



a time for treasures

CELEBRATE THE TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS LEAD-UP BY ENJOYING NATURE'S GIFTS EVERY DAY.

WORDS AND STYLING PIA JANE BIJKERK PHOTOGRAPHY CRAIG WALL

OVER THE YEARS I have enjoyed celebrating Christmas in Europe: sitting by a fire, gazing out the window to see snow fall from the night sky, watching fairy lights twinkling on the Christmas tree. But recently I've grown to understand and appreciate what makes our festive season so unique here in Australia. We are truly blessed to have nature at its most wildly beautiful and abundant during the summer festive months. As much as I love having a tree in my home (any excuse to bring nature indoors!), at the end of each year I'm inspired more and more to embrace the culture and celebrate this land by adorning my home with native flora found in my garden and neighbourhood.

Last year on these pages, I shared my love of displaying floral stems by attaching them to the wall with gold Japanese washi tape, creating a charming and unique Christmas tree that celebrated our natural environment. This year, inspired by this numbered display cabinet (see facing page) offered to me by a friend, I've been looking forward to creating an adaptation of the traditional Advent calendar — instead of placing items in an envelope or box to take out each day leading up to Christmas, I will add a new-found treasure to this pretty display cabinet each day in December, creating a beautiful piece of art and giving thanks to the nature that surrounds us.

To create something similar, look for old letterpress printers' trays or vintage medicine cabinets. You could also gather wooden boxes of different shapes and sizes from

bygone eras, arranging them on a sideboard. Add stencilled numbers to each box for an Advent calendar.

As Christmas Day approaches, I'm looking forward to gathering gumnuts and banksia pods as my baby girl and I meander through the neighbourhood and visit friends; perhaps bringing home a little piece of china found buried in the hillside on our friend's farm; discovering delicate feathers or even a little nest long discarded, some seashells from sandy beaches, or a tiny hydrangea blossom from our garden, just before it bursts into bloom.

Combined with some of the objects we've made by hand throughout the year, as well as cherished decorations from a time long past, our found treasures will form a living installation of our celebration of nature. I can't wait to pop a small gift in the final hole as a surprise for my little one to open on Christmas morning.

A year ago you welcomed me into your homes through the pages of this magazine. I'd like to take this opportunity to let you know how much I adore sharing my world of crafts, styling and nature inspiration with you each month. *

We would love to see your own Advent calendars come to life, so be sure to keep in touch via Instagram, @countrystylemag and @piajanebijkerk.

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- 2 www.pinterest.com/poppytalk/holidays
- 3 theyardpdx.tumblr.com