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Double reflection

> A fusion of Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year decor

THERE are two reasons to don the colour red at home this month: Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year (CNY).

Every few years, the two celebrations – one of love, the other involving family – fall within a few days of the other.

Besides the traditional red hues that reflect the Chinese festivity and the romantic pinks and crimson communicating love and hinting of Valentine's Day, here are some other ways to dress up the home without getting too carried away with a little too much of red:

DINING SET

Whether you're hosting a reunion dinner or a gathering of loved ones, the common space that gathers guests at both celebrations would be the dining table.

It is advisable to stow away that deep red tablecloth and instead go for a homey, more romantic setting with a do-it-yourself (DIY) xoxo-painted tablecloth by "walk in love". Armed with just a paintbrush and acrylic or fabric paint of your desired colour, paint big Xs and Os onto a basic cotton material. Start from the corner to create a neat row or "follow your heart" and paint them on however you wish. Leave it to dry before throwing it over the table.

A more private sit-down dinner setting can be given a simple boost of elegance by incorporating table napkins into the decoration. The simple tutorial from "One Kings Lane" shows how, with a few triangular folds, a heart-shaped napkin is made, to be placed at each seat of the table. However, hosts may want something more challenging and choose to fold napkins into little rosettes instead.

For bigger parties, it is better to use serving dishes in hues of red and pink or with floral designs for a slight Valentine's day feel.

SPELL IT OUT

If you constantly scroll Facebook or Instagram, you would have seen party photos with inflated letter foil balloons in the background. This party trend is simply a variation on the home decor trend of spelling out words of significance using colourful wooden blocks on full display at entryways or living rooms. "Love" is one of the most



common words spelled out when it comes to this trend, which makes it a perfect piece of decoration or "talking piece" for Valentine's Day. Fashion blog "LuLus.com" gives a "fresh" take by cutting out the top of the paper-mached letters and filling the insides with faux flowers. Look for faux chrysanthemums or peonies in pink, red or gold, which are commonly used in CNY decoration for its auspicious significance.

Incorporate a collage of family photos into the display by using the decoupage method on the letter "O". Alternatively, switch out the "O" for a heart-shaped block for a bigger collage but bear in mind that the block will have to lean on its side. So, plan the collage layout beforehand. Homeowners can also choose to spell out their family name instead, for a more family-oriented display.

FORTUNE FOLDING

Fishes, flowers and even lanterns

folded out of ang pow through origami are a common sight in many homes during the CNY festive season.

This year, add some heart shapes into the mix with this simple tutorial from "How About Orange" blogger Jessica Jones. Instead of plain red paper, use old ang pow cut out into heart shapes, with a deep slit partway down the middle.

The slit should then be rolled back and the edges glued or stapled together to form a 3D heart. Cut and fold a few in varying sizes, stick them up on the wall and you'll even have a perfect backdrop for those reunion dinner photos!

FRESH BLOOMS

Kumquat trees, plum blossoms, orchids, peonies and peach blossoms are just some of the flowered plants usually found scattered throughout the home during CNY. Kumquats symbolise wealth and good luck, while the rest mark the beginning of spring.

Often, these plants sit in boring clay pots because the plants are mere symbols rather than actual decoration.

By simply dressing up the pots, the overall festive look is elevated. In "Brit + Co" art director Lee Schellenberger's tutorial, mini vases are spray-painted in gold, red and pink and complemented with festive wishes written with paint pens. The resulting product has a modern, subtle Valentine's day feel. "A Night Owl" blogger Kimberly Sneed on the other hand, has a tutorial that uses multi-surface paint to slap on a large heart in the front of a pot and a strip along the rim of the pot.

The tutorial can be adapted for larger potted plants, by wrapping the pot in burlap or canvas to imitate the texture of Sneed's jiffy pots. Complete the look with leftover 3D ang pow hearts and you have yourself the perfect CNY cum V-Day photo op setting.

LIGHT UP

Once an integral source of light, now lanterns are mostly on display for decorative purposes. As the new year arrives, deep red lanterns are hung at entrances of



homes in preparation of the upcoming house parties and gatherings. Throw in lanterns in varied shades of pink and red for a fusion celebration. Using lanterns with cute heart designs wouldn't hurt as well. Including paper pompons interspersed between the lanterns make for a great backdrop and bring about a more playful mood.

Some households may prefer to stay away from white-coloured lanterns during an auspicious time, but those brave enough to try may opt for patterned white lanterns instead.

Take this tutorial from Christy of "One Handspun Day", which uses fabric scraps, acrylic paint as well as lace and ribbon trimmings to create a whimsical paper lantern that has hints of "old Shanghai glamour". Even if you're not celebrating either occasion, these tweaks to the home interior scene can bring some much needed colour, vibe and cheer amid our unforgiving weather.

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PHOTO: HOWABOUTORANGE.BLOGSPOT.MY

PHOTO: BLOG.LULUS.COM



ASSURANCE IN NUMBERS... "The take up rate is a reaffirmation that our buyers share similar confidence that Trinity Aquata is a strategic investment in KL South within Greater KL," said Trinity Group managing director Datuk Neoh Soo Keat (pix, centre). Trinity, one of Malaysia's leading boutique developers, announced a 95% sales take amounting to RM355 million for its Trinity Aquata development project. The project is targeted for completion at the end of 2018 and is located in the heart of Kuala Lumpur's commercial, shopping and entertainment hub, dubbed the "Golden Triangle".