

Eight Wonderful Days of Light-- Floral Art For Chanukah



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Some Comments About Chanukah

Chanukah is an amazing Jewish holiday.....It is a holiday that has very ancient roots, over 2000 years old....

Chanukah is not a Jewish Christmas. Christmas commemorates the birth of Jesus. Chanukah marks the successful conclusion of a war for religious freedom when the Jews over 2000 years ago achieved a victory to worship their own way in a Hellenistic world.

One could argue that many cultures have celebrated holidays of light at this dark time of the year, so that there are some ancient commonalities.....

For many today, Christmas and Chanukah have become coupled in the popular mind due to a variety of factors. (eg. they occur around the same time of year, the commercialization of the winter holidays, a very open western society etc.), Some folks even have tried to blend the two very unique holidays into something called "Chrismukkah."



What confuses the matter is the fact that many folks of all religions enjoy the winter holidays as secular/national holidays... rather than as deeply theological/religious ones.....For example, Christmas in the US is celebrated on Dec. 25th as a federal holiday. People of many backgrounds focus on this holiday as a national/civic one without necessarily being particularly observant or pious.

Spirituality in both holidays is often expressed in the context of civic goodwill, feelings of universal brotherhood, a time to spoil our kids and focus on family, friends and so forth rather than in theological terms---- though there are certainly very real theological aspects to both the Christian and Jewish holidays



Still Chanukah is paradoxical in many ways.....

As far as the Jewish Year is concerned, it is considered a relatively minor holiday. Yet in popular observance, it is one of the most popular of all of the Jewish holidays celebrated by the masses.

People love the holiday yet sometimes still have a hard time figuring out how to spell its name.

The contemporary appeal of Chanukah goes beyond a military victory and a “miracle” of oil lasting longer than it was supposed to..... The holiday reflects something that was an issue over 2000 years ago.. and remains with us to this day.... It reflects the tension between celebrating a specific ethnic or religious group’s uniqueness vs. the enjoyment of participating in the culture of the majority where it is very easy to assimilate. Every ethnic/religious group brings something very special to the fabric of our North American Society. In a pluralistic society celebrating uniqueness yet participating in the culture as a whole touches a universal concern regardless of ones ethnicity or religion.





In my opinion, the holiday of Chanukah is also a very optimistic one.... It reflects the human desire for the forces of light (good) to triumph over the forces of darkness (evil). This is the stuff of epic myth and legend, and is found in many stories in our popular culture. The holiday of Chanukah reminds us that we all have our part to play in repairing the world and making it a better place.

These aspects of Chanukah---"uniqueness and universalism" and "light vs. darkness" are just as important, if not more so today then they were in times past.

Each generation reexamines and reinterprets holidays. Chanukah is now experiencing amazing contemporary creative expression--in art and music....

It is time for us to evolve our use of all kinds of media for this holiday including floral decoration.....

Floral art can play a major role in shaping space and creating an environment/atmosphere for any celebration...

It is in this spirit of renewal that we present contemporary applications of floral art for this amazing holiday of light.

Thoughts About Materials and Colors....

As far as colors are concerned, we stayed very closely within the palette of blues and whites. This is because of the association with the Jewish Prayer Shawl or Tallit of blue and white. (To be sure Tallit can also be all white, white and black and multicolored. ..Still the blue and white also ties in with the national colors of Israel and is therefore quite appropriate for Chanukah.) While other colors can and should be used, we chose to be conservative in our choice of hue in most of these designs with only a few exceptions (eg. Menorah).

In some cases our foliage reflects the fact that our school is in the northeast part of the United States. For example, balsam/ fir is used as it is readily available at this time of the year and it is locally appropriate. It is used to cover mechanics rather than dominating the arrangement. Salal tips, and other materials were used as well.

Whenever possible we used materials imported from Israel, such as silver/white Kochia and Xanadu foliage...



