

# Island in the Sun

Help your customers turn up the heat on the lingering cold with products that invite a taste of the tropics into their backyards.

By Paige Worthy

The British poet John Donne wrote in the 17th century that no man is an island, meaning people aren't isolated but instead linked to one another in some way. Hundreds of years later, his words still ring true. We are all connected: Every year around this time, I can't help but wish I were at least on an island, and I'm not alone.

For adults, it's the winter doldrums. For students, it's the mid-semester blues and the slow but steady approach of spring break. The tundra-like February conditions in most of the country leave nearly everyone seeking tropical solace, but too often the demands of everyday life can keep us physically tethered to our frigid posts.

Luckily, travel isn't the only route to a quick winter warm-up. Some people embrace the spirit of winter, huddling by a roaring fireplace, wrapped in a warm blanket with a book and a mug of hot cocoa. Others might turn to the pages

of their favorite getaway magazine or find escape in summery movies like *Dirty Dancing* or the surfer music of the Beach Boys. And still others — maybe even your customers — want to beat the chill by bringing a little year-round tropical warmth into their homes.

From plants to accents and practical accessories, you can help them transform their homes from North Pole to South Pacific. Potted lilies that bloom year round in a vibrant array of colors can warm up any room inside, and jewel-toned outdoor hummingbird feeders will stand out even more against a thick blanket of snow. As the weather begins to melt the ice, realistic-looking rock enclosures hide utilities to make the backyard seem more like a natural paradise.

We all have the urge get away when winter insists on sticking around, but when beach travel isn't in the cards, these products should help warm things up on the home front. ☼



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### 1. *Tecoma x*

'Orange Jubilee' is a sun-loving, flowering shrub with lush foliage. It will reach a maximum height of 12 feet but is best kept at shorter heights. It is bred to produce blooms repeatedly in tropical climates, and in cooler climates up to Zone 7A, it will produce blossoms spring through fall. 'Orange Jubilee' should attract bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Boynton Botanicals. (800) 642-1033. **Write in 1400**

### 2. Rock enclosure

Rock enclosures are available in the new realistic RealRock material. They conceal most irrigation and sprinkler system installations, including backflow devices, booster pump applications, well and septic systems, and most communications and power pedestal installations. Dekorra Rock Enclosures. (888) 635-8585. **Write in 1402**

### 3. Shore bird accent

Made from recycled tomato paste drums, this shore bird is crafted in Haiti. It is about 36 inches tall and available only in the colors shown, although all will vary in pattern. Country Originals. (800) 249-4229. **Write in 1401**

### 4. Hummingbird feeder

These North American handmade flower hummingbird feeders are designed to add whimsy and decoration to any garden space. All the color is blown into the piece, so they should never fade. Approximately 8 inches in size, six color patterns are available. Kitras Art Glass Inc. (800) 439-6393. **Write in 1403**

### 5. Lily series

The Lily Looks series includes six color variations. Produced through a large-scale breeding program, this pot lily line may be used throughout the year. These varieties are genetically short and exhibit uniform growth habits. They have a short crop production time, which averages 60 to 62 days. Zabo Plant. (877) 642-8770/Langeveld Bulb. (800) 526-0467. **Write in 1406** ▶