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Enjoy Outdoor Accessories All Year-round

The beautiful new urns on your deck or patio were a sight to behold this summer. Overflowing with brightly colored flowers, they brought you pleasure all season. But now that the colder weather is setting in, do you need to un-plant them and store them out of sight where no one can enjoy them?

"The answer is no," says Peter C. Cilio of Campania International Inc., manufacturers of fine garden accessories. "Bring your containers, birdbaths, statuary and fountains indoors to use as accent pieces during the holidays and winter months."

With more than 20 years in the garden business, the folks at Campania know it is possible to use garden accessories in hundreds of creative ways -- with and without plants.

"Outdoor accessories can really make a statement when they're brought indoors," says Cilio. "Cast stone urns, especially with a weathered mossy patina, make wonderful and atmospheric indoor decorations."

If you wish to plant outdoor urns or containers for indoor use, Cilio recommends inserting a plastic liner in the pot and slipping the plant in the liner, thus preventing leaks when watering. Sphagnum moss can be used to fill any gaps if the interior of the pot is still visible.

For lower maintenance, dried flowers, interesting branches or topiary shapes made of moss, grapevine, shells or even shiny Christmas balls can be arranged in the urns or containers and for added interest can be changed seasonally.

White lights can be added for a festive nighttime look. Even unplanted, a cast stone urn, especially if raised on a pedestal or placed on a table can be a dramatic sculptural focal point.

Statuary, finials or small fountains and birdbaths can also be enjoyed indoors during the colder months. Create a conservatory look in winter by bringing a garden statue or small fountain indoors and nestling it among potted plants in a corner of a room. A fountain used indoors will provide much needed humidity during the winter and the sound will be a delightful reminder of summer.

Here are few more tips for using outdoor accessories indoors:

*Small birdbaths can also be used in many creative ways. Filled with seasonal fruit or colorful (peppers) or sculptural (artichokes) vegetables, they become unusual, edible, not to mention economical, centerpieces. Remember to use felt coasters on the bottom

to protect your table. Fill a small birdbath with water to float flowers or candles for an exotic and enchanting table decoration.

* Keep an interesting large urn or planter by your door to catch umbrellas or gloves, mittens, hats or other winter belongings tossed by your kids as they race into the house.

* Fill a container or small birdbath with unusual gourds and small pumpkins. Weathered terra cotta, cast stone or rusted irons are natural complements to autumn decorating.

* An elegant planter box can be used beside your fireplace as a place to store kindling.

* Create your own indoor water garden by adding plants such as spider lilies, taro or water lettuce to a glazed or lightweight container.

* Place a small urn or birdbath in your bathroom to hold soap or towels.

"With a little creativity," Cilio says, "your planters and garden accent pieces can be versatile and elegant enough to bring indoors for four seasons of enjoyment."

To learn more about outdoor planters and ideas for bringing them indoors, visit your local garden center or go to www.campaniainternational.com to view their entire catalog online.



Create a conservatory look in winter by placing greenery in a lightweight urn or other garden accessory.



Cast stone accents, like this Campania Pisa birdbath, make wonderful and atmospheric indoor decorations.



Garden accent pieces can be versatile and elegant enough to bring indoors for four seasons of enjoyment.