Botanicals Used In This Ebook:

Fuji Mums
Kochia
Delphinium
Carnations
Roses
Australian Greens
Balsam/Fir
Leptospermum
Curly Willow
Fantail Willow
Xanadu
Mini Callas
Statice
Salal
Bells of Ireland
Ilex
Lisianthus
Kiwi Vine

Snapdragon
Boxwood
Cushion Poms
Miniature Carnations
Spray Roses
Sheet Moss
Button Poms
Trick Dianthus
Dogwood
Pine
Pine Cones
Hydrangea
Alstroemeria
Birch Branches

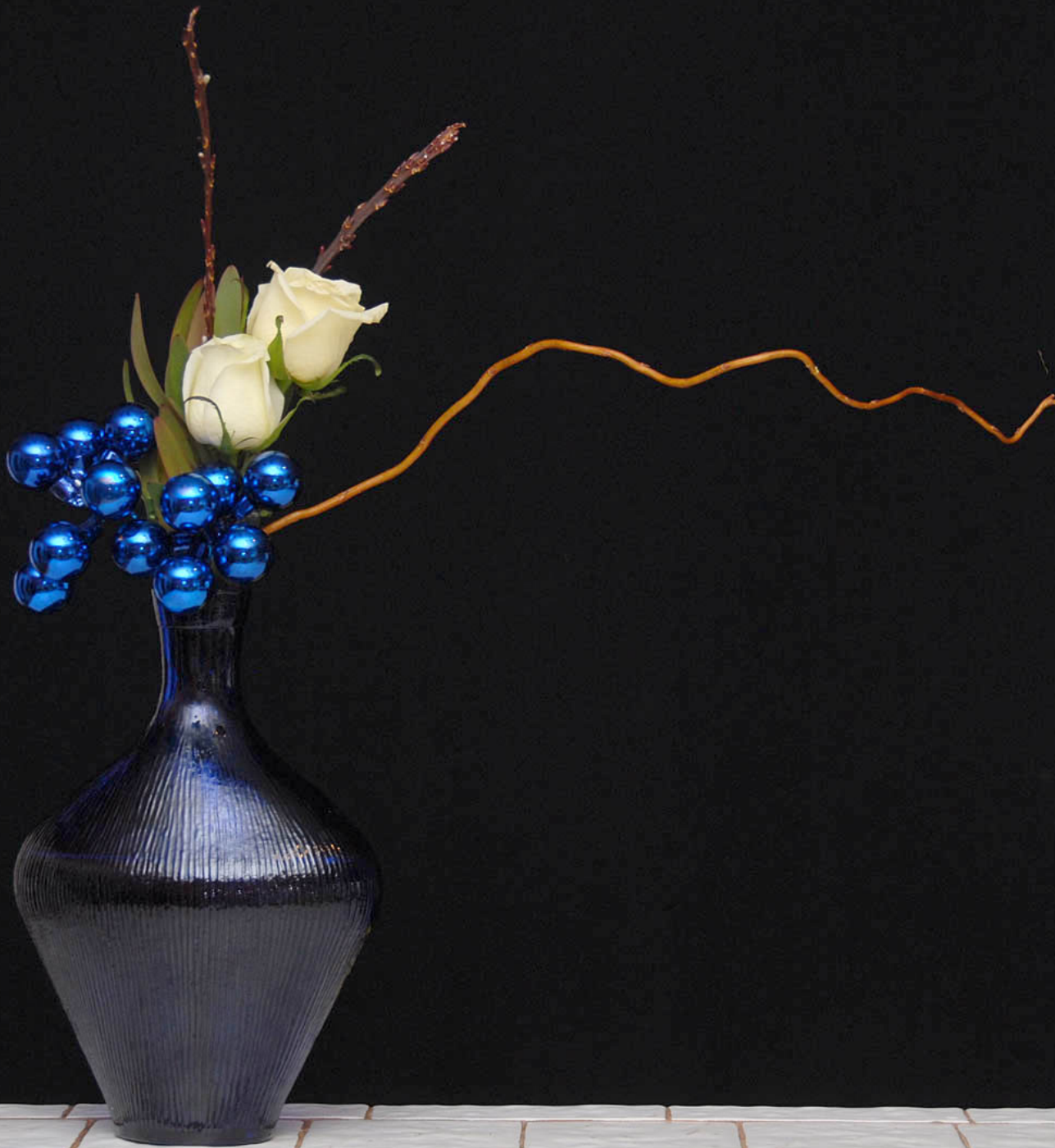


A Gallery of Chanukah Floral Designs



Simplicity....

