



family friendly

CHRISTMAS

*decor & crafting
ebook*

Eryn Whalen Online

Tis' the season for cozy.

CHRISTMAS WILL SOON BE UPON US. AND THAT MEANS ALL THE BAKING, CRAFTING, AND DECORATING. IT'S SOMETHING I EXCITEDLY LOOK FORWARD TO EVERY YEAR.

ONE OF THE BEST PARTS ABOUT CHRISTMAS IS THE MEMORIES THAT YOU GET TO CREATE WITH FAMILY. TRADITIONS, SPECIAL MOMENTS, AND FILLING YOUR HOUSE WITH LOVE AND WARMTH. COMING HOME TO FRESH-BAKED COOKIES, FIRESIDE COCOA, AND DECOR THAT ENVELOPS YOU IN A SENSE OF CALM, PEACE, AND SECURITY.

THEY SAY "HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS",
FOR A REASON.

MY DESIRE AND HOPE ARE THAT WITHIN THESE PAGES YOU FIND NOT ONLY DECOR BUT TANGIBLE WAYS TO SAVOR CHRISTMAS WITH YOUR FAMILY.

THAT EACH CRAFT IS A MOMENT IN TIME TO CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS. TO SLOW DOWN, FORGET ABOUT SCHEDULES, LISTS, AND BEING BUSY. THAT YOU FIND YOURSELF LAUGHING, CONNECTING, AND IN THE MOMENT WITH THOSE YOU LOVE MOST.

TIME IS FLEETING. WE USE CHRISTMAS AS A REASON TO RECONNECT, DRAW CLOSE, AND TAKE IN THE REASON FOR THE SEASON. I HOPE THIS BOOK ENCOURAGES AND BLESSES YOUR FAMILY.

For behold, I bring unto you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'"

Luke 2:8-14

*with love,
Erin*

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NATURAL CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

FOR THIS CRAFT, YOU'LL FIND THAT MANY OF THESE ITEMS CAN BE FOUND IN YOUR BACKYARD OR ON A HIKE. IF NOT, I'LL ALSO INCLUDE LINKS TO PURCHASE FROM AMAZON. A TRIP TO YOUR CRAFT STORE MIGHT YIELD THE ITEMS NEEDED AS WELL.



MATERIALS:

- PINECONES
- ACORNS
- WOOD ROUNDS
- ACRYLIC PAINT
- TEXTURED SNOW PAINT
- PAINTBRUSHES
- JUTE OR STRING
- GLUE GUN & GLUE
- STENCILS (OPTIONAL)

ASSEMBLY:



START BY HOT GLUING THE JUTE STRING TO THE TOP OF YOUR ORNAMENTS. FOR THE PINE CONES, I HID A DOT OF GLUE ON EACH SIDE OF THE TOP PORTION OF THE CONE, AND PLUGGED EACH SIDE OF THE STRING INTO THE SPOT OF GLUE. FOR THE ACORNS, I MADE A SMALL KNOT IN THE MIDDLE OF A 6" PIECE OF JUTE, PLACED A DOT OF HOT GLUE BY THE ACORN STEM, AND CAREFULLY SET THE KNOT INTO THE GLUE, AROUND THE STEM, AND PULLED TO TIGHTEN. FOR THE WOOD ROUNDS, SIMPLY STRING THE DESIRED LENGTH OF JUTE THROUGH THE DRILLED HOLE.

ONCE YOU'VE COMPLETED THIS TASK YOU CAN BEGIN THE FUN PART – PAINTING!

DIVIDE YOUR ACORN INTO EQUAL GROUPS ACCORDING TO HOW MANY COLORS YOU'RE USING. I USED METALLIC AND EARTH TONES PAINT. APPLY THE FIRST COAT AND LET DRY ON A PARCHMENT-LINED COOKIE SHEET.



WHILE THE ACORNS ARE DRYING, START THE PINE CONES. USE A LARGE STIFF BRUSH TO REALLY GET INTO THE CONES WITH THE PAINT. THESE WILL MOST LIKELY TAKE TWO COATS. ANOTHER IDEA IS TO COAT THE PINE CONES WITH WHAT LOOKS LIKE REAL SNOW USING SNOW-TEX.

ONCE THE PINECONES ARE DONE, MOVE ON TO THE WOOD ROUNDS. OF COURSE, YOU COULD DO THESE IN ANY ORDER, OR ONLY USE ACORNS, OR WOOD ROUNDS, OR WHATEVER SUITS YOUR FANCY. THE OPTIONS ARE ENDLESS WITH THIS CRAFT!

I HAD A LITTLE HELPER WHO PAINTED SEVERAL OF THE ORNAMENTS, AND HER FOUR-YEAR-OLD FINGERS CRAFTED SOME OF THE BEST ONES ON OUR LITTLE TREE.

FOR THE WOOD ROUNDS, FEEL FREE TO USE STENCILS OR DRAW FREE HAND. I PRINTED OUT A REINDEER AND A FEW SNOWFLAKES AND TRACED THEM ONTO THE ROUNDS AS MY GUIDE. I PAINTED GLITTER OVER THE TOP OF A FEW OF THEM TO REALLY MAKE THEM SHINE!



DECORATE FOR CHRISTMAS WITH GIFT TAGS 6 DIFFERENT WAYS

CHRISTMAS CAN GET EXPENSIVE! WHILE I DON'T MIND SPENDING MONEY ON QUALITY, TIMELESS CHRISTMAS DECOR, I ALSO LOVE TO GET CREATIVE AND COME UP WITH FUN WAYS TO DECORATE MY HOUSE WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK. BALANCE RIGHT?

THAT'S HOW I CAME UP WITH THE IDEA TO DECORATE WITH GIFT TAGS! THEY ARE LITTLE BLANK CANVASES READY TO BE PUT TO USE!



MATERIAL:

- GIFT TAGS
- BOWS, GEMS, AND OTHER CRAFTING ITEMS

IDEA 1 – ORNAMENTS

ORNAMENTS FOR A TREE CAN GET SO EXPENSIVE. ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE TRYING TO GO WITH A CERTAIN LOOK AND NEED TO PURCHASE SEVERAL OF THE SAME KIND. USING GIFT TAGS AS ORNAMENTS ALLOWS YOU TO PICK YOUR COLOR, THEME, AND MAKE THEM ALL BEAUTIFUL.



I LOVE FINDING DIFFERENT FONTS ON PINTEREST AND THEN COPYING THEM ONTO MY CRAFTS. FOR THESE ORNAMENTS, I LOVED THE RAY DUNN LOOK. THE BOWS I FOUND AT THE DOLLAR STORE YEARS AGO AND WERE STILL IN THEIR BAG, NEVER USED.

IDEA 2 – WREATH ACCENT

AGAIN, I FOUND A FONT I LIKED ON PINTEREST, WROTE IT OUT, AND THEN THREADED THE TAG AND WOODEN BEADS THROUGH JUTE

STRING, AND HUNG. IF YOU DON'T HAVE WOOD BEADS LOOK AROUND FOR SOMETHING ELSE THAT MAY WORK, OR JUST BRAID THE JUTE STRING AND HANG THE TAG AT THE END! THIS IS ALL ABOUT GETTING SUPER CREATIVE!

IDEA 3 – GARLAND FILLER

THIS WAS MAYBE MY FAVORITE USE FOR THEM! I HAD ON HAND SOME EXTRA CHUNKY GOLD GLITTER FROM MAKING MY STAR TREE TOPPER AND SOME GOLD GEMS FROM A DIFFERENT CRAFT. I COVERED THE TAGS IN GLITTER AND HOT GLUED ON A FEW GEMS AND TIED THEM THROUGHOUT THE GARLAND ON MY STAIRCASE. THE GOLD SPARKLE OF THE TWINKLE LIGHTS BOUNCING OFF THE GLITTER IS SIMPLY THE BEST.



