

Rittners School of Floral Design



*Rittners School Of
Floral Design In
Boston Presents...*

**Incredible
Cool Vase
Arrangement**

Wow!!!! Isn't this an incredible arrangement???? (It's really cool too!)





Hi, Welcome to The Rittners School of Floral Design in Boston. It's a pleasure welcoming you to this distance education workshop e-book entitled "Incredible Cool Vase Arrangement" We think that you are really going to enjoy this lesson!

One thing that can elevate your floral designing to professional status is the knowledge of professional techniques. People come to Rittners Floral School to learn such techniques. We are pleased to share a really great one here with you, one which can really give your florals some sparkle and pizzazz!

So what is the very specific technique that gives this design a very unique look?

In this "Incredible Cool Vase Arrangement" we use what we call "sheltering" technique.

What is sheltering technique? Sheltering technique is a very neat technique where some flowers (or other floral items) are placed around and over other florals that are used in an arrangement, thereby enclosing or "sheltering" those items.....



Some designers would suggest that sheltering gives an impression of depth in our designing. This is true in some cases. More important, in our opinion, is that sheltering can give a totally different visual “look” or “feel” to an arrangement.....

There are times when a designer simply wants to come up with a design that feels different or unusual. Sheltering is one of those techniques that can easily create a different kind of look.

It is not hard to do.

It can give an almost futuristic feel to many of your florals.

It is certainly not a classical kind of look.

Nor is it for everyone. Some folks will love designs that incorporate this effect. Others will find it weird. (It is weird, but we think it is ‘good’ weird!)

We suggest that you look at sheltering as but one technique and approach amongst many! The more techniques and approaches that a floral designer masters, the more interesting the floral solutions that s/he can provide.

Here are some examples of sheltering on the next page.....

Sheltering technique is a very neat technique where some flowers (or other floral items) are placed around and over other florals that are used in an arrangement, thereby enclosing or “sheltering” those items.....



Sheltering can be achieved by grasses, flexible branches, decorative wire or by flowers..... These are examples with grasses and equisetum..... In the arrangement that you will learn in this e-book lesson we will shelter with curly willow which is a very neat branchy material...



What You Will Need For This Incredible Vase Arrangement:

- Container
- Foam
- Red carnations (3-5)
- Green carnations (3-5)
- Yellow roses (4-5)
- Red roses (4-5)
- Small allium (4-5)
- Sedum (4-5 stems)
- Viburnum berries
- Bittersweet
- Spanish moss
- curly willow





The choice of a container is a critical one!

The choice of a container is always the starting point for any vase arrangement. It sets the atmosphere.

We can use just about any container for a design incorporating sheltering technique.....

In this particular design we are going to use a simulated terra cotta container. The reason I say “simulated” is that the container is actually ceramic, but has a terra cotta type finish to it.

It provides a very rich, lavish kind of feeling right from the start!





I can't stress enough that the choice of a container for your design is one that should be given thought. If the container is



five or six inches tall your arrangement will be elevated at least that amount above the surface upon which it will be placed. It will “feel” a little bigger because of that.

The material and surface characteristics of your container will impact upon the psychological impact and the “atmosphere” of the design. If the container feels more utilitarian, so too will the design. If the base is more upscale the arrangement will feel that way as well.



Here are examples of designs that are very similar to the one we are creating in this lesson. Notice the use of the glass container.

Different container, different effect. Not that one is necessarily “better” than the other. The visual effect is just different.

You may wish to experiment with this variable in your own designing!





If you are like most folks who like to play with flowers, you will have already accumulated a number of containers (or you will).

As always, we suggest that in making the design for this lesson, you don't obsess about matching your specific base exactly to ours.

Pick something that you have on hand, and you will most likely have a very pretty design.... It is healthy to experiment and see how any given arrangement may look with different kinds of containers.....



