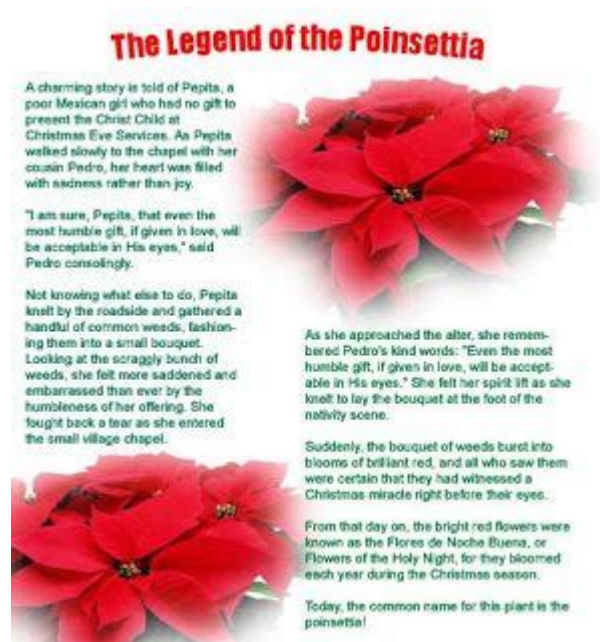


The Legend Of The Poinsettia



The Legend of the Poinsettia: A Festive Flower's Enchanting History

The vibrant crimson blooms of the poinsettia are synonymous with Christmas cheer. But beyond its festive role adorning homes and holiday tables, this stunning plant holds a rich and captivating history, woven with legend and folklore. This blog post will delve into the enchanting legend of the poinsettia, exploring its origins, cultural significance, and the fascinating stories that surround this beloved holiday symbol. Prepare to be captivated by the tale of a humble flower with an extraordinary legacy.

From Humble Beginnings: The Botanical Story of the Poinsettia

Before we delve into the legend, let's briefly touch upon the poinsettia's botanical origins. Scientifically known as *Euphorbia pulcherrima*, the poinsettia is native to Mexico and Central America. It's a member of the Euphorbiaceae family, a diverse group known for its milky sap. The Aztecs valued the poinsettia for its vibrant color and medicinal properties, using its sap for dyes and its bracts (the colorful leaf-like structures often mistaken for petals) for medicinal purposes.

The Legend of Pepita: A Christmas Miracle

The most widely known legend surrounding the poinsettia centers around a poor Mexican girl named Pepita. On Christmas Eve, Pepita longed to offer a gift to the baby Jesus but had nothing of value. Heartbroken, she gathered a small bouquet of weeds to present at the church service. As she laid her humble offering at the altar, the weeds miraculously transformed into brilliant red poinsettias, dazzling the congregation with their beauty. This story beautifully emphasizes the idea that even the simplest offering, given with love and sincerity, holds immense value.

Variations on a Theme: Different Interpretations of the Legend

While the core of Pepita's story remains consistent, variations exist. Some versions emphasize the divine intervention more strongly, highlighting the miraculous nature of the transformation. Others focus on the message of humility and faith, underscoring the power of a pure heart. Regardless of the specific details, the underlying message remains consistent: the poinsettia represents the spirit of Christmas – a gift of simple beauty and profound meaning.

The Poinsettia's Cultural Significance Beyond Christmas

The poinsettia's association with Christmas is undeniably strong, especially in the Western world. However, its cultural significance extends beyond the holiday season and beyond Western borders. In Mexico, the poinsettia holds a place of honor in traditional celebrations, symbolizing purity, hope, and the celebration of life. Its bright red color also links it to ancient Aztec traditions, connecting it to the cycle of rebirth and the celebration of the winter solstice.

Beyond Red: A Rainbow of Poinsettia Colors

While the classic red poinsettia remains the most popular, modern horticulture has produced a stunning array of colors, including white, pink, cream, and marbled varieties. Each color adds a unique touch to its symbolism, broadening its aesthetic appeal and offering a wider range of options for festive decorations.