IDEA 4 – CUT AND HANG

FOR THESE TAGS, WHICH I HUNG FROM OUR KITCHEN CHANDELIER I DECORATE EACH YEAR, I CUT THEM INTO FUN-SHAPED DESIGNS.

I ADDED REMOTE-CONTROLLED TWINKLE LIGHTS TO THE CHANDELIER AS WELL AND GOSH IT SPARKLES AT NIGHT!



IDEA 5 – STOCKING PERSONALIZATION

WE USE TO HAVE OUR NAMES PRINTED ON OUR STOCKINGS, BUT AFTER A FEW YEARS, I WANTED A CLEANER, MORE SIMPLISTIC LOOK. HOWEVER, THE KIDS ALWAYS GOT CONFUSED ABOUT WHO'S STOCKING WAS WHO'S. TAKING TAGS AND WRITING OUT EVERYONE'S NAMES LOOKS SO CHIC.



IDEA 6 – USE THEM AS GIFT TAGS, BUT MAKE THEM CUTE!

AND LASTLY, USE THEM AS GIFT TAGS FOR GIFTS, BUT MAKE THEM FUN AND ORIGINAL. THESE CUTE LITTLE DEER AND SNOWMEN WERE SO EASY TO WHIP TOGETHER, AND THE KIDS GOT SUCH GIGGLES FROM SEEING THEM ON TOP OF THEIR PRESENTS!



EASY PAPER CHRISTMAS TREE CONES DIY

I HAVE AN OBSESSION . . .
AND IT'S WITH PLACING SMALL
TREES ALL OVER MY HOUSE.
HOWEVER, THAT CAN GET A
TAD EXPENSIVE IF YOU'RE
BUYING THEM ALL. SO, I'M
SHARING THESE EASY PAPER
CHRISTMAS TREE CONES THAT
HAVE SAVED MY BUDGET WHILE
ALSO HELPING ME TO GET MY MINI
TREE FIX.



ALL YOU NEED ARE A FEW ITEMS TO WHIP THESE TOGETHER TODAY!
THE PAPER CHRISTMAS TREE CAN BE MADE TO ALMOST ANY HEIGHT,
YOU CAN DECORATE IT WITH MATERIAL, FEATHERS, GLITTER . . . THE
OPTIONS ARE TRULY ENDLESS.

MATERIALS

- POSTER BOARD
- HOT GLUE GUN
- CLEAR PACKING TAPE
- SCISSORS
- FABRIC OF YOUR CHOICE OR ADDITIONAL DECORATING OPTIONS

HOW TO SHAPE THE TREES

CUT OFF SOME SMALL PIECES OF PACKING TAPE AND SECURE TO THE
SIDE OF YOUR TABLE SO YOU CAN GRAB THEM QUICKLY WITH ONE
HAND WHEN READY TO SECURE THE TREES.

TAKING YOUR POSTER BOARD, BEGINNING AT ONE CORNER, START ROLLING INTO A CIRCLE. KEEP THE TOP TIGHT, WHILE ALLOWING THE BOTTOM TO BE LARGER. MAKE SURE THE TOP OF THE “TREE” HAS A SMALL OPENING TO TUCK THE EXTRA MATERIAL INTO.

ONCE THE SIZE YOU’D LIKE IS MET, HOLD WITH ONE HAND AND SECURE WITH PACKING TAPE AT TOP. THEN CUT AWAY THE EXTRA POSTER BOARD ALONG THE BOTTOM AND TAPE CONE DOWN THE SIDE.



STAND THE TREE UP TO CHECK AND MAKE SURE CONE IS STANDING STRAIGHT. TRIM BOTTOM AS NEEDED TO STRAIGHTEN.

MAKING THREE IS A GREAT NUMBER TO STYLE WELL. A SMALL, MEDIUM, AND LARGE TREE.

ONCE TREES ARE MADE, LAY OUT FABRIC. STARTING ON ONE END, ROLL THE PAPER TREE LIKE A PATTERN ACROSS THE FABRIC, MARKING WHERE YOU NEED TO CUT. LEAVE AN INCH OF EXTRA FABRIC AT THE BOTTOM AND A HALF AN INCH AT THE TOP SO YOU CAN FOLD INTO THE TOP, AND FOLD OVER THE BOTTOM AND SECURE ON THE INSIDE OF THE CONE WITH THE HOT GLUE GUN.

I ENDED UP COMPLETING THREE SETS OF THREE, AND PLACED ONE SET ABOVE MY HEADBOARD, ONE ON MY NIGHTSTAND, AND THE OTHER ON OUR DRESSER.

USING THREE DIFFERENT FABRIC COLORS/PATTERNS IS ALSO A GREAT OPTION THAT IS VISUALLY APPEALING TO THE EYE.



SNOW GARLAND WITH COTTON BALLS AND STRING | CREATING A WINTER WONDERLAND

WHO KNEW SOMETHING SO SIMPLE COULD BE THIS MAGICAL? SNOW GARLAND IS MY NEW FAVORITE THING.

ISN'T IT DREAMY? AND ALL IT TOOK TO MAKE THIS SNOW GARLAND WAS ONE CHRISTMAS MOVIE, (WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING), A HOT GLUE GUN, ONE BAG OF COTTON BALLS, AND SOME NYLON THREAD. I WATCHED THE MOVIE, SIPPED COFFEE, AND PUT TOGETHER THESE STRINGS OF "SNOW".



ORIGINALLY WHEN I SAW A SIMILAR GARLAND IT WAS MADE WITH WOOL BALLS. MAKING THE WOOL BALLS SOUNDED TIME CONSUMING. ROLLING AND ROLLING. AND PURCHASING THEM ADDED UP FAST. I SAW SOME ON ETSY SELLING 200 FOR \$75. YIKES! THIS PROJECT ONLY COST ME \$1.99 FOR THE COTTON BALLS, BECAUSE I HAD THE THREAD ALREADY ON HAND.

HOW TO MAKE SNOW GARLAND



MATERIALS NEEDED:

COTTONBALLS

NYLON STRING

THREADING NEEDLE

HOT GLUE

COMMAND STRIPS

THESE ARE AN EASY PROJECT TO DO WITH KIDS. THEY CAN DIVIDE THE COTTON, SOMEONE CAN STRING THEM, AND THE OLDEST CHILD OR ADULT CAN SECURE THEM WITH THE HOTGLUE GUN.

ASSEMBLY:

1. CUT STRING THE LENGTH YOU WANT IT TO HANG. (I USED NYLON STRING BECAUSE IT'S ON THE STRONGER SIDE, BUT USE WHATEVER YOU WANT OR HAVE ON HAND!) I DID MINE ALMOST TOUCHING THE FLOOR.

2. USING A LARGER NEEDLE, THREAD STRING. DON'T TIE OR KNOT, YOU'LL BE SECURING THE COTTON BALLS WITH A DAB OF HOT GLUE

3. TAKING A COTTON BALL, PULL APART INTO FOUR PIECES, ROLLING EACH ONE BACK INTO A BALL FORM. DO THIS TO SEVERAL COTTON BALLS SO YOU HAVE A LOT TO WORK WITH WHEN THREADING. I DID ABOUT 40 STRINGS OF GARLAND AND ONLY USED 3/4 OF ONE BAG!

4. THREAD COTTON BALLS ONTO STRING

5. SECURE COTTON BALLS TO STRING WITH A DAB OF HOT GLUE. I PLACED

MY "SNOW" PIECES ABOUT A FOOT APART ON THE STRING, WITH A TOTAL OF ABOUT 5 TO 7 ON EACH STRING. AFTER PLACING THE HOT GLUE ON THE STRING, PULL THE COTTON BALL OVER GLUE AND LET DRY IN PLACE.