Wedge a piece of foam securely into the container. If you feel the need to put florists' tape across the top of the foam, and secure the tape to both sides of the container, feel free to do so. We find that if we wedge the foam tightly into the container, it seems to be secured well enough for our needs. Our particular container required a full block of foam. Your mileage may vary!

Many designers like to start the design process by placing foliage.

In our case, we are going to use a very special kind of foliage..In fact we are actually using small branches that incorporate both foliage as well as berries.....



The remarkable botanical we are using in this design is called bittersweet.



Normally we associate bittersweet with the small orange dried materials that we often see in the fall.

In fact, as these berries dry, they actually start to turn a bright orange. If you look carefully at the photo, you will see a few of these actually starting to dry and turn orange.

I believe that with bittersweet, the live product actually is just as visually interesting (if not more so), and just as pleasant to use in florals as its dried counterpart.

As with all of our floral products, these florals are meant **to be used for decorative use only**. A general rule of thumb with all botanicals in completed floral art is “look but don’t touch.” Enjoy creating your masterpieces but

don’t ingest and keep kids and animals away from the florals.

The bittersweet used here was donated by Blooming of Beloit, a wonderful floral specialty farm in Beloit Wisconsin. They not only produce wonderful product, but they are nice folks as well. Our thanks to them!



Design tip: There are many botanicals out there that contain both foliage and berries. By using cuttings that contain both, we can cover the foam mechanics of our designs, create shape and have texture and color.

The process provides the underlying structure to our floral art, but also contributes to its character.....



The foliage and berries are used to define the shape of this arrangement which is ultimately going to be either round or fan shaped depending upon whether you'd like to view it all the way around or only on one side.



Start with a piece of foliage on the left side. Then place one on the top and then a couple coming out towards you on the bottom as shown in this photograph to the right...

It's easy isn't it? Almost like me being here with you as you make it.

Please don't agonize about the exact position of the foliage. You really can't go wrong here!





Overall we have a gentle hemispherical shape.

If you want this to be viewed all the way around, rather than just as a once sided piece, place a couple of small branches on the back side of the design facing away from the camera.



One reason I told you not to overly fuss about your placing the bittersweet, is that I didn't want you to "stuff" the base so much with the foliage that you won't have room left over for some face/mass flowers.

Although the container looks "filled" with bittersweet, there is still plenty of open foam surface into which we may now place larger florals.

Notice the placement of the three yellow roses. The use of yellow roses complements the yellow and yellow/orange of the bittersweet quite nicely.

You can never go wrong with roses. They are big. They are impressive. People love them. They say "This is important. This is expensive!"

Should you want this design to be viewed all the way around, place one or two more roses on the "back" side of the design facing away from the camera. Place them randomly and lower so that they won't compete against the three flowers illustrated here.



Add three roses to the front of the arrangement. Notice that although we call these “red”, one is a pink, and the others a darker red. This is to provide visual variety. You can simply use one kind of red rose if that is what is available to you. Once again add a rose or two to the other side randomly to create a design meant to be viewed all the way around.



The idea behind this design is to provide a feeling of abundance and variety.

Carnations are a good way to contribute to that. They come in many colors, fill space quickly and easily, hold up well and are easy to design with. Several red carnations add visual impact. (Place more in the back if desired.)



Three lime green carnations help to fill and add to the feeling of abundance. Add more green carnations randomly to the back if desired.

The use of several different colors helps to obscure the fact that we have five carnations facing us. Instead we see the red carnations integrating with the red roses. The green appear as something different. We will play a little more with the color green in a moment!





Although we still have not added sheltering technique, this arrangement is very pretty and could be considered as complete, if we wanted to display it as such.....

But wait... there's more!!!!



The remarkable green stuff is called “Sedum.”

It is another wonderful botanical made available to us from Blooming of Beloit, in Beloit Wisconsin.

A few moments ago I mentioned that we were going to play with the green color a bit. Now is that time.

The green of the sedum mixes quite well with the lime green carnations.

Add a couple more sedum randomly into the back side of the design (facing away from the camera,) if desired.





