

# Golden glow

Marsha Smith shows you how to craft illuminating centrepieces for your table.

## WHAT YOU NEED

- Balloons
- Disposable bowl or other plastic container
- Iceblock sticks (used as spatulas)
- 500g bag multi-purpose cement-based powder filler
- Disposable gloves (optional)
- Jars, for drying
- 1 sheet medium-grit sandpaper
- Resene testpot paintbrush
- Resene White
- Resene Gold Dust metallic

**These concrete candle holders are for ornamental purposes only. For safety reasons, we recommend using battery-operated tealights. They provide an effective glow and are far safer than an open flame.**

- 1** Start by covering your work surface with a protective layer of newsprint or similar, as this project can get messy.
- 2** Blow up the balloons so they fit comfortably in the palm of your hand. These can be made at various sizes, but be aware: the bigger you go, the more fragile they become. We made ours approximately 9cm in diameter with one slightly larger at 12cm.
- 3** In a disposable bowl, using an iceblock stick, mix cement-based filler according to the packet instructions. You'll need approximately 1 part water to 2 parts powder. Use gloves, if you prefer, as the filler can be harsh on skin.
- 4** Once the consistency is right (see note), start smearing the concrete mix on top of each balloon (pic A). Cover two-thirds of the surface, leaving a wide enough opening for your candle. The idea is not to make a straight edge or a perfectly smooth outer – the edges should vary with little dips to create the look of a broken egg. The mixture needs

to be applied approximately 5mm thick. If it's too thin, you'll have holes or weak areas once it's dry. To help spread the outer surface, slightly wet your gloves or fingers and pat gently.

**5** Place each balloon, concrete-side up, on top of a jar and allow to dry for 24 hours (pic B).

**6** Once dry, leave the balloon unpopped and sand all the way around the concrete surface to remove any large bumps or sharp patches. Once you're happy, pop the balloon. It will easily peel away from the dried inside.

**7** Paint the exterior of each holder with

2 coats of Resene White (or you may wish to choose a Resene colour that's more specific to your decor.) Once dry, paint the insides with 2 coats of Resene Gold Dust metallic (pic C). The gold creates a stunning illumination! Once dry, they're ready to adorn your table.

**Note:** Consistency of your concrete mix is key to the success of this project. When mixing, you are looking for a mixture that's thick enough to hold onto the iceblock stick without falling or dripping off. If it's too wet, the mixture will simply run off the balloon or create folds as it settles.



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