6. REPEAT THESE STEPS WITH AS MANY GARLAND STRINGS AS YOU NEED TO COMPLETE YOUR PROJECT.

TIPS SO THEY DON'T TANGLE

THESE CAN TANGLE! I FOUND THAT YOU DON'T NEED TO HANG THEM VERY CLOSE TOGETHER. KEEPING THEM AROUND A FOOT AND A HALF APART SEEMS TO BE THE KEY TO MAKING SURE THEY FALL BACK DOWN STRAIGHT AND NOT BECOME HOOKED TOGETHER.

I USED COMMAND STRIP REFILLS. (I SHOULD HAVE STOCK IN COMMAND STRIPS BECAUSE I USE THEM FOR ALLLLL MY CRAFTS.) YOU DON'T NEED THE HOOKS FOR THIS PROJECT, JUST THE ADHESIVE BACKS.

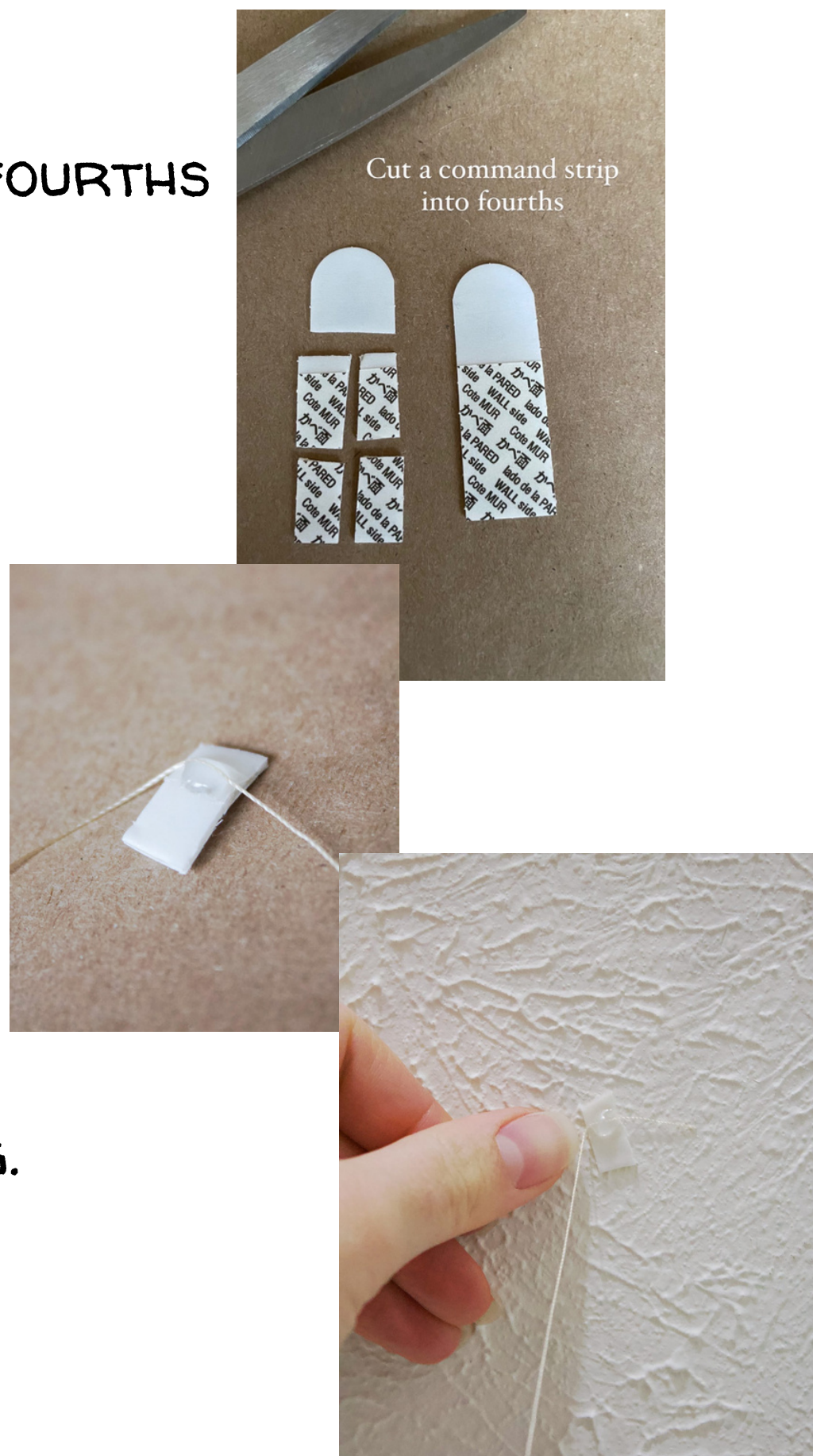
BECAUSE THESE GARLANDS WEIGH PRACTICALLY NOTHING, YOU DON'T NEED MUCH TO GET THEM TO STICK TO THE CEILING.

HOW TO HANG

1. CUT THE COMMAND DRIPS INTO FOURTHS

2. REMOVE THE FILM FROM ONE SIDE AND ATTACH THE END OF THE GARLAND STRING ONTO THE STICKY SURFACE. THEN PLACE THE DOT OF HOT GLUE OVER THE TOP TO MAKE SURE IT'S SECURE.

3. ONCE DRIED, REMOVE THE FILM BACKING AND STICK TO THE CEILING.



PUT TOGETHER YOUR SNOWY WINTER WONDERLAND

FIRST, FIGURE OUT HOW LARGE AN AREA YOU WANT TO MAKE YOUR WONDERLAND. WE CHOSE THE STAIRS HEADED TO THE BASEMENT AND THE BASEMENT LANDING. I STAGGERED THE GARLANDS OUT, STANDING BACK OFTEN TO SEE IF I WAS PLACING THEM EVENLY AND NOT ADDING TOO MUCH GARLAND IN ONE AREA, MAKING IT GARLAND HEAVY.

ENJOY!

YES, OVER THE TWO WEEKS FROM WHEN WE SET IT UP UNTIL CHRISTMAS, THEY DID TANGLE SOME AND SOME FELL DOWN. OVERALL THOUGH, IT HELD UP WELL AND WAS SO MUCH FUN FOR THE KIDS LEADING UP TO CHRISTMAS DAY.



WATERLESS SNOW GLOBES

WHAT IS IT ABOUT SNOW GLOBES THAT ARE SO ENCHANTING? LITTLE WORLDS ENCASED IN GLASS. DREAMY SNOW AND GLITTER FALLING OVER ANIMALS AND VILLAGES. THEY GET ME EVERY TIME. THIS YEAR I WANTED TO GO NEXT LEVEL WITH THE DREAMY ENCHANTMENT AND HAVE THE KIDS AND I MAKE OUR OWN GLOBES. AND I ABSOLUTELY LOVE THEM. WONDERING HOW TO MAKE A SNOW GLOBE? HERE IS OUR SIMPLE TUTORIAL TO MAKE YOUR OWN MAGICAL GLOBES.

THERE ARE SOOOOO MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF SNOW GLOBES TO MAKE OUT THERE. I'D SAY THAT'S HALF THE FUN! THE HARDEST PART ABOUT HOW TO MAKE A SNOW GLOBE? IT'S SETTLING ON WHAT YOU WANT TO PUT INSIDE. THANK GOODNESS YOU CAN MAKE AS MANY AS YOU HEART DESIRES AND PLAY WITH EVERY IDEA!

EACH YEAR I REALLY TRY TO GET THE KIDS INVOLVED IN DECORATING FOR CHRISTMAS AND ENJOYING THE SEASON. WE'RE ALL ABOUT "PLAYABLE DECOR" IN OUR HOUSE. AND THIS ONE WAS A FAVORITE FOR SURE.



