

christmas trends

The colour schemes and themes that will make your customers merry this year

BY ERICA KIRKLAND

Senior buyers and designers from leading firms reveal their top trends for the holiday season, from traditional displays of red and white to modern and bold bits of electric blue, dazzling pink, vivid green and sparkling purple

All prices are suggested retail. Please turn to Supplier Listings, starting on page 86, for company contact information.



Four pear candles on a tray from Samaco Trading. SRP: \$25



Pea in a pod ornaments from Accent Imports. SRP: Set of four \$10

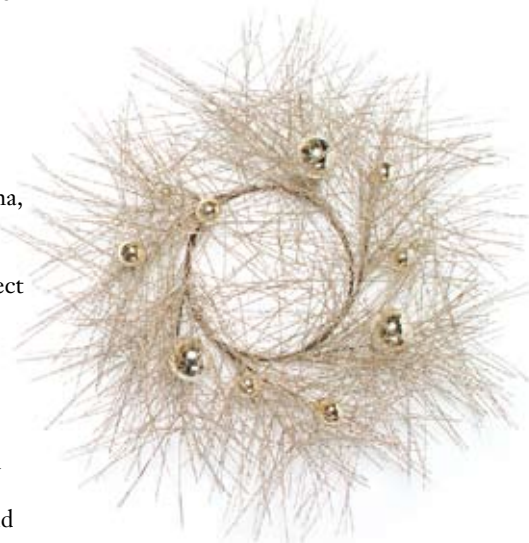
Glitz & Glamour

Whether you stick to silver or gold – or combine them for a truly modern look – glitz and glamour is a popular holiday decorating theme.

“Sparkly, gem-encrusted items which combine shiny metals, particularly silver, are popular,” says Jennifer Boake, Abbott’s senior buyer. “Crystal snowflakes in a myriad of materials are still strong,” she says. “These items are very urban and are not solely for holiday. They cover the entire winter season and are a favourite for entertaining and decorating.”

In recent years silver has been in the limelight, replacing gold as the traditional holiday metallic. But at Samaco Trading, the key metallic this year is soft champagne gold. Laurie Blaha, vice-president of merchandise, says that softer, more muted metallics are the trend. “Soft champagne gold is the perfect colour to create a classic yet luxurious look to holiday decorating,” she says. “We are seeing this colour everywhere – in ornaments, tabletop, candles and Christmas accessories. This soft champagne looks great when paired with rich browns, creamy beige or soft plum, and mixes beautifully with silver and gold tones.”

At Accent Imports and Candym Enterprises, this holiday story is grounded in a mixture of soft gold and silver combined with green and pearl embellishments for an upscale and current feel. “Jewelled ornaments, glass birds and satin accessories add a romantic feel to holiday decorating,” says Kathryn Hunter, vice-president of national accounts and business development for the companies.



Large platinum glitter wreath from Abbott. SRP: \$35



Four apple candles on a tray from Samaco Trading. SRP: \$23

Antique silver votive with gem band from Abbott. SRP: \$15 each



Whimsical & Fun



“Products that evoke a smile – frolicking snowmen, sliding birds and hugging penguins – are all popular for 2010,” says Boake from Abbott.

Because children are the focal point at Christmas, they continue to have a strong influence on how their parents decorate, which is reflected in holiday design. “The desire to create childhood memories – and to relive and retain that youthful spirit – drives the demand for whimsical, child-friendly holiday décor,” explains Cherri Coe-Stephan, design manager for Midwest-CBK. “Bright, spirited colours and fun playful characters and shapes add just the right touch of whimsy to holiday décor. The cheerful colours and adorable characters lift our spirits and create small moments of joy in our busy lives.” For an updated, modern twist on whimsy, Coe-Stephan suggests combining bright hits of red, hot pink, purple, lime green and blue.

At Candym this year, one of the whimsical holiday collections involves a playful palette of red, green and brown. Hunter describes it as fun and family-oriented. “Hot items include woodland animals, non-breakable ornaments, aprons

for children and fun entertaining pieces,” she says.

The whimsical spirit is alive at Accents de Ville where light-hearted forest critters, penguins and funky Santas frolic in a traditional palette of red, white and green. Coloured-glass beads, nickel-plated finishes, sequins, felt and paper add spirit and style to this collection.

