BERRY BONANZA

> While less juicy and delicious than their fruity counterparts, ornamental berries are no less appealing to the eyes. Available in an assortment of colors, shapes, and sizes, they complement almost any flower and foliage and provide texture, which makes a design more intriguing — and increases their perceived value. Better yet: They're very user friendly (just drop a few stems in a vase or bouquet sleeve), so even novice designers can make them look good — a huge advantage during the busy holiday season.

Berries' popularity grew in the 1990s with the rise of mixed bouquets. "They give a good base to bouquets," says Peter Kolster, whose family business in the Netherlands, Kolster BV, breeds plants and flowers sold in more 90 countries. "We see demand for certain flowers go up and down, but berries (especially seasonal ones like rosehips, snowberries, and ilex) are always wanted."

Hypericum, grown largely in South America and Africa, can be sourced year round. Rosehips, snowberries, and ilex are available in the fall, with the latter extending through December. All boast a strong vase life — especially ilex — which can last well past two to three weeks.

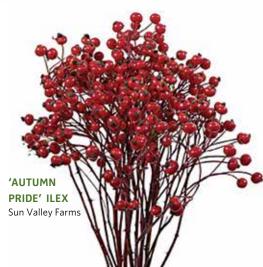




Many berries, including ilex, rosehips, and some snowberries, preserve nicely too. "I have rosehips in vases from last autumn," says Kolster. "They're dried but still beautiful."

Here are a few berries that will make your designs even more appealing.

Katie Vincent is the senior contributing writer and editor of Floral Management.



'MAGICAL ROYAL PRINCESS' HYPERICUM Kolster BV



'MAGICAL DEEP PURPLE' CALLICARPA Kolster BV



Fresh Choices

'MAGICAL TEMPTATION' SNOWBERRY Kolster BV



'MAGICAL GREEN
POWER' HYPERICUM
Kolster BV



'MAGICAL MILKY WAY' SNOWBERRY Kolster BV



'MAGICAL SNOW QUEEN' CALLICARPA Kolster BV



GOLD ILEXOregon Flowers



'MAGICAL CITRONELLA' ILEX Kolster BV



'MAGICAL DAYDREAM' ILEX Kolster BV



'MAGICAL AMARANTH' ILEX Kolster BV



'MAGICAL MIRACLE' ROSEHIP HYBRID Kolster BV



'MAGICAL AUTUMN'S GLORY' ROSEHIPS Kolster BV



RED ILEXOregon Flowers



'MAGICAL DELIGHT' ROSEHIP HYBRID Kolster BV