

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

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Decorative Recycling

*A Second Life for
Pumpkins and Gourds*

By Andrea A. Firth

“Not everything has to be new or custom,” says Nikolene Isely of Moraga who has managed her own real estate staging business for the past twelve years. “My job is to enhance the look of a home by working with the existing furniture and art and adding a few new pieces and interior accents along with some fresh colors,” explains the designer.

“I’m all about recycling, reusing, and repurposing,” says Isely, who often employs paint to bring a new look to a wall, piece of furniture, or even a brass candlestick.

“We call it upcycling,” says Erin Mason, who works as an assistant to Isely in the staging business. Isely laughs at her colleague’s new terminology but agrees it accurately describes the approach.

Isely explains that as Thanksgiving arrives, she often takes the pumpkins and gourds that have been sitting on the front steps and kitchen table through the Halloween season and with a little spray paint, greenery, and decorative accents the autumn vine veggies are reborn as a festive entranceway vignette or table display.

Nikolene Isely sits alongside the festive holiday display she created for the entranceway of her Moraga home by reusing some of her pumpkins. Photo Doug Kohen.

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