

# ACCENT

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## Flowers brighten winter interiors

Indoor plants ready and waiting to bloom

By LEE REICH  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Every blossom is welcome this time of year, especially those you can grow indoors.

Even houseplants that bloom year-round take periodic breathers, and now is typically when that breather ends. So the season has begun for colorful blossoms to unfold around the house.

The easiest choices for indoor blooms are spring bulbs because their flower buds are pre-formed inside them in autumn.

Almost as easy to get to bloom indoors are African violets and the botanically related gloxinias. Gloxinias are more flamboyant than African violets, with large, velvety, pastel flowers.

African violets and gloxinias have a slew of lesser-known cousins with very interesting winter flowers.

Their names tell all: There's the goldfish plant, looking as if goldfish are floating about its stems; the lipstick plant, with tubular, cherry-red flowers, and the Cape primrose.

The Cape primrose shares no family ties with true primroses, but they also make nice winter bloomers, especially if kept cool. The African violet and its kin flourish in moist, well-drained soil and warm temperatures.

Their names also describe other houseplants that bloom well in winter: Flamingo flowers are as much fun as plastic pink flamingos. "Cloak-and-dagger flower" might be a better name for this bloom with its colorful pointy spathe that pokes forth from the equally colorful, flattened, oval cloak.

If you have abundant indoor light, there's almost no end to the number of flower shows winter can bring.

Geranium and flowering maple — a plant with maple-like leaves and flowers like hibiscus — come to mind first, but why stop there?

Graduate to a south-facing bay window or a warm greenhouse and you could create a tropical paradise with billowing mounds of red bougainvillea, creamy yellow allamanda, rose-colored mandevilla, and hibiscus.



AP PHOTO

The flowering maple works well as a winter house plant, but it requires abundant indoor light.



Like wine, beer tastes best when paired with the right foods, says Kwang Casey, owner of Oaken Barrel Brewing Co. in Greenwood. Hearty foods such as steak

call for a heavy beer such as Snake Pit Porter, Casey says. Many Oaken Barrel beers are available at Johnson County liquor stores and restaurants.

STAFF PHOTOS BY SCOTT ROBERSON/sroberson@thejournalnet.com

## On game day, hit the bottle

### Pair speciality beers with the right foods

By ANNETTE JONES  
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With the Colts playing the Bears Sunday, football fans are in a party mood.

Before rushing out to buy your usual brew for the party, hosts should consider different kinds of beer to appeal to thirsty Super Bowl crowds.

With all the ado about pairing certain wines with particular foods, we asked the owner of a Greenwood brewery if people should consider the type of food they plan to serve before buying beer.

Definitely, said Kwang Casey, owner of Oaken Barrel Brewing Co. in Greenwood.

Beer has subtle, complex flavors, Casey said. Depending on the type of grain used to make it, the method of fermenting and the addition of

hops and malt, beer takes on different flavors and intensities.

Casey offers this advice on beers to serve with game-day foods.

- Belgian white ale is a light beer that complements cheese dips and appetizers such as shrimp cocktail.

- Casey serves Alabaster White beer with a cream cheese and black bean dip with spicy Southwest seasonings.

- A pale ale with a strong hops flavor and a more subtle malt flavor stands up well to spicier foods. Oaken Barrel often serves Gnaw Bone pale ale with Mexican dishes and ribs.

- A medium-bodied beer, such as Indiana Amber, pairs well with pork and chicken.

- With hearty foods such as steak, serve a heavier Belgian beer like Snake Pit Porter, Casey said.

- Don't overlook beer with dessert, he said. A brew that's sweet but not too sweet, such as Oaken Barrel's Razz Wheat beer made with raspberry juice, blends well with sugary treats.

- "It's a perfect match with cheesecake," Casey said.

- A stronger beer, such as Belgian Tripel, usually is served after dinner.

At 8½ percent alcohol, it is best served at home to drinkers who will not be driving later.

In comparison, domestic beer is 4 percent alcohol, while imported beer is 5 percent.

How beer is served makes a difference in its taste, Casey said.

Most beer tastes best in a tall glass, not in mugs, he said. A tall glass helps with carbonation.

Exceptions are dark, strong beers that should be served in a wine glass.

"It tastes smoother in a wine glass," he said.