I'M A MASON JAR AND GLASS JAR HOARDER. I DO A LOT OF CANNING AND HAVE TONS OF LIDS AND SEALS AT THE READY. YOU CAN SEE IN MY PICTURES THE USED CAN LIDS THAT SAY SALSA AND JAM. I LOVE REPURPOSING AS MUCH AS I CAN.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED FOR THE GLOBES:

THANKFULLY WHEN MAKING WATERLESS SNOW GLOBES, YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HAVING A SUPER GREAT SEAL TO HOLD IN WATER. THIS MAKES IT EASIER TO USE VINTAGE GLASS CONTAINERS, OR OLD GLASS JAM OR BABY FOOD JARS. HOBBY LOBBY ALSO HAS AN AMAZING SELECTION OF GLASS CONTAINERS AT REALLY GREAT PRICES. AND MOST OF US HAVE A FEW MASON JARS LAYING AROUND (MY CHOICE PICK FOR SNOW GLOBES.) SO GRAB A FEW CONTAINERS AND NOW WE MOVE ONTO THE ITEMS FOR INSIDE THE GLOBES.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- GLASS JARS AND LIDS
- BOTTLE BRUSH TREES
- WOODLAND CREATURES
- CARS
- FAKE SNOW
- HOT GLUE GUN
- GLITTER



NOTE: THESE ALSO MAKE GREAT GIFTS! I PLAN ON GIVING THEM TO SOME FRIENDS AND FAMILY. AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE THEM HOLIDAY THEMED. THERE ARE SO MANY OPTIONS WHEN MAKING SNOW GLOBES!

ASSEMBLING THE SNOW GLOBES

MOST CONTAINERS YOU'LL USE FOR YOUR GLOBES WILL HAVE A LID WITH A LIP THAT IS AROUND A HALF INCH TALL. THIS MEANS WHEN YOU PLACE YOUR ITEMS INSIDE YOUR GLOBE, YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO ELEVATE THEM SOMEHOW SO YOU DON'T LOOSE YOUR WONDERLAND SCENE UNDER THE SIDE OF THE LID.

FOR SEVERAL OF MY GLOBES I USED WIDE MOUTH MASON JARS. SO, FOR A LITTLE LIFT, I HOT GLUED A SMALL MOUTH LID AND SEAL TOGETHER, AND THEN GLUED IT TO THE INSIDE OF THE LARGE MOUTH SEAL AND IT WAS THE EXACT PERFECT HEIGHT. GET CREATIVE AND FIND ITEMS ALREADY ON HAND TO GLUE AND LIFT YOUR SCENES.



I ALSO SPRAY PAINTED THE LIDS WITH A GOLD GLITTER (I'M ALL ABOUT NEUTRAL COLORS AND GOLDS FOR THIS CHRISTMAS. (SEE MY VILLAGE CHRISTMAS SHELF DECOR FOR MORE NEUTRAL INSPIRATION!)) PAINTING THE LIDS IS A PERFECT WAY TO TIE ALL THE GLASS GLOBES TOGETHER. ONCE THE PAINT WAS DRY IT WAS TIME TO GLUE THE ITEMS TO THE LID.

CHRISTMAS CARS ARE ADORABLE AND BESIDES THE DEER, COME IN AS A CLOSE SECOND TO MY FAVORITE GLOBES. I SIMPLY REMOVED THE BOTTOM WOOD ROUND FROM A BOTTLE BRUSH TREE, SUPERGLUED IT TO THE CAR, AND TIED A STRING AROUND IT.

YOU TRULY DON'T NEED A TON OF SNOW IN THESE TO MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL. I ENDED UP TAKING OUT A LOT AFTER MY FIRST NEW ATTEMPTS TO FINISH THEM OFF, BECAUSE TOO MUCH SNOW COVERED ALL YOUR ANIMALS AND ITEMS. ADDING JUST ENOUGH TO COVER THE BOTTOMS OF THE JARS AND ANYTHING YOU USED TO ELEVATE YOUR ITEMS IS PERFECT!

THEN SET THEM OUT TOGETHER, RUN SOME TWINKLE LIGHTS BETWEEN THEM IF DESIRED, AND ENJOY YOUR LITTLE WINTER SCENES.



ORANGE GARLAND AND ORNAMENT HOW-TO



I'VE SEEN AND READ SEVERAL DIFFERENT WAYS TO DRY ORANGES. I'VE ALSO DONE IT A FEW DIFFERENT WAYS. MY FIRST ATTEMPT I PUT THEM IN THE OVEN AT THE LOWEST TEMP ONE EVENING, AND THEN WENT ON TO COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT THEM! I WOKE AT ABOUT 2AM REMEMBERING WHAT I HAD DONE. OOPS! THEY ACTUALLY TURNED OUT ALRIGHT AND I ENDED UP STILL USING THEM! THE TEMP WAS SO LOW THAT EVEN AT 6+ HOURS THEY DIDN'T BURN. THANK GOODNESS FOR THAT!

ORANGE GARLAN

I WENT ON TO TRY A FEW DIFFERENT WAYS AFTER THAT AND FOUND WHAT WORKS WELL FOR ME! BE AWARE THOUGH, ALL OVENS COOK HOTTER OR COOLER THAN EACH OTHER. MY OVEN COOKS HOT, SO I OFTEN HAVE TO BAKE THINGS FOR LESS TIME, OR REDUCE THE TEMP.



HOW TO DRY ORANGES:

- CUT INTO THIN SLICES
- LAY OUT ON A PARCHMENT LINED COOKIE SHEET (I ELEVATED MINE BY ALSO USING A COOLING RACK ON TOP OF THE PARCHMENT PAPER TO SPEED DRYING TIME)
- PAT ORANGES DRY WITH PAPER TOWELS ON BOTH SIDES
- PLACE IN OVEN AT 200 FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS. FLIP EVERY 30 TO 45 MINUTES. SINCE I DID TWO SHEETS AT A TIME I ALSO ROTATED THE SHEETS EVERY TIME I FLIPPED THE ORANGES TO HELP WITH EVEN DRYING.
- THEY WILL BE DONE WHEN RINDS LOOK DRY AND SHINY
- ALLOW TO COOL AND THEN GET BUSY MAKING ALL THE THINGS!

DIFFERENT ORANGE GARLAND DECOR OPTIONS:

SIMPLY STRINGING AN ORANGE GARLAND UP IS BEAUTIFUL AND PERFECT IN ITS SIMPLICITY.

CINNAMON STICKS AND GREENERY ARE GREAT ADDITIONS AND COMPLEMENT THE COLOR OF THE ORANGE WELL. FEEL FREE TO MIX AND MATCH THESE ITEMS TO CREATE ANY KIND OF GARLAND YOU'D LIKE. ABOVE ARE FOUR EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO ADD IN THESE ADDITIONS. AREN'T THEY SWOON WORTHY? (AGAIN, HOLES NEAR THE TOP! THESE ONES I DID INCORRECTLY TOO.)

HOW TO ATTACH ITEMS TO THE GARLAND

I ADHERED MY CINNAMON STICKS AND GREENERY TO THE ORANGES USING A HOT GLUE GUN.



MAKING ORNAMENTS

ORANGE ORNAMENTS CAN BE JAW-DROPPING! AND THEY'RE HONESTLY PUT TOGETHER A LOT LIKE THE FULL GARLANDS.

THEY ARE SUCH A SIMPLE, BEAUTIFUL, BUDGET FRIENDLY WAY TO ELEVATE YOUR CHRISTMAS DECOR! I WENT AHEAD AND GLUED ON SOME GREENERY AND CINNAMON STICKS TO SOME OF THEM, AND LEFT OTHERS AS IS. FOR THE BACKS I ADDED TWO DOTS OF GLUE TO THE TOPS OF THE RIND AND SECURED THE STRING TO IT SO I WAS SURE THEY'D HANG AS STRAIGHT AS POSSIBLE.

