

Seasonal Crafting and Decorating Ideas for You

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November 7, 2021



Fall is my favorite season and Chanukah is my favorite holiday, so you can be sure I have a lot of ideas for seasonal and holiday activities and decor!

I love how with each season, there are new activities to work on, decorating to do, foods to eat and holidays to celebrate, bringing freshness and excitement into the next few months. Things like changing the bed covers and throw pillows to seasonally-themed colors and door decorating are two of my favorites. Then there's serving seasonal foods like grilled fish with mango or corn chutney in the summer, pumpkin soup and baked root vegetables in the fall, a hearty stew in winter

and fruit shakes and salads in the spring, not to mention holiday specialty foods.

The month of Kislev is here, falling out in early November this year. Here in Israel, it's finally feeling a bit like autumn and this is when we really get into the autumn and Chanukah shvung around our house! Fall is my favorite season and Chanukah is my favorite holiday, so you can be sure I have a lot of ideas for seasonal and holiday activities and decor! I'll go through just a few in this article. We use these and more to get the kids creativity and imagination going, as well as to teach about the upcoming holiday, nature, and the season, and to instill a new and exciting mood in the house.



Leaf and Pinecone Collecting, Painting, and Crafting

Here's where we bring in some outdoor/nature time. We go to either a local park or a nearby forest and collect leaves and pinecones. As we walk around collecting, I point out evergreen trees and compare them with the deciduous trees and explain the difference. We'll take a pinecone and review its beautiful mathematical symmetry and point out that there is tremendous mathematical symmetry in all over in nature. We look out for the wagtails, Israel's autumn bird and we usually find a couple, which is always exciting!

At home, we make leaf and pinecone art! For example, we'll make animal shapes out of leaves and paste them on cardboard; we create leaf lanterns by taking 48-hour glass candle holders, pasting leaves on the outside of the jar, and lighting a tealight candle inside it. It's so cute! Or we'll make glitter leaves by brushing glue over the leaves and then

sprinkling glitter on them. We then display them on a tray or a shallow basket. With the pinecones, we'll spray paint them silver or gold and then display them in a basket on the living room table.



Adding seasonal colors and holiday mementos to your home decor

For fall I love burnt orange, forest green, gray, mustard, and earth tones. For Chanukah time I like fall colors plus lots of silver, gold, and glitter. Also, the cooler weather, rain, sweaters, and Chanukah candles makes me feel homey and cozy and I want to instill that feel in my home.

In the living room, I switch out the purple couch throw pillows for burnt orange ones and take out the grey throw

blankets. I'll switch the off white dining-room table runner for a brown and gold one and place a bowl with silver or gold spray painted (yes – homemade) pinecones in it. We take out our Chanukah menorah and display it on a prominent living room shelf. In the kitchen I have a bowl of lemons from my yard and another bowl of red apples. In the bedrooms I switch out the kids' blue blanket covers and pillowcases to silver-grey and take out some knitted throw blankets.



There are so many more fun and exciting things to do to get into the season! Creating a nature basket with leaves, pine cones, rocks and acorns; making plasticine figures like snails

and birds; baking apple pie, making pumpkin spiced latee and apple-ginger-lemon tea with honey, raking leaves, hiking, making leaf art, doing a seasonal home decluttering project, reading a book or two about Chanukah to the kids every night and discussing our plans for the upcoming holiday; teaching the kids about Chanukah's theme of giving thanks to Hashem as well as teaching them to give thanks every time it rains because it is a huge blessing.

Creating a seasonal theme in your home, getting your children's creativity and imagination going through crafts and education are all awesome and fun things to do for their development, education and excitement about the season, upcoming holidays, and life in general!

Adding that extra seasonal touch to your home gives it a loving feel and will create lasting memories for those who inhabit it. It doesn't have to be a lot either. Just a small change makes for a change in atmosphere and feel. Let the crafting and decorating begin!