



Johnson's Garden Talk

Lawn and garden information for the friends and customers of Johnson's Garden Centers

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Nov/Dec 2005



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Wichita, KS 67203
316-942-1443

EAST STORE

6225 E. Shadybrook
(21st @ Woodlawn)
Wichita, KS 67203
316-687-5451

RIDGE ROAD STORE

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Wichita, KS 67212
316-943-0494

LANDSCAPE DESIGN & INSTALLATION NIGHTSCAPING

316-943-6886

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Extend The Season

Pat Handley, Johnson's Ridge Rd. Store Manager, Kansas Certified
Nursery Professional, Kansas Certified Pesticide Applicator

Instead of retreating to the house as outdoor temperatures begin to drop this year, how about extending the season in the yard and garden with the warmth and wonderful scent of a chimenea from Johnson's? The crisp fall days make time spent in the yard a pleasure, and the fragrance and gentle heat of a chimenea only enhance that wonderful experience. This year at Johnson's we are featuring a new line of Hand Made Mexican Terracotta Chimeneas (pronounced chim-in-ay-as) in various sizes and styles from PR Imports, Inc.

What is a Chimenea?

Well, simply put, it is a traditional Mexican clay fireplace. Chimeneas (literally chimneys) first made their appearance in Mexico in the 17th century, and were used to bake bread. Nowadays, few of us actually bake in them, but rather, build piñon wood fires in them. We treasure them for their aesthetic appeal, the focal point they become for gatherings on a porch or patio, and most especially for the way they fill the autumn air with fragrant smoke, evocative of our American Southwest.

Light My Fire!

Chimeneas are best used with a hard wood, such as the bagged piñon wood we carry here at the garden center. Hard woods produce the least sparks but, even so, the chimenea should be situated on a hard, non-flammable surface, such as a concrete slab or brick patio. A word of caution here—chimeneas are designed for outdoor use only. Please do not attempt to burn one indoors, or on a covered porch or patio.

The typical chimenea's two-piece construction of a base or belly, and the chimney or neck, makes lighting a fire in them a very easy task. It is desirable to put gravel or, better still, lava rock in the bottom of the chimenea to build the fire on. Start with small fires, which will season the clay of the chimenea and enable it to accommodate larger burns in the future, without damaging the clay. Don't use the chimenea when it is wet or raining, or damage may occur. Never use water to douse the fire in a chimenea, but do let it burn down naturally. If it is necessary to put the fire out immediately, smother it with soil or sand. If possible, your chimenea may be covered when not in use, and brought into a shed or garage for storage as winter freezes set in. This will prolong the life of your chimenea for many seasons.

Please stop by one of our three convenient locations soon to get yourself set up with a fall-tastic chimenea from Johnson's. ■