In another of Accents de Ville’s collections, Holiday Revival, “fun, vintage and happy” are the keywords on the design board. Everything from recycled bottlecap and vintage toy ornaments to graphic vintage prints are contrasted with a modern colour combo of bright lime green and eye-popping red.



Top left: Genuine Monkeez collection from Midwest-CBK.
Opposite left: Merry Moose dip bowl and spreader set from Tag through Candym Enterprises. SRP: \$21
Right: Pearl white snowman ornaments from Abbott. SRP: \$3.50 each



Heirloom & Vintage

Antique, vintage, reproduction, nostalgic – whatever you want to call it, holiday themes which reflect simpler times remain popular this year.

“Perhaps this is due to the Canadian consumer’s preference of surrounding themselves with family traditions and heritage items,” speculates Boake from Abbott. “Products that ‘tug at the heart strings’ with warm sentiments such as ‘peace’, ‘joy’ and ‘hope’ inscribed on them are still hugely successful and cover a wide consumer base. Old-fashioned ice skates, vintage postcards, replica antique rockers in classic red and green have proven to remain very popular for this season.”

As the world around us changes at a rapid pace and uncertainty seems to fill our days, consumers are grasping for comfort and familiarity, says Coe-Stephan from Midwest-CBK. Familiar icons and characters like Santa, snowmen, angels,

stars and trees are the foundation of heritage collections. “Reinventing the familiar with a classic, new twist is the key,” says Coe-Stephan. “In our line for Christmas 2010, we introduce a theme that projects this trend – Merry Little Christmas is inspired by vintage crafts and characters, but with an updated colour palette and clean approach to design. It’s warm and approachable, and will bring back childhood memories. The colour palette is traditional with Christmas red and green, with a punch of lime and cherry.”

Everything old is new again at Accents de Ville. In their Rustic Charm collection, nostalgia leads the way with hand-knit sweater ornaments, toboggans, moose, skates and the like. Brown, red and beige are the collection’s main colours, while rustic felt, bark, fur and knits are the materials of choice.



Large holiday signs from Abbott. SRP: \$22 each

Continued on page 68

Brilliant Colours & Oversized Ornaments

Never one to shy away from bold statements, Blaha from Samaco Trading is betting that Christmas décor for 2010 will be filled with bright colours. “We are seeing the move towards electric blues, dazzling pinks, vivid greens and sparkling purples,” she says. “These bold colours can be combined together to make a colourful statement or used individually to create a brilliant monochromatic look. It’s all about colour and consumers are embracing it.”

“When dressing the tree this year, go big,” says Blaha. “Oversized ornaments are taking centre stage. Available in a range of colours, large ornaments add a distinctively bold look to tree décor, outdoor urns and mantles. The bigger the better with this trend. Make a statement!”

Oversized ornaments from Samaco Trading pack a big punch on the tree, mantle or front porch. SRP: \$13.50



Bright and bold colours are at the forefront of holiday trends at Samaco Trading. SRP: \$7 each

Classic Red & White

Artisan & Crafty

Hand-crafted, natural products continue to trend up in the market. “As we face high-tech gadgets and gizmos every day, there’s an opposite, counter trend underfoot in design,” says Coe-Stephan. “Consumers are looking for natural, eco-friendly products that have an artisan, hand-crafted feel and quality to them, reminding us that people are behind the designs.” Eco-friendly materials like organic, hand-dyed wools and yarns feature prominently in their Warm and Fuzzy Collection. “The stockings, ornaments, booties and tote bags in this collection are handmade of felted wool in cheerful colours like red, green and turquoise. The unique cottage industry process for making these pieces gives each one a unique artisan-crafted feel.”



Above: The Peppermint Twist collection from Midwest-CBK.

Red and white remains a classic staple in holiday decorating. “Its youthful appeal and versatility allows retailers to mix in a variety of items to create their own unique Christmas look,” says Coe-Stephan from Midwest-CBK. “Candy cane stripes or red and white polka dots say Christmas is here in a bold, festive way!” In the company’s new Peppermint Twist collection, the use of mixed materials creates a fun and festive vibe. “These timeless classics are designed to become favourites for years to come.” ■