**For Those Who
Like A
Minimalist Look**











The twins.. Two in one.
Modular floral art.....





Table Arrangements.....

The use of candles is intended as decorative...

Never leave candles that are lit unattended....It's just not good karma.

(That means the Menorah as well)













The Menorah...



The Chanukah Menorah or Chanukkiyah is the eight branch Menorah used during Chanukah. (with the extra candle used to light the other eight).

Lights are kindled on each of the eight nights of the holiday. The first night one candle is lit. The second night two are lit and so forth.

We have two floral related Chanukah Menorahs here.

This one allows an additional flower to be placed into a water tube each night....



This is a flower Menorah where each day we add a modular section to the florals from the day before... Each contains a candle that can be replenished. Do use caution with candles and never leave them unattended....



Dreidel.....



The dreidel is a top used in a game of chance played during this holiday. It is enjoyed by the young and young at heart... It does have a serious aspect...

The Hebrew Nun, Gimel, Hay and Shin stand for the words, “Nas Gadol Haya Sham” or a great miracle was there.... נס גדול היה שם. It refers to the fact that the oil used in the rededicated Temple in Jerusalem lasted eight days (which was quite unexpected--hence the “miracle!” This is also the reason for the eight days of Chanukah and the lighting of lights each day.)

But the letters on the top also tell players whether to put money in the pot, take money out of the pot, etc... What a fun way to educate!





How about an entire dreidel made of flowers?







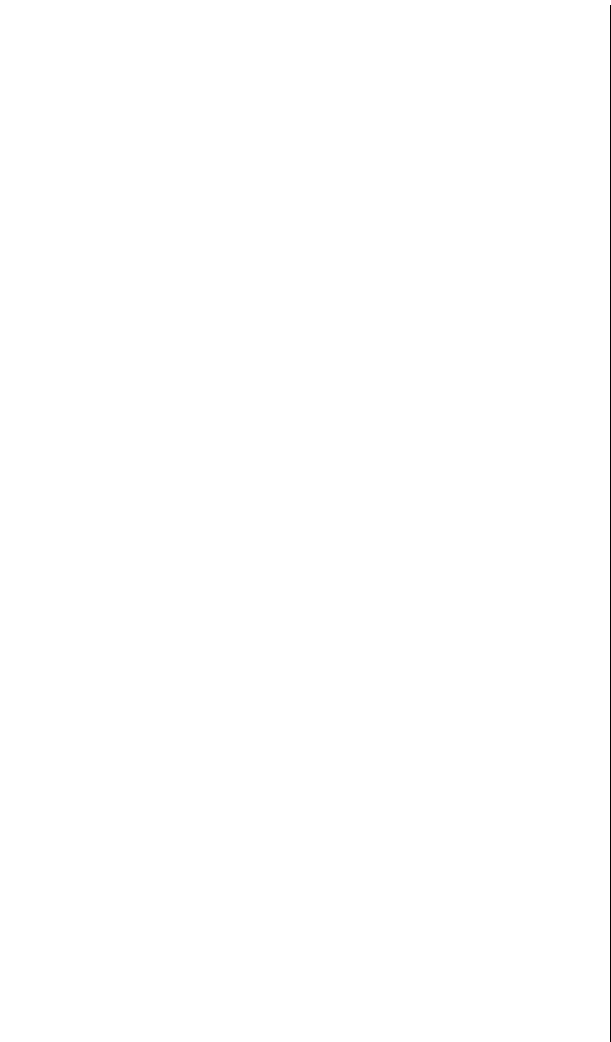
Classical And Contemporary





















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About Rittners Floral School



Rittners Floral School is one of the longest running and finest private floral design schools in North America.

Located in the prestigious Back Bay neighborhood of Boston, Rittners Floral School attracts students from all over North America and abroad by the excellence of its courses.

Rittners makes use of the latest educational theory, teaching and floral technologies, to bring its students outstanding diploma programs in floral designing....

Rittners Floral School's only business is floral education.

Whether your goals are rest and relaxation, stress reduction, or vocational, you will really enjoy the various hands-on workshop floral art courses offered at Rittners.

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