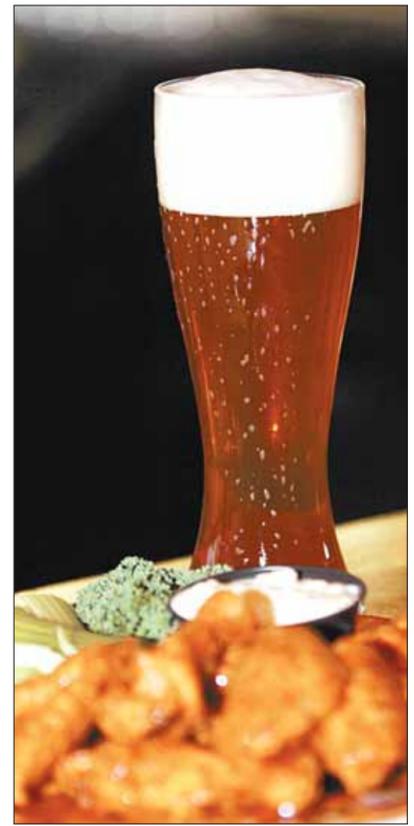
Casey sometimes enjoys Belgian Tripel in a wine glass after work.

Temperature also affects the taste of beer. Brews that are served too cold lose their flavor, Casey said. The ideal temperature is 40 to 42 degrees.

"That's the way it is served around the world," Casey said.



Serve a medium-bodied beer such as Indiana Amber with foods like pork and chicken.



Pale ale pairs well with spicier foods, says brewery owner Kwang Casey. Oaken Barrel Brewing Co. often serves Gnaw Bone pale ale with hot wings or Mexican dishes.

## For a simple and sweet Valentine's treat, whip up easy chocolate mousse

By J.M. HIRSCH  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Valentine's Day provides enough pressure without also having to perform wonders in the kitchen.

Yet since a home-cooked anything can be the surest way to your love's (or perhaps would-be love's) heart, it's not a bad idea to search out something with which to dazzle. I prefer the dessert route because it offers a great compromise: eating out and in.

Here's the plan: Treat your mate to a fine dinner out, but skip dessert. After a (weather permitting) romantic walk under the stars, head home and present this chocolate mousse, perhaps paired with a red wine, followed by coffee.

The beauty of this instant mousse is that it offers luxurious chocolate flavor with none of the fussiness of traditional mousse recipes. The secret — a whipped

cream base infused with a brew of cocoa powder and coffee.

The most impressive (and easiest) way to serve this is in purchased chocolate shells or cups. These cups are designed to be filled in this manner and can be purchased at most specialty food and baking shops.

If you'd rather skip the chocolate cups, consider serving the mousse in a tall, wide wine glass. Or depending on how well you know your date, use a large martini glass and make it a mousse for two.

Though the mousse holds well in the refrigerator, it's best not to make it too far in advance. Late afternoon the day of your dinner would be ideal. Cover the mousse loosely with plastic wrap, but don't let the wrap rest on the mousse.

This recipe makes plenty. Consider using the extra to fill crepes or top waffles in the morning.

### INSTANT CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

**Start to finish:** 15 minutes

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons hot coffee

Pinch salt  
1 pint heavy whipping cream

¾ cup powdered sugar  
1 ounce kirsch (cherry brandy), coffee

brandy or chocolate liqueur  
6 chocolate cups or shells

Small chocolate bar (for garnish)  
6 maraschino cherries

In a medium bowl, whisk together the cocoa powder, coffee and salt. It should whisk easily and have the consistency of melted chocolate.

If it is too thick, whisk in another tablespoon of coffee. Set aside.

In a large bowl, use an electric mixer on medium-high to whip the cream for

1 minute. Add the powdered sugar and whip for another minute.

Add the kirsch and coffee-cocoa powder mixture. Whip on high until stiff peaks form, about another minute.

Spoon the mousse into a medium plastic bag and twist the top closed. Use scissors to snip off one corner (about ½ inch up).

Arrange the chocolate cups on serving plates. If the cups don't sit flat, place a dollop of mousse under them. Squeeze the bag to pipe the mousse into the chocolate cups.

Use a vegetable peeler to shave the chocolate bar over the mousse-filled cups, letting some of the shavings scatter on the plate. Top each mousse with a cherry. Refrigerate if not eating immediately.

Makes six servings.

