

A Tree For All Seasons



I LOVE the feeling the holidays bring. They make me feel warm inside, make me think about gathering with family and friends and I let some of the stress of work and school just melt away. It's the end of another year and it's time to rest and just enjoy the fruits of a years worth of labor.

And then there's the Christmas tree. That wonderful aroma it brings into the home if you are lucky enough to have a live one. The lights, the shine, the glitter, well, the Christmas tree is simply an exciting addition to the home at the holidays.

With this in mind, let me tell you the story of the "Tree for all Seasons". It started because I have an old style artificial Christmas Tree. (I only have this because I am allergic to pine!) My particular tree is 9 feet tall and it comes completely apart – not every needle mind you – but it feels that way when you are putting it together. There is a two part trunk, perhaps 75 individual branches that must be "dressed" and then inserted, and a mini tree that plugs into the top to finish the whole thing off.

After hours of just putting the tree together, the adding of the lights begins. Starting at the bottom and wrapping each branch, I can literally be doing this for an entire day, with strings that won't light and trips to the local home center store! When the lights are finally up and working, my favorite part comes next....arranging the ornaments.

Do you remember that story about a chicken was it who was going to make some bakery...pies maybe...and she asked all the other animals if they would help and none of them would.....until the treat was finished, then everyone wanted to help eat it? Well that is my family with the ornaments. Once all the hard work is done, everyone comes out of the woodwork to hang ornaments!!!

So here's the scenario, the tree takes forever to put up and the thought of taking it down is distressing. Two, I love decorating the tree. Three, who says the tree can't stay up through at least half of January to get the most use out of it?

Well, I got to about the 20th of January, and mind you I had changed the look of the tree a bit so it was fresh. I got rid of the whimsical ornaments and made the whole tree white and sparkling like new fallen snow. Everyone LOVED it!

With February right around the corner I suggested to my husband that I might add some red hearts and doilies and keep it up at least through Valentine's Day! Well that went so smoothly I was dead set to keep that tree up all year.

I did it, and have many photos and even some projects to share with you as we go through the months, but for now just a sneak peek to keep you interested. Check back every month or so to get updates so you too can have a Tree for all Seasons!!



January: January's tree is all about the beauty of nature at this time of the year; the glimmer of the fresh snow, the intricate shapes of snowflakes, snowballs, icicles and the like. The nice thing about this tree is that the white lights from December still work perfectly and some of the white glass ornaments from the past month can be reused.

Upon closer inspection you can see that the tree isn't packed with material. There are lights, white flocked branches with pinecones that have been added, large snowflake ornaments, and puffs of quilt batting playing the roll of snow on the branches.



There are about a dozen white glass ornaments and several with a snowflake done in white glitter. The ice chip wreath is actually a candle surround and there are several on the tree as well.

These ornaments can be purchased a year in advance, when all of the Christmas finery goes on sale. And make sure to buy a couple of extra strings of lights. (I guess they aren't really made to last an entire year!!)

Now I'll just give you some sneak peeks at the months ahead. Then, as each month arrives you can come on in and check out the entire tree and any craft projects that may go along with it!



February: You knew there would be hearts involved! Check back and I'll show you how to make these pretty felt hearts!



March: Is all about shamrocks and gold! No special project here, but you can see the entire tree and the unusual topper by stopping back in March!

April: April showers bring May flowers, but April also brings many birds back up north. It's time to think about nesting materials, birdhouses, and strings of seed-like beads.



May: Spring flowers conjure up all sorts of great details like gardening utensils, straw hats, and picket fences. Grab a couple sheets of white fun foam and let's get creative! See you in May.



June: June's tree project uses leftover white foam from May and adds those summer reds, yellows and blues to create – you guessed it, a nautical tree complete with model sailboats! You won't want to miss it.



July: Hooray for the red, white and blue. Independence Day inspired and full of stars and stripes, this tree gets your proud and loyal heart pounding. What a statement to the birth of our country! It really adds to the festivities of the month.

Now, the **August** tree was a little difficult at first. I was thinking about going in a beach direction. Can't you just imagine the shell ornaments, maybe some beautiful coral to add some color, even fish could be part of this theme. Well, it took my then 8 year old to remind me that everyone in our family has a birthday in August (except for me) so why not create a birthday tree!!!



Since everyone was humoring me in this “Tree for all Seasons” project, I decided to go with the flow and created a birthday tree. The nice thing about it, once I got into the decorating, was that I had most of the materials at home already. I always save gift bags and seem to have every color of the rainbow in tissue paper, so it came together better than I first thought.

Add crepe paper streamers, party hats and horns and you have a pretty spectacular looking birthday tree!

September: I'll bet you can guess what September's tree is all about! Anyone with children knows this is all that is on your mind at this time of the year. So how about celebrating the beginning of the school year with a tree filled with “reuseable” decorations such as pencils and composition books!



October: My favorite tree of all was a spooky tree! It included every Halloween decoration I could find in my house from pumpkins to bats to spider webbing. I even used the witches cauldron that I normally place the trick or treat candy in! The base of this tree has some unexpected additions. You'll just have to wait and see!!!





November: Thanksgiving is the theme of this tree and you can see I have a singing pilgrim, (along with the rest of her family) in this tree. The pumpkins from Halloween stayed, and a myriad of other vegetables, wheat, colored leaves, berries and the like would be perfect for this theme. U used my turkey napkin rings as ornaments and they finished the tree off just right.

And it's back around to December again. Wow the year went fast as I had to come with a new idea each month. With a full year under my belt, I have some thoughts to convey if you'd like to give "A Tree for all Seasons" a try in your home.

- 1) This would be just as effective and not quite so obtrusive if you used a tabletop tree instead of a full 9' tall tree. Place the table top tree in your entry, in the corner of the living room or for fun use it as a nightlight in your child's room on top of an armoire or at the end of a dresser.
- 2) If you don't like the idea of changing it every month, why not make it a seasonal tree. Four times a year, dress it for the season and it will save you both time and money!
- 3) Suggest this idea to that one really creative friend you have and let them go through the work while you get to enjoy seeing the changes every month! Hahaha.

I will say, now that I've gone through the creation of 12 different trees, I am anxious for next December to come around. I want to try something completely different than last year. I'm going more sophisticated, I'd like to match the décor of my home, and see if I can come up with something unexpected to surprise you with one year from now. Is it a date?

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