The Poinsettia's Journey to Global Fame

The poinsettia's journey from a humble Mexican wildflower to a global Christmas icon is a

fascinating story in itself. Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first U.S. ambassador to Mexico, is credited with introducing the plant to the United States in the 1820s. From there, its popularity steadily grew, transforming it into the iconic symbol of Christmas cheer that it is today.

Cultivating the Legend: Growing Your Own Poinsettia

The beauty of the poinsettia extends beyond its legend; it also offers a rewarding experience for those who choose to cultivate it. Growing poinsettias requires specific conditions, but with proper care, you can enjoy the vibrant blooms year after year, continuing the legacy of this magical plant.

Tips for Poinsettia Care: Ensuring a Blooming Success

Poinsettias thrive in bright, indirect light and prefer consistently moist soil. They are sensitive to cold temperatures and drafts, so protecting them from sudden changes in temperature is crucial. Regular watering and fertilizing during the growing season will help promote healthy growth and abundant blooms.

Conclusion:

The legend of the poinsettia is more than just a charming tale; it's a story that embodies the spirit of Christmas – a testament to the power of faith, humility, and the simple beauty that can bring joy to the world. From its humble origins in Mexico to its global popularity, the poinsettia continues to captivate us with its vibrant color and the enchanting stories that surround it. So this Christmas, as you admire the poinsettia's vibrant hues, remember the inspiring legend of Pepita and the timeless message it conveys.

FAQs:

1. Are poinsettias poisonous? While poinsettias contain a milky sap that can cause mild skin irritation or stomach upset if ingested, they are not as toxic as commonly believed. The effects are generally mild and rarely cause serious harm.
2. How long do poinsettias bloom? Poinsettias typically bloom from late fall through the winter holiday season. With proper care, you can extend their blooming period.
3. Can I grow a poinsettia from a cutting? Yes, you can propagate poinsettias from cuttings, although it requires specific conditions and techniques for success.
4. What is the best way to dispose of a poinsettia after it blooms? You can compost the plant or safely discard it in your household garbage.
5. What does the color of a poinsettia symbolize? While red is most associated with Christmas and

symbolizes love and celebration, other colors have diverse meanings. For example, white poinsettias often symbolize purity and innocence.

the legend of the poinsettia: The Legend of the Poinsettia Tomie dePaola, 1997-10-06 In Mexico, the poinsettia is called flor de la Nochebuena flower of the Holy Night. At Christmastime, the flower blooms and flourishes, the quite exquisite red stars lighting up the countryside. This Mexican legend tells how the poinsettia came to be, through a little girl's unselfish gift to the Christ Child. Beloved Newbery honor-winning author and Caldecott honor-winning illustrator Tomie dePaola has embraced the legend using his own special feeling for Christmas. His glorious paintings capture not only the brilliant colors of Mexico and its art, but also the excitement of the children preparing for Christmas and the hope of Lucida, who comes to see what makes a gift truly beautiful.

the legend of the poinsettia: Zetta the Poinsettia Alma Hammond, 2018-11 Zetta was once a lonely poinsettia sitting on a box with the rest of the stock at the Miller Flower and Seed. It was the beginning of the holiday season - so there was a reason To Be. Then one day the season went away, but Zetta discovers she still has reason To Be.

the legend of the poinsettia: The Legend of the Poinsettia Tomie DePaola, 1994-01 When Lucida is unable to finish her gift for the Baby Jesus in time for the Christmas procession, a miracle enables her to offer the Beautiful flower we now call the poinsettia.

the legend of the poinsettia: The Legend of Old Befana Tomie dePaola, 2017-11-07 In this beloved classic picture book, Tomie dePaola retells and illustrates an Italian Christmas folk tale, breathing warmth and humanity into the character of the lonely Old Befana and her endless search for the Christ Child. Every morning and every afternoon, Old Befana sweeps with her broom. "Cranky old lady," the children say. "She is always sweeping!" Sweep, sweep, sweep. But when a brilliant star glows in the eastern sky one night, and Old Befana encounters the glorious procession of three kings on their way to Bethlehem, her world will never be the same.

