

episode 91 show notes and advice

Episode Description

This week, Sarah and Arthur pick their favourite things to make your home and garden look gorgeous and festive. Including jewel-coloured lights, pretty garlands, decorative trees to suit every space, and floral decorations so versatile, they'll look perfect on any table.

In this episode, discover...

- ❖ New and unusual ideas for Christmas trees with a Scandi feel- from the Exquisite Lit Tree to the Nordic Tree
- ❖ Beautiful baubles, including the new range of vintage style decorations
- ❖ How to set the stage for your favourite winter houseplants, with the mini Copenhagen Greenhouse
- ❖ Sarah and Arthur's top picks for natural yet dressy decorations, which are definitely not just for Christmas

episode 91 advice sheet

lights

Arthur's favourite

- ❖ Jewel Cluster Light String – delicate gemstone lights in green, pure white, and cranberry glass, which he suggests draping through a freshly staked amaryllis or as a runner down the table

Sarah's favourites

- ❖ An old favourite: Gold Branch Garland with Lights – which can be used outside as it's waterproof, although Sarah has it draped over the fireplace at Perch Hill with silver birch (all year round). It really comes into its own at Christmas alongside the alliums and all the other natural Christmas decorations
- ❖ Sarah's new obsession: Exquisite Lit Tree - made from very subtle, soft black wire, with lights all over every branch. Sarah had the larger one on the doorstep, bare, and the smaller one on the hall table, decorated

baubles

Arthur's favourites

- ❖ Giant Etched Glass Bauble in gold and green. Arthur suggests having just one in a beautiful bowl with some battery-operated copper wire lights, or hanging, like a witch's crystal ball
- ❖ The Lit Globe with Dried Flowers looks magical and fun – very 'Harry Potter', especially hanging in a darkened room on a winter's night
- ❖ The Spiral Rainbow Glass Bauble in vintage coloured glass, reminds Arthur of brightly lit fairgrounds and E-number packed sweets! He loves these more traditional Christmas decorations, now back in fashion, all made to be carefully wrapped every year, and passed down the generations

Sarah's favourites

- ❖ The Glass Snowdrop Bauble painted with snowdrops is incredibly subtle and classy. Sarah imagines having a few of them hanging on silver birch or elder branches, as a table centrepiece
- ❖ The Cockerel Glass Bauble for (Arthur) and the Seed Packet Glass Baubles which are miniature vegetable seed packets with a jolly vintage design
- ❖ The Copenhagen Greenhouse – a mini glass and zinc greenhouse, like a stage set for your houseplants, with a string of small lights to beautifully light up a dark corner. Sarah found it incredibly low-maintenance and long-lasting when she sampled it with baubles and Narcissus Paperwhite – rather like a cold frame as a Christmas decoration. If you have something precious like an Auricula in flower, it could live in there all year

candles

Arthur suggests giving gorgeous candles (instead of a bottle of wine) when going out at Christmas, and picks out some of the many brightly coloured hand-tied Dinner Candle Sets

- ❖ The Green and Red Winter Dinner Candle Set
- ❖ The coral orange, purple and Jaffa Cake orange of the Sunset Dinner Candle Set
- ❖ Ivy Pomegranate and Moss Dinner Candle Set

Sarah likes beeswax candles for sustainability and loves the Twisted Dinner Candles (in 3 shades: Apricot Cream, Burgundy, and Honey Yellow).

Natural yet dressy decoration ideas

Sarah's selection

- ❖ The Hellebore Garland, with dark crimson hellebores made from slightly waxy paper. Combine it with the realistic-looking, Large Catkins Sprays – either running down a table or along a mantelpiece, or even hanging in a swag above the table (hung around a wire strung between two beams – with the Mini Allium Light Chain running through it). The Hellebore Garland has value beyond Christmas and would look lovely decorating a spring table and even an autumn table, as it's similar looking to Hellebore 'Maestro', which is around from October
- ❖ For a small room or flat, or more contemporary interior, Sarah picks out the very versatile and elegant Nordic Tree made from cut golden metal. Beautifully simple just as it is, or dressed up with little soft wire lights or a swag around the base
- ❖ The Brass Embossed Bowl (around 40cm across) is hugely versatile, either full of floating flowers through the year, or with a grid over it for roses, or even filled with Christmas decorations. And it's made of metal so unbreakable

Arthur's selection

- ❖ Hyacinth forcer more as a beautiful vase than forcer. It's very heavy so useful for a single stem (of anything), in a lovely mallard green head colour, and a good price for something that looks authentically vintage
- ❖ Luxury Christmas Crackers not just for their all-wooden decorations inside, but for their beautiful presentation with golden yellow ribbons and their depiction of the grey partridge (native to Britain) surrounded by pears
- ❖ 3D Advent Calendar - a lovely old Dickensian Cathedral with little pictures behind the numbered doors to count the days to Christmas, and the Charity Christmas Cards supporting Maggie's 'Everyone's Home of Cancer Care'. This year the Christmas cards are especially jolly with brightly coloured alliums, beautifully lit wreaths, and another has blue tits feasting on a willow and dogwood fat ball hanger
- ❖ Lastly, Arthur will be buying the Sarah Raven Giant Flower Press as it will fit everything you can think of – big stems of hellebores, roses, cosmos and more

Sarah's stationery staples

- ❖ Wild Garden Calendar 2023 full of all the things that are really good for the pollinators, month by month (from the Perch Hill garden), by photographer Jonathan Buckley (all taken in the Perch Hill garden)
- ❖ A Year Full of Flowers Slim Calendar 2023 with plant portraits
- ❖ The longstanding stalwart favourite, Sarah Raven Diary 2023

What Sarah will be sending as Christmas gifts

- ❖ Potted hyacinths and Potted Paperwhites for the recipients to then have Christmas growing in their houses. Sarah particularly loves the ones in the willow baskets, and all of them will last around 4 – 6 weeks, so it's a Christmas present that will go on giving.
- ❖ Tip: They're watered well to get them into growth, but once they start sprouting, don't water, as that's when you can get rotting in the apex of the bulb. They prefer to be kept pretty dry, particularly hyacinths with their large bulbs

Finally... a fabulous winter houseplant

Amaryllis 'Marilyn' (double amaryllis)

- ❖ Slightly scented
- ❖ Extremely long-lasting
- ❖ Quite short so no staking palaver