OTHER USES FOR DRIED ORANGES:

YOU DON'T HAVE TO STRING THE DRIED ORANGES TOGETHER TO USE AS DECOR. YOU CAN ALSO SIMPLY PLACE ORANGES ONTO THE GARLAND EVERY FEW INCHES AND IT ADDED JUST THE WOW FACTOR I WAS LOOKING FOR.



KIDS CHRISTMAS VILLAGE | CHILD FRIENDLY DECOR

I REMEMBER BEING A LITTLE GIRL AND GOING CHRISTMAS SHOPPING WITH MY MOTHER. WE'D WALK INTO A STORE FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH SHIMMERING LIGHTS, RED AND GREEN BOWS ON ANYTHING A BOW WOULD STICK TO, AND ALL THE HOLIDAY GOODNESS IMAGINABLE. IT ALMOST NEVER FAILED . . . IN THE CENTER OF THE STORE, THERE STOOD A BEAUTIFUL, TINY, SNOWY KIDS CHRISTMAS VILLAGE.



ADULTS AND CHILDREN WERE ALWAYS GATHERED AROUND THE TINY HOUSES, WATCHING THE MINIATURE TRAIN TRAVEL ROUND AND ROUND THE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE, WHILE THE MAGNETIZED ICE SKATERS DID THEIR FIGURE EIGHTS OVER THE GLASS ICE, AND THE LITTLE LIGHT POLLS SHINED BRIGHT AROUND THE VILLAGE PEOPLE.

I COULD HAVE STOOD AND STARED AT THE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE FOR HOURS, NOTICING ALL THE FUN LITTLE DETAILS. IT WOULD NEVER FAIL THOUGH, AFTER A WHILE MY HAND WOULD INVOLUNTARILY START TO RAISE AND SUDDENLY MY FINGERS WOULD ALMOST TOUCH ONE OF THE TINY PEOPLE. MOTHER, EVER WATCHFUL, WOULD SAY IN A HUSHED, VOICE, "DON'T TOUCH!" AND I'D BE DRUG AWAY TO CONTINUE OUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EXCURSION.

KIDS CHRISTMAS VILLAGE

ONE DAY, YEARS LATER AS I WAS WALKING THE ISLES OF WALMART, I NOTICE THE MOST INEXPENSIVE LITTLE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE ITEMS. TINY PEOPLE, HOUSES, HOTELS, SHOPS, AND BARNES. WOODLAND CREATURES, SANTA, AND EVERYTHING ELSE A LITTLE CHILD WOULD GO CRAZY OVER. I MEAN, I WAS GIDDY OVER THEM! THEY WERE SOLD INDIVIDUALLY AND ALSO IN SETS. THE PRICES WERE AMAZING, AND THEN I HAD A THOUGHT. . .

I'LL MAKE A VILLAGE OUT OF THESE ITEMS AND I WON'T CARE IF THE KIDS PLAY WITH THEM. IF THEY BREAK AND HAVE TO BE REPLACED. THE KIDS WANT SO MUCH TO BE PART OF CHRISTMAS, AND I WANT TO GIVE THAT TO THEM. I WANT THEM TO TOUCH AND PLAY AND FEEL CHRISTMAS BETWEEN THEIR LITTLE FINGERS. SO I'LL MAKE THEM THEIR OWN KIDS-FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS VILLAGE THEY ARE ALLOWED TO PLAY WITH.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- A FLAT TRAY OR THREE TIERED TRAY TO KEEP THE VILLAGE ITEMS AND SNOW IN
- FAKE SNOW
- CHRISTMAS VILLAGE SETS OF YOUR CHOICE



ASSEMBLE THE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE

I SIMPLY TOOK A THREE TIERED TRAY WE ALREADY HAD ON HAND, THREW SOME SNOW ON EACH LEVEL AND ADDED THE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE DECOR. YOU CAN ALSO USE A SINGLE TRAY. JUST MAKE SURE IT HAS A LIP ON THE SIDES SO THE SNOW STAYS IN EASIER. FOR SMALLER CHILDREN, YOU COULD ALSO MAKE IT A CHRISTMAS VILLAGE SENSORY BIN FOR LESS MESS, AND ONLY BRING IT OUT WHEN YOU CAN WATCH THE CHILD PLAY IN IT.



THE KIDS HAVE FOUND SO MUCH JOY IN SPENDING TIME PLAYING WITH THE VILLAGE, OR EVEN CHANGING A PIECE OR TWO EACH TIME THEY WALK BY. IT'S FUN TO STOP AND EXAMINE WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN THE LITTLE VILLAGE WHEN I STROLL BY AS WELL. I EVEN CHANGE A PIECE OR TWO AND PLAY WITH IT A BIT. WHAT CAN I SAY, I'M THE SAME GIRL AS YEARS GONE BY, GIDDY TO REACH MY HAND OUT AT THE TOY STORE AND TOUCH THE ENCHANTING CHRISTMAS VILLAGE PEOPLE.

CHILDREN'S ADVENT CALENDAR WITH THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

THE KIDS AND I HAVE BEEN DOING THIS WAY OF ADVENT FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS, AND EACH TIME I PULL OUT THE ADVENT CALENDAR THEY GET SO EXCITED!

MY HEART'S DESIRE IS THAT MY KIDS TOUCH, TASTE, AND FEEL CHRISTMAS AT THEIR VERY CORE. THAT THIS IS A TIME OF YEAR TO REALIGN WITH OUR SAVIOR. OUR CHILDREN'S ADVENT CALENDAR GOES PERFECTLY WITH THAT.



CHILDREN'S ADVENT CALENDAR | WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE
- FREE PRINTABLE ORNAMENTS THAT CORRESPOND TO THE BIBLE STORY (ALSO INCLUDED IN THIS PRINTABLE IS THE READING LIST OF WHAT PAGES FROM THE STORYBOOK BIBLE TO READ EACH DAY)

WHEN I STARTED DOING THIS THREE YEARS AGO, THE AMAZING PRINTABLE PDF WITH ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS WASN'T EVEN A THING. THE ADVENT CALENDAR WAS SOMETHING THAT SOMEONE MADE UP AND IT CAUGHT FIRE, AND NOW THEY'VE MADE A CONVENIENT RESOURCE TO IT. WHICH IS AMAZING!

OPTIONAL EXTRA ITEMS:

ALTHOUGH WE PRINTED OFF THE ORNAMENTS AND THE KIDS COLORED THEM, YOU CAN ALSO PURCHASE FELT OR WOODEN ORNAMENTS IF YOUR KIDS ARE TOO YOUNG OR YOU LOVE A MORE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING TREE.

THERE ARE ALSO SOME NEW, GREAT BOOKS THAT ARE MADE TO GO ALONG WITH THE STORYBOOK BIBLE FOR CHRISTMAS TIME.

