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Style Publishing Group
P.O. Box 1676
Frisco, Texas 75034
Phone: 972.335.1181
Toll Free: 877.781.7067
Fax: 214.722.2313

E-mail: info@friscostyle.com
Web: www.friscostyle.com

Ad Sales: (972) 335-1306



Two garden displays from Heritage Exteriors
photos by Leah Ratliff

normally associate with interior décor, such as adding a chandelier to a covered space or sconces with fragrant candles. You can find a variety of chandeliers with different finishes at reasonable prices at Lowe's and Home Depot. The Home Depot EXPO has a nice selection also.

When choosing planters, first get an idea of how many you think you will need. Remember, a good rule of thumb is to go larger than you think you should when selecting your planters. Too many small planters will make your space look cluttered. Living in the Dallas area for more than 25 years, I have discovered lots of places that carry beautiful planters and pottery. On the weekends, the Dallas Farmers Market on South Pearl St. is my favorite choice. The pottery there is authentic and reasonably priced. I love the fact that they have larger sizes and several different shapes to choose from. While you are there, it is also a great place to look for bedding plants to fill your pots. You can make a fun afternoon just browsing around, and then head over to the West End for lunch or dinner and some fun.

If the Farmers Market downtown does not fit your schedule, there is a smaller farmers market in East Plano. It is located between Parker and Spring Creek on the east side of S. H. 75. Obezit is another longtime business in Plano. They have unusual pottery and a great selection. They are located on Preston Road south of the George Bush Tollway. Close to home in downtown Frisco, Heritage Exteriors has a wonderful selection of large pottery.

A few years ago, many stores started carrying the lighter weight pots in finishes that give some an Old World look. The nice thing about these is they are lightweight and can be moved around easily. Ladies, we can appreciate that because we always want to change things up. And men, be thankful, it will make your job easier.

Garden Ridge has aisles and aisles of these types of planters, both contemporary and Old World. Because they come in different finishes and styles, my recommendation would be to choose a color and style you like and purchase

The Frisco Personal Shopper Examines the Outdoors

By Karen Long

FOR THOSE WHO KNOW ME, they have grown to understand that decorating and shopping...and decorating and shopping...are not only my profession, but also my passion. Because of this passion, I have learned a lot over the years regarding ideas for the home, but also where to get some of the best deals. I hope to share several of these ideas with you over the next several months, and hopefully give you the incentive to get things started around your home. And

the good thing is, it does not need to be expensive. You just have to know what you want and where to go. So let's get started.

With the weather beginning to warm up and spring in the air, it's time to add some color and pizzazz to your outdoor patio and pool areas.

Begin with a style that flows with your interior and carry that outside to your patio and pool areas. Don't be afraid to decorate with things that you would



several sizes. It is nice to place the taller urn-like pots at a doorway or either side of the pool area. I normally group my pots in a couple of areas, using three different sizes. I sometimes put a round trellis made for pots in the larger one and bravely purchase a climbing, flowering plant that most of the time I've never heard of. Last year my plant actually survived. Amazing what a little love and water will do for them.

On the weekends, the Dallas Farmers Market on South Pearl Street is my favorite choice.

Next, we have to fill all of those new planters and pots with flowers and plants. Use lots of color, it makes a difference. Use many height differences to also add to the look. My favorite colors are reds with purples and a splash of yellow. But, mix them up to match your taste.

Palm plants are another eye catcher for large planters. They give you a very tropical feel. They also look great around the pool and can survive the Texas heat. Be sure to ask which ones can take full sun; some can only be planted in the shade.

