

BASKETS FOR *Sweet Treats*

by Morgan McLaughlin



One of the great things about children is their equalled fascination for gifts and the packaging they come in. That new doll or bicycle could easily be set aside for the opportunity to play in the big box it came in. Think of how much more special receiving gifts can be when wrapped in lovely paper with a big bow, or the wonder of receiving an Easter basket with candies inside; these things would be lackluster without the presentation. For this reason, decorating or hand-making special treat containers for giving goodies makes a gift to a child even more precious. And with these artists' ideas of spring treat containers, the adults will be swooning over your packages as much as the children.

Miniature Cup Containers

Andrea Singarella (www.velvetstrawberries.typepad.com) has a fondness for fun color combinations and special party presentations. Making someone's day special by adding unique touches to everyday items is a strong point of her crafting creativity. With plain white Nut and Party cups from Wilton (www.wilton.com), Andrea pleated crepe paper around the cup, adhering with glue stick as she worked. To make the basket handle, she



glued the ends of playful German lametta tinsel on either side and covered them with the crepe paper. For the final touches a ribbon was wrapped around the circumference and a vintage button, earring or flower was attached to the front.

With these simple and pretty containers you have any number of great creations. Miniature baskets (a younger generation of their bigger Easter brothers) to hold candies or jelly beans on a serving tray or table top would be a great fit for these pretty little containers. Put them at place settings for a dinner party with after dinner mints inside, giving each guest something to take home, or fill with crafty items and give at a birthday party for an artist. Personalize the baskets for a special holiday or occasion using ribbon with words such as "happy birthday" or "happy Easter." Use miniature frames instead of a button to place photos of friends or family inside and make the baskets fit for a reunion.

Handmade Paper Baskets

Have more time (and effort) on your hands? Try these hand-painted peat pots (or make your own handmade papier mâché treat baskets), beautifully made by Cari Kraft (www.carikraft.typepad.com). Cari originally started making these baskets as eye-catching containers for party door prizes when she worked as a Home Party Sales consultant. With her collection of Martha Stewart peat pots for seed starting she found the perfect solution. "They were the perfect size to sit on a tray all painted up and glittered," says Cari. Any leftover baskets were used to give birthday trinkets or left as pick-me-up gifts on the desks of coworkers.

Eventually Cari started to experiment with different shapes and sizes of peat pots for the different seasons. Crepe paper ruffles, vintage silk flowers, mother-of-pearl buttons, and more were used to embellish her baskets, trying different combinations for different looks. "I have always been a big believer in the practice of 'random acts of kindness' and how it can turn a negative day into a positive one," Cari says, "what better way to brighten someone's day than by bringing them a little polka dot goodness filled with their favorite chocolate?"

Sweet Insides

Now that you have amazing containers to hold your spring treats, get creative with the insides. Write a message at the bottom of your miniature cup containers for a little surprise for the receiver when they reach the bottom, past all the goodies. Or fill your basket with shredded book pages for a unique bed on which to place your chocolates. Use your imagination for fun spring treat boxes and their filling, anything would be more interesting than your standard and expected faux Easter grass. 🍪

To learn more about Andrea Singarella's life and work, visit her blog at www.velvetstrawberries.typepad.com.

To learn more about Cari Kraft's life and work, visit her blog at www.carikraft.typepad.com.