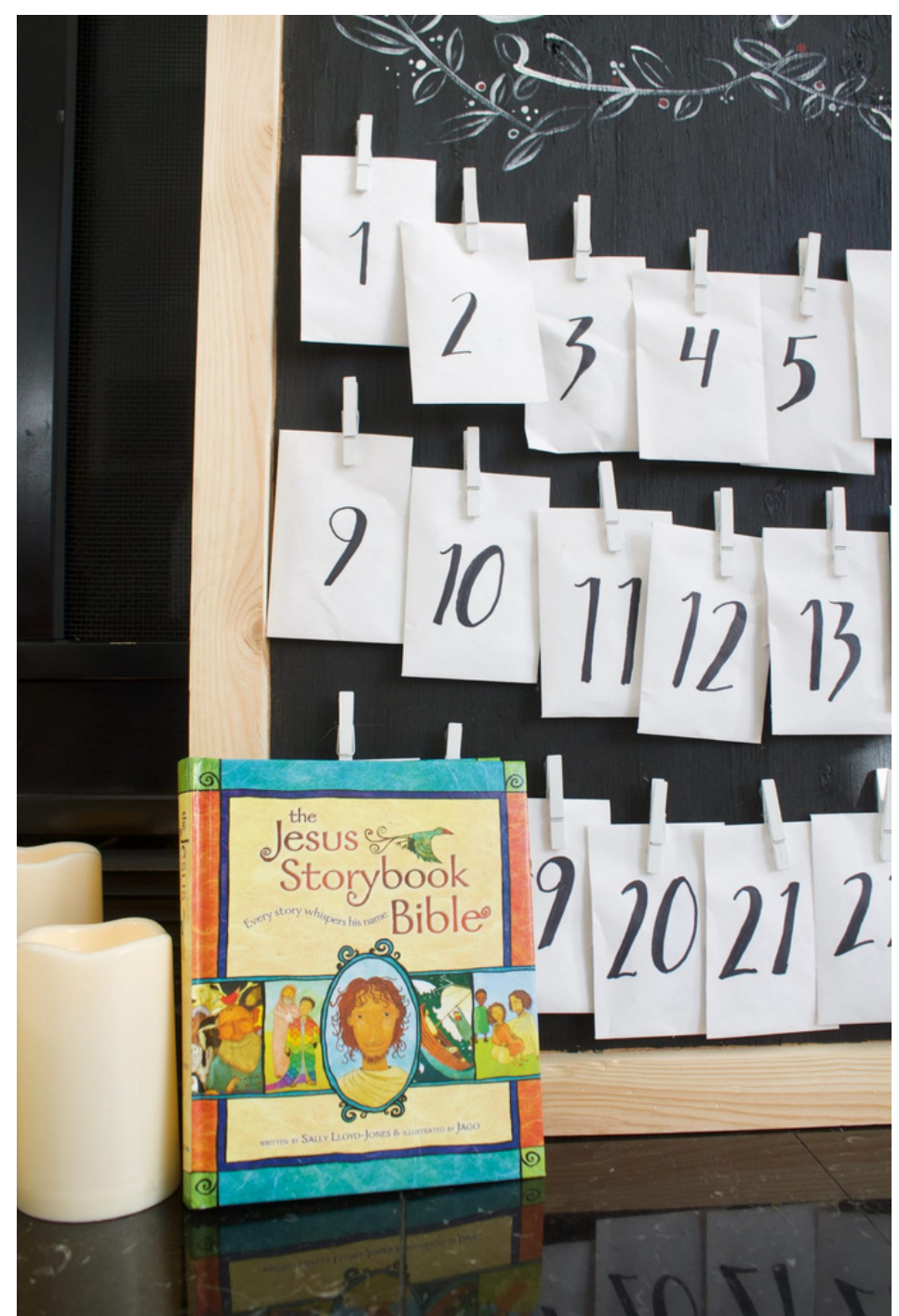
THE STORYBOOK BIBLE IS NOT JUST MADE FOR ADVENT. IT'S A BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED AND GREAT BIBLE FOR KIDS AND YOUTH. WE HAVE ONE FOR EACH CHILD AND TRULY LOVE READING WITH THEM. TYRION WILL SOON BE ABLE TO READ IT TO HIMSELF!

OUR DIY ADVENT CALENDAR BOARD

TO KEEP IT REALLY FUN AND INTERACTIVE, I STILL WANTED THE KIDS TO BE "OPENING" SOMETHING EACH DAY. SO WE THREW TOGETHER THIS ADVENT CALENDAR BOARD.

ALTHOUGH IT LOOKS LIKE A CHALK BOARD, IT'S JUST BLACK PAINT WITH FREEHANDED SCRIPT AND PAINTED LEAVES I DREW LOOKING AT SOME FONT TYPES ON PINTEREST. TRAVIS CUT THE BACK BOARD, AND GLUED ON THE FRAME. I THEN PAINTED IT, AND GLUED ON THESE CUTE MINI CLOTHESPINS. TO MAKE THE ENVELOPS FIT, I TOOK A STANDARD SIZE ENVELOPE, CUT IT IN HALF, TAPED THE CUT SEAM, AND USED THOSE TO PIN TO THE BOARD WITH THE ORNAMENTS INSIDE. AS AN EXTRA TREAT, I PLACE ONE SMALL CHOCOLATE FOR EACH CHILD IN THE ENVELOPE ALONG WITH THE ORNAMENT.

THE CORRESPONDING PAGES TO THE ORNAMENTS AND CHRISTMAS STORY COME WITH THE PRINTABLE ORNAMENTS. FOR THE SAKE OF KEEPING IT EASY, I WROTE THE EXACT PAGES ON THE BACK OF EACH ORNAMENT THAT GOES WITH THAT DAY, SO I DON'T HAVE TO REFER TO THE PAPER DAILY.



DAILY

THE KIDS TAKE TURNS EACH MORNING OPENING UP THE ORNAMENT AND HANDING OUT THE CHOCOLATES. THEY EAT THEM WHILE LISTENING TO ME READ THE STORY OF THE DAY. AFTER WE'RE DONE THE CHILD THAT OPENED THE ORNAMENT GETS TO HANG IT ON OUR SPECIAL ADVENT TREE. THIS IS A 4' TREE THAT WE HAVE JUST FOR THE ADVENT CALENDAR ORNAMENTS. IT'S BEYOND PRECIOUS FRIENDS, AND IT'S A HIGHLIGHT IN THE KIDS CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

TO SEE THE SPARK OF JOY AS THEY REMEMBER THEIR FAVORITE ORNAMENTS FROM THE PAST YEARS, AND LISTEN TO THEM GET EXCITED ABOUT THE STORY THAT ALMOST KNOW BY HEART NOW, THAT'S WHAT MY CHRISTMAS DREAMS ARE MADE OF.



CHRISTMAS TERRARIUM WITH BOTTLE BRUSH CHRISTMAS TREES

ALL YOU NEED IS THREE THINGS TO MAKE THIS BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS TERRARIUM: A GLASS CAKE STAND, (OR OTHER STAND OF YOUR CHOICE) BOTTLE BRUSH CHRISTMAS TREES, AND ARTIFICIAL SNOW. THAT'S IT! IN A SEA OF INTRICATE, EXPENSIVE CHRISTMAS DIY, THIS IS A GEM OF BEAUTIFUL, BUDGET FRIENDLY DECOR!

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- CAKE STANDS(S)
- BOTTLE BRUSH TREES
- FAKE SNOW
- REMOTE CONTROLLED TWINKLE LIGHTS
(A MUST FOR HIGH PLACES!)

ORIGINALLY I HAD DECIDED TO DO GARLAND OVER THESE CABINETS. BUT AS I STARED AT THE CAKE STANDS THAT WERE ALREADY IN PLACE, I THOUGH ABOUT HOW BEAUTIFUL AND POPULAR TERRARIUMS HAVE BEEN LATELY. AND I FIGURED, I ALREADY HAVE FAKE SNOW AND PLENTY OF BOTTLE BRUSH TREES . . . WHY NOT MAKE A CHRISTMAS TERRARIUM!



CONSTRUCTING A CHRISTMAS TERRARIUM

PLACE THE BOTTLE BUSH TREES ON THE CAKE STAND. SECURE TO THE BOTTOMS OF THE TREES WITH A COMMAND STRIP IF NEEDED. USE THREE TO FIVE TREES PER STAND. I LOVED THE ADDED DIMENSION OF USING DIFFERENT COLORED TREES.