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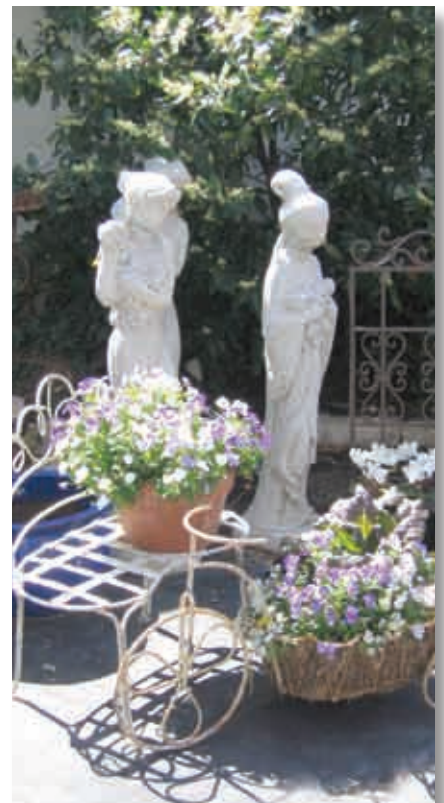
One of my favorite ferns is called the Queen Lady. It can get large and does not shed all over the place. It lasts until October and can be cut down, watered through the winter and will come back in the spring.

Well, times have changed, and Canton has too! Pavilions are loaded with both old and new stuff.

Shades of Green, right here in Frisco, is a wealth of knowledge when it comes to flowers and plants. They are also very helpful when it comes to assisting you with what plants work best in the heat and can give you great ideas on how to mix up your plants for the best eye appeal. Callaway's is another choice for flowers and plants. Their employees are knowledgeable and will guide you through every step.

Now the fun part! Canton Trade Days is an unbelievable place to find treasures

*Garden art samples from Shades of Green
photo by Leah Ratliff*



for not only inside, but also outside areas. If you like searching and shopping for unique pieces, this is the place to go. I have heard people say, "I don't have the desire or time to walk around for hours looking for old stuff." Well, times have changed, and Canton has too! Pavilions are loaded with both old and new stuff. It's definitely worth the trip for iron pieces, wall plaques, benches, planters, etc. Plan a whole day and expect to have fun! Wear running shoes and bring a friend!

Another purchase to consider for your outdoors is a fountain. I have seen so many gorgeous ones this year. If you have the space, plan on fitting one in somewhere. You may have a bear spot or someplace you can center one. They are a great focal point and can add charm to a garden area. If you do not have a space for a freestanding fountain, purchase a wall mounted one. It is really soothing in the evening to sit outside and hear the fountain water running.

Birdbaths are another favorite of mine. They come in all sizes and can be used as planters as well. Hemispheres, a store in Plano, has a good selection of fountains. You can also use a birdbath as a table outside in your sitting area by purchasing a round glass top and setting it on top of the birdbath. If you chose to go this route, I would suggest you do it in a covered area to protect it from the elements. Linens and Things and Bed Bath and Beyond are good places to shop for your round glass.

Iron décor has become a number one accent for decorating rooms inside and out. I personally think it adds a different charm to your walls instead of always using pictures. For your outside, iron can be used anywhere. Choose pieces that fit your décor. The star is popular here in the Lone Star State. They look great over a fireplace or on an outside wall. It would look great with a more rustic motif. The larger more ornate wall pieces are great if you want to dress up your outdoors. Look for trellis pieces that can stand in your garden as a backdrop for your flowers. Also, in some of the stores I have seen smaller pieces that link together as a border. Don't go crazy and put this everywhere. But it is a fun accent maybe on a curve or a smaller flowerbed. An old gate can also be used as a trellis by mounting it and placing a potted plant



Ironworks at Shades of Green

photo by Leah Ratliff

with a vine underneath. Weave it through the gate so it climbs.

In search of different iron pieces, I have found that Lone Star right here in Frisco has one of the best selections. Their pieces are very rustic and old. They will even add a clear finish to your piece if you ask. I have purchased benches, old gates and trellises from them. Decorators Choice is another retailer that has a good selection at great prices.

Wicker and rattan are another look that is nice outside. Rattan can give you a tropical look. Wicker is a little dressier and is great if you want the 'Chabby Chic' look. Remember to add a splash of color

with your cushions. Casual Living here in Frisco is a good place to go for wicker and rattan selections.

I hope this has given you some fresh ideas and incentive for updating your outdoors for the spring. Remember to bring depth and texture to your outdoor living space with color that fits your own personal taste and style. Whether you want a clean fresh space or a cozy cottage feel, don't be afraid to go beyond your boundaries.

Hope to see you out there shopping!

Karen Long is a Frisco resident and partner in Before and After Interior Makeovers.