

Features

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Sophisticated and Refined

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Writes fashion blogger Maura West, “American fashion tends to be more casual and practical, while European fashion leans towards a more sophisticated and refined aesthetic, reflecting the cultural differences and lifestyle choices of the two regions.”

“Sophisticated and refined” neatly sums up many of the displays and products you will find both in and for garden centers in Europe. Not that Europeans can’t be practical ... and not that we Yanks can’t dress up with the best of them ... but when we travel to Europe—as we did in January for the trade show IPM Essen and some retail visits—we seek out what makes them special. Here are some displays, trends and ideas from our trip.



Pictured: We always check the container displays to see what colors are in; this year was fairly unadventurous, with classic gray, geometric patterns and earthen textures continuing to be popular.

Pictured: Black and gold ooze sophisticated. Left is a display at IPM by Capri Europe, right is at garden center Intratuin Duiven (the largest in the Intratuin chain).

Pictured: At IPM, Feldborg Growers of Denmark



showed four houseplant “styles” for their EasyCare line of foliage:

Classic (“minimalistic, clean, modest, exclusive, Nordic, elegant”)

Exotic (“refresh, tropical, natural, jungle, ocean, rain forest, breeze”)

Emotion (“soft, curvy, delicate, romantic, graceful, mild, elegant”)

Nature (“warm, wood, rustic, solid, rough, wilderness, sculptural”)



Pictured: Everywhere we went we saw tidy, color-blocked displays of primula. And less than \$1.50 each!

Pictured: Do your customers know who’s taking care of them? At Plantencentrum Velden they do, because giant banners both outside and inside celebrate the staff—and show that this is a fun place to work!

Pictured: Want to liven up your green displays? Pink, purple and orange will do it. This is at Plantencentrum Velden, near Venlo in the Netherlands.



Pictured: A casual take on the classic (but somewhat stuffy) Delft Blue pottery. This is called Delfts Blond, by Blond Amsterdam.

Pictured: "Nature" is one of four plant styles touted by Danish grower Feldborg at IPM. This bowl of daffodils looks like it was carefully lifted from a forest floor. Price? About \$14.