ONCE YOU HAVE ALL THE TREES IN PLACE AND HAVE MADE SURE THE LIDS CAN STILL FIT ON THE TOP WITH ENOUGH CLEARANCE FOR YOUR TALLEST TREE, YOU'RE READY FOR SNOW!

SPRINKLE THE SNOW RIGHT OVER THE TOP OF YOUR BOTTLE BRUSH TREES. USE AS MUCH OR AS LITTLE AS YOU'D LIKE. BUT FOR ME, THE MORE YOU USE THE MORE WINTER WONDERLAND IT BECOMES.

ONCE THE SNOW IS HEAVY ENOUGH TO YOUR LIKING, PLACE THE LID ON AND PUT THE CAKE STAND WHERE YOU WANT IT. I HAD TWO CAKE STANDS WITH LIDS, ONE WITHOUT, AND I FELT THE DIFFERENCE ADDED GOOD CONTRAST!



A FEW DIFFERENT VERSIONS

THESE ARE JUST THE PERFECT AMOUNT OF COZY CHRISTMAS SPIRIT TO BRING MY KITCHEN ALIVE WITH THE HOLIDAY!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO STICK TO BOTTLE BRUSH TREES! FILL THEM WITH PINECONES, CREATE A TINY CHRISTMAS VILLAGE, HONESTLY ANYTHING FESTIVE WILL BE ELEVATED ENCASED IN A BEAUTIFUL GLASS CAKE STAND! YOU NEXT CAKE WILL BE JEALOUS! 😊

HAPPY CREATING!



GINGERBREAD HOUSE RECIPE & TABLESCAPE

I'M COMPLETELY IN LOVE WITH NOT ONLY THIS GINGERBREAD HOUSE RECIPE, (AND BELIEVE ME, I TRIED A FEW BEFORE PERFECTING THIS ONE) BUT ALSO THIS GINGERBREAD HOUSE TABLESCAPE! IT MAKES MY HEART GO PIT-TER-PAT-TER.

THERE IS MORE THAN ONE GINGERBREAD HOUSE RECIPE OUT THERE. A FEW WITH MOLASSES, AND A FEW WITH CORN SYRUP. ALTHOUGH I INITIALLY WANTED TO USE MOLASSES IN MY GINGERBREAD, MAKING IT THAT WAY DIDN'T HOLD UP. IT CRUMBLED SO EASILY AND I WASTED A TON OF DOUGH.

AFTER A FEW MORE ATTEMPTS I REALIZED THAT CORN SYRUP HELPED KEEP THE DOUGH SOFTER AND MORE PLAYABLE FOR ROLLING AND SHAPING, YET IT ALSO COOKED CRISP AND STRONG.

CONSTRUCTION GINGERBREAD

THESE GINGERBREAD HOUSES ARE MADE FROM WHAT'S CALLED "CONSTRUCTION GINGERBREAD." IT IS EDIBLE, BUT A LOT MORE CRISP THAN THE GINGERBREAD THE TYPICAL GINGERBREAD MAN IS MADE FROM. I WAS AFRAID IT WOULDN'T TASTE AS GOOD, BUT HONESTLY, I LOVE IT! ESPECIALLY DIPPED IN COFFEE TO SOFTEN IT UP A BIT.

ANOTHER BONUS WITH THIS RECIPE, NO REFRIGERATION NEEDED. I'LL SHARE THE RECIPE, AND THEN HOW I CONSTRUCTED, FROSTED, AND MADE THE TABLESCAPE.

MATERIALS:

GINGERBREAD HOUSE COOKIE CUTTERS



GINGERBREAD HOUSE RECIPE

THIS IS CONSTRUCTION GINGERBREAD. IT'S HARDER, ALLOWING THE HOUSES TO BE CONSTRUCTED EASIER AND HOLD UP LONGER.

THIS RECIPE ALSO CALLS FOR CORN SYRUP INSTEAD OF MOLASSES WHICH KEEPS THE DOUGH PLIABLE WHEN WORKING AND RE-ROLLING. THE CINNAMON AND SPICES ASSURE THE DOUGH LOOKS AND SMELLS LIKE GINGERBREAD.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 CUP BROWN SUGAR

1 1/2 TBSP GROUND CINNAMON

1 TBSP GINGER

1 TSP CLOVES

1 TSP NUTMEG

DASH SALT

2/3 CUP + 2 TBSP CORN SYRUP

6 TBSP BUTTER – ROOM TEMP

1 TBSP VANILLA

2 1/4 CUP FLOUR

*ADD IN MORE FLOUR IF DOUGH IS TOO STICKY. DO THIS IN THE MIXING BOWL OR OUT ON THE COUNTER, SPRINKLING IT WITH FLOUR UNTIL IT'S EASY TO ROLL. IF TOO DRY, ADD IN A SMALL AMOUNT OF CORN SYRUP UNTIL A GOOD ROLLING CONSISTENCY.



INSTRUCTIONS

PREHEAT OVEN TO 350°F

CREAM TOGETHER BUTTER AND BROWN SUGAR. ONCE FLUFFY, ADD IN SPICES, STIR.

SLOWLY MIX IN CORN SYRUP AND VANILLA UNTIL COMBINED.

ADD IN FLOUR 1/3 CUP AT A TIME.

REMOVE FROM MIXING BOWL AND PLACE ON FLOURED COUNTER. KNEAD UNTIL FORMS A BALL.

ROLL OUT TO ABOUT 1/4 INCH THICK.

CUT OUT.

USING A SPATULA OR OTHER FLAT KITCHEN UTINSLE, TRANSFER TO A BAKING SHEET LINED WITH PARTCHMENT PAPER.

BAKE FOR 15 MINTUES FOR LARGER PIECES. 8 MINUTES FOR SMALLER PIECES.

LET COOL ON A FLAT SURFACE SO THEY DON'T LOSE THEIR SHAPE.

ONCE COMPLETELY COOL, ASSEMBLE HOUSES.

I USED THE GINGERBREAD COOKIES CUTTERS AND ALSO MODIFIED THEM A BIT AND MADE SOME SMALLER SIZES AS WELL.

ASSEMBLING THE HOUSES

TIP: ONE OF MY FAVORITE COOKIE BAKING FRIENDS SHARED THIS WITH ME, AND IT WAS A GAME CHANGER WHEN ASSEMBLING MY HOUSES. USE A ZESTER TO FILE THE EDGES OF YOUR HOUSE SO THEY GO TOGETHER SEAMLESSLY. OFTEN WHEN BAKING YOU'LL SEE THE SIDES ARE A LITTLE UNEVEN, OR YOU HAVE AN EDGE OR A SWOOP WHERE THERE WASN'T SUPPOSE TO BE ONE. USING A ZESTER ALLOWS YOU TO EASILY REMOVE THESE LITTLE ISSUES AND THE ROOFS AND SIDES GO ON FLAT AND FLUSH.

JUST BE CARFUL OF YOUR KNUCKLES BECAUSE ZESTING THOSE ISN'T FUN.

ANOTHER TIP: ASSEMBLE THE HOUSES WITH A HOT GLUE GUN. AFTER ALL, YOU'RE NOT EATING THEM, AND GLUING THEM TOGETHER MEANS NO DOWN TIME WAITING FOR THE FROSTING TO DRY. THE GLUE HOLDS THE HOUSES TOGETHER FIRMLY, YET IF YOU MAKE A MISTAKE, IT'S FORGIVING. LET IT DRY AND SLOWLY PEEL OFF THE HOUSE. IT SHOULD PULL AWAY EASILY. FROST OVER THE GLUE, AND NO ONE WILL BE THE WISER.



AFTER ASSEMBLING THE HOUSES I WHIPPED UP A BATCH OF MY FAVORITE BUTTER CREAM FROSTING, WHICH WORKED PERFECTLY FOR DECORATING.