Once again this is a natural stopping point for this arrangement..... We could consider it completed even without the sheltering technique.....

But wait... there's more!!!!

The purple flowers are small allium, another of my favorite flowers. (Of course my students know that just about every flower is my favorite flower for various reasons!)

The allium are courtesy of Blooming of Beloit. Once again we could simply add some of the allium to the front (and if desired the back) and consider the design completed....



Nahhhh!

Let's play with this just a little more....

And add our sheltering effect!!



Let's go back a step when we had only added a few a few allium to the design.

Take some branchy material like curly willow and make loops of it in your hand. **You really need fresh, flexible product to do this.** Tie the loops together using florist wire. The result almost looks like a miniature curly willow wreath.



Tie the tiny wreath to a wooden pick and insert it into the arrangement as shown.



Repeat this a second time. Make a second series of loops or coils using very, very flexible branch material like fresh curly willow. Tie it in one or two places with wire so that it holds its wreath-like appearance.

Tie one of these pieces of wire to a pick and insert the pick into the foam, securely holding the second series of coils in place.....Your design is now “sheltered.”

There is one more botanical that we've added to this arrangement, after securing the curly willow...

Can you guess what it is? Can you see it?





Yes! The little red berries.

These are viburnum berries, another wonderful product from Blooming of Beloit.

Notice the placement indicated by the arrows. The berries unify nicely with the red roses and carnations.

They can be placed higher or lower than the willow as you desire, to help create a three dimensional effect to this arrangement.



As with the other florals these can be placed on one side, or a few pieces also can be randomly placed on the side of the design facing away from the camera.



Most of your foam is already covered by the foliage, berries and flowers.

If you notice any bare spots of foam you may either add some foliage (eg. baker fern) or moss (such as spanish moss) to cleanly cover the working mechanics.

In this particular design I added a little spanish moss.

If you look carefully into the center of the arrangement you will also notice a little spanish moss intertwined with one of the curly willow coils. It adds to the visual complexity of the sheltering effect

Once you get started you will find that you will be trying out sheltering technique with a wide variety of materials including using the flowers themselves to shelter other flowers!





To Summarize: We have learned a very neat technique that can add a different dimension to our designing...

Sheltering technique is a very neat approach where some flowers (or other floral items) are placed around and over other florals that are used in an arrangement, thereby enclosing or “sheltering” those items.....

But we also learned that in the process of creating this Incredible Vase Arrangement, we were also able to create three more traditional designs, depending upon where we stopped in the designing cycle....

The Variations



VARIATION ONE--Bittersweet, Roses, Carnations

VARIATION TWO--Bittersweet, Roses, Carnations and Sedum



VARIATION Three and Three A--Bittersweet, Roses, Carnations, Sedum and Allium



These variations appeal to more classical tastes. Any of these would be lovely designs depending upon the desires of the recipient and also cost factors. (They are increasingly more expensive as you add more materials.)



With 94 acres and over 60,000 plants, Blooming of Beloit is located only about 75 miles from Chicago's O'Hare airport, making it a very accessible and affordable source for specialty floral product throughout North America.

Our Thanks....

Our thanks to the great folks of Blooming of Beloit in Beloit Wi, for providing the wonderful bittersweet, viburnum berries, sedum and allium used in this lesson.





(Hey we have to toot our horn a little.. OK?)

(Besides which the tuitions help feed the dog... He eats a lot!)

We hope that you really enjoyed this distance floral design lesson e-book. We certainly enjoyed sharing it with you.

At Rittners Floral School in Boston we provide floral design instruction that includes a wide range of different styles and techniques.

Folks attend Rittners Floral School from all over North America as well as abroad, because we are great floral designers, and just as importantly because we are outstanding teachers!!

This is but one distance education lesson.... **Think of how much you could learn from one of our great hands-on programs!!** Take one of our great workshop diploma courses at Rittners Floral School. Consider encouraging your family and friends to take a course with us as well!

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