prizes. 115-1 p.m. 33335 Grand River, Farmington.

THE ONE ON
Learn gift wrap ideas and how to make incredible holiday accents with French-wrapped Mokuba Specialty Ribbon. \$10. 1-3 p.m. Haberman Fabrics, 117 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak; (248) 541-0010.