CLASSIC BUTTERCREAM FROSTING

THIS IS A DELICIOUS, CLASSIC BUTTERCREAM PERFECT FOR USING TO DECORATE ANYTHING FROM A KIDS BIRTHDAY CAKE, TO A THREE TIERED WEDDING CAKE.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 CUP BUTTER
- 3 TO 5 CUPS POWDERED SUGAR
- 1 TBSP VANILLA EXTRACT
- 1/4 TSP SALT
- 4 TBSP HEAVY CREAM



MIX ROOM TEMPERATURE BUTTER UNTIL A WHIPPED CONSISTENCY. SLOWLY ADD 1 CUP POWDERED SUGAR AND MIX TO COMBINE.

ADD IN SALT, VANILLA, AND HEAVY CREAM. SLOWLY MIX IN REMAINDER OF POWDERED SUGAR.

NOTICE I LEAVE A BIG MARGIN FOR THE AMOUNT OF POWDERED SUGAR TO USE. THIS IS BECAUSE EVERYONE TENDS TO HAVE A FROSTING CONSISTENCY THEY PREFER. I LIKE MINE A BIT THICKER, SO I TEND TO ADD MORE. SOME KEEP THE CRUMB COAT FROSTING THINNER, AND MAKE THE FROSTING USED FOR DECORATING A LITTLE THICKER. IF YOU'RE UNSURE, USE AROUND THE 4 CUP RANGE.

FROSTING THE HOUSES

WHIP UP THE EASY, CLASSIC BUTTERCREAM AND PLACE IN A PIPING BAG WITH A MEDIUM ROUND DECORATING TIP OR A SMALL CUT IN THE END OF THE FROSTING BAG.

I WENT OVER ALL THE HOT GLUE WITH BUTTERCREAM, GIVING IT THE ILLUSION IT WAS FROSTED TOGETHER. AFTER THAT I WENT DOWN TO A SMALLER ROUND TIP, AND STARTED DECORATING THE HOUSES AND ROOFS.

ALL I DID WAS SEARCH PINTEREST FOR GINGERBREAD HOUSES, AND FOUND SOME HOUSE PATTERNS I LIKED AND FREEHANDED THEM ONTO MY HOUSES. THEY DIDN'T TURN OUT PERFECT, I'M NOT A EXPERT FROSTER ANYMORE, BUT STILL, THEY WERE SO FUN TO WORK ON. AND TRULY, NO ONE IS GOING TO SEE THE FROSTING SMUDGE ON THE CORNER OF YOUR HOUSE, OR THE DRIP ON THE ROOF. THERE'S GOING TO BE SO MUCH TO LOOK AT IN YOUR VILLAGE THEY'RE JUST GOING TO BE IN AWE.

ADDING THE SNOW

ONCE THE HOUSES ARE DECORATED, IT'S TIME TO ADD THE SNOW, OR ROYAL ICING AS IT'S TRULY CALLED. THIS IS WHAT TAKES YOUR GINGERBREAD HOUSES TO THE NEXT LEVEL. THE SNOW IS SO ROMANTIC, SO SOFT AND BEAUTIFUL, AND SO . . . SNOWY! IT TRULY LOOKS LIKE THE SNOW YOU SEE OUTSIDE ON A FRESH WINTER MORNING!



ROYAL ICING

THIS ROYAL ICING IS ONLY TWO INGREDIENTS PERFECT FOR A SNOWY TOPPED GINGERBREAD VILLAGE.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 EGG WHITES
- 2 CUPS SIFTED POWDERED SUGAR

INSTRUCTIONS

1. BEAT EGG WHITES IN A MIXER OR WITH A HAND MIXER UNTIL THEY BEGIN TO TURN WHITE IN COLOR. SLOWLY ADD IN POWDERED SUGAR 1/4 CUP AT A TIME. PLAY WITH THE CONSISTENCY. SOME LIKE THEIR SNOW WITH MORE DEFINITION, AND MAY WANT TO ADD A LITTLE MORE. OTHERS MIGHT LIKE THEIR SNOW SOFT, WHICH MAY MEAN A LITTLE LESS SUGAR.
2. USE IMMEDIATELY, IT WILL DRY AND FORM A SHELL COATING FAST. IF NOT USING RIGHT AWAY, COVER WITH A WET CLOTH OR PLACTIC WRAP.

WORK QUICKLY ONCE YOU'VE ADDED THE ROYAL ICING TO A LARGE TIPPED PIPPING BAG. THE FROSTING WILL DRY WITHIN A FEW MINUTES ONCE PIPPED OUT OF THE BAG. ADD TO YOUR HOUSE IN SMALL CIRCULAR MOTIONS, PULLING DOWN TO MAKE MELTING SNOW. YOU'LL GET THE HANG OF IT ONCE YOU DO ONE OR TWO HOUSES!

GINGERBREAD HOUSE TABLESCAPE

TO MAKE THE TABLESCAPE, I CUT OUT A SECTION OF WRAPPING PAPER A FOOT AND A HALF WIDE, BY 5 FEET LONG. DEPENDING ON YOUR TABLE YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHANGE THE DIMENSIONS.



ONCE THE PAPER WAS DOWN, I STARTED IN THE CENTER AND WORKED MY WAY OUT ON EACH SIDE, STAGGERING THE HOUSES. I PUT THE CHURCH AND LARGER HOUSES TOWARDS THE MIDDLE, AND SMALLER HOUSES AROUND THOSE.

TO MAKE THE CHURCH STEEPLE I FREEHANDED SOME LONGER RECTANGLE PIECES MYSELF, AND SOME NARROW TRIANGLES, AND ASSEMBLING THEM. THEY DIDN'T LOOK GREAT SOLO, BUT COVERED IN SNOW IT'S PERFECT.

ONCE THE HOUSES ARE STAGGERED HOW YOU THINK THEY LOOK BEST, IT'S TIME TO FILL IN A LITTLE. NOW, YOU CAN LEAVE AS IS, AND THEY'D BE JUST AS STUNNING, BUT I WANTED TO CREATE A COMPLETE WHITE WINTER WONDERLAND.

AT FIRST I ADDED IN BOTTLE BRUSH TREES AND LITTLE VILLAGE ITEMS, BUT FOR ME, IT WAS TOO BUSY. I WANTED A SIMPLE SNOWY CHRISTMAS MORNING. MY VISION WAS FOR SPARKLE AND LOTS OF WHITE. I GRABBED ALL THE NEUTRAL CANDLESTICK HOLDERS I HAD, STAGGERED THEM THROUGHOUT THE VILLAGE.

ALONG WITH THE CANDLES, I THREADED TWINKLE LIGHTS BETWEEN AND AROUND THE HOUSES. TO ADD EVEN MORE WHITE, I BROUGHT UP SOME SMALL CERAMIC HOUSES AND STAGGERED THOSE TOO.

TO FINISH IT OFF, I DUSTED THE TOP OF IT ALL WITH POWDERED SUGAR, LARGE FLAKE SILVER GLITTER, AND SMALL, PLASTIC DIAMONDS.



The End

I HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS EBOOK AND THAT IT ENCOURAGES YOU TO HAVE AN AMAZING CHRISTMAS WITH YOUR FAMILY!

Bonny

WANT ONE MORE IDEA? CHECK OUT THIS PAINT BY NUMBER SANTA I MADE LAST YEAR. IT WAS SUCH A FUN TIME AND ANOTHER GREAT FAMILY PROJECT! HE IS A LOOKER!

PAINT SANTA, LARGER THAN LIFE

MAKE SURE WE'RE FRIENDS ON INSTAGRAM WHERE I SHARE ALL MY PROJECTS IN REAL TIME!

Merry Christmas
friends,
Eryn