the legend of the poinsettia: The Miracle of the First Poinsettia Joanne Oppenheim, 2004 A beautiful story which offers a new way of celebrating Christmas- Accessible, engaging text teaches children the valuable life lesson of the power of faith and trust and encourages personal integrity- Author Joanne Oppenheim has written more than fifty books for and about children, and is President of the Oppenheim Toy Portfolio organization- Introduces the extraordinary artwork of Fabian Negrin, who grew up in Argentina and studied art in Mexico City- Poinsettias are the bestselling potted plant in the United States!

the legend of the poinsettia: The Night of Las Posadas Tomie dePaola, 2001-09-24 Tomie dePaola's glorious paintings are as luminous as the farolitos that light up on the Plaza in Santa Fe for the procession of Las Posadas, the tradition in which Mary and Joseph go from door to door seeking shelter at the inn on Christmas Eve. This year Sister Angie, who is always in charge of the celebration, has to stay home with the flu, and Lupe and Roberto, who are to play Mary and Joseph, get caught in a snowstorm. But a man and a woman no one knows arrive in time to take their place in the procession and then mysteriously disappear at the end before they can be thanked. That night we witness a Christian miracle, for when Sister Angie goes to the cathedral and kneels before the statue of Mary and Joseph, wet footprints from the snow lead up to the statue.

the legend of the poinsettia: Joy to the World Tomie dePaola, 2013-10-17 A timeless celebration of Christmas from the legendary Newbery and Caldecott Honor winner Tomie dePaola! This collection unifies three of the incomparable Tomie dePaola's most beloved Christmas stories into one handsome volume. Vividly portrayed and expertly crafted, The Night of Las Posadas, The Story of the Three Wise Kings, and The Legend of the Poinsettia are sure to enchant and mesmerize the whole family during the holiday season.

the legend of the poinsettia: Poinsettias, the December Flower Christine Anderson, Terry Tischer, 1998 Melding myth, historical lore, botanical details, and delectable illustrations, Anderson and Tischer offer an inviting portrayal of just how this once thought to be weedy specimen was

reinvented as a prominent symbol of holiday spirit. Richly colored reproductions of ancient artwork show examples of the genus Euphorbia, and century-old postcards depict Poinsettia flowers in all their glory. The story of this now celebrated plant unfolds in a delightfully instructive, visually alluring volume devoted to the flower named for Joel Roberts Poinsett of South Carolina, with growing tips for aficionados of the brilliant red bloom and the other appealing cultivars currently available. - Alice Joyce; 64p-

the legend of the poinsettia: *Hurry, Santa!* Tomie dePaola, 2020-09-15 From award-winning author Tomie dePaola comes a witty and charming Christmas tale about Santa getting ready for his big night until...oh no, he's really got to GO...to the potty! *Hurry, Santa!* No time to rest, It's Christmas Eve. And time to get dressed! It's finally time for Santa to prepare for the most magical night of the year! But before he can spread Christmas cheer to every boy and girl, he must hurry up and get ready. Just when he's almost out the door, Santa runs back inside because OH NO! Santa's got to GO! Little ones will be chuckling with merry laughter when they find out that even Santa needs to go to the potty!

the legend of the poinsettia: *'Twas Nochebuena* Roseanne Greenfield Thong, 2014-10-16 'Twas Nochebuena and all through our casa, every creature was kneading tamale masa... It's Christmas Eve, and you're invited to a Nochebuena celebration! Follow a family as they prepare to host a night filled with laughter, love, and Latino tradition. Make tasty tamales and hang colorful adornos (decorations) on the walls. Gather to sing festive canciones (songs) while sipping champurrado (hot chocolate). After the midnight feast has been served and the last gifts have been unwrapped, it's time to cheer, "Feliz Navidad and to all a good night!" Savor the magic of Nochebuena with a holiday tale you'll want to read again and again.

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Story of the Three Wise Kings* Tomie dePaola, 2020-09-15 Tomie dePaola's "gorgeous...sumptuous" (Horn Book Magazine) retelling of the story of the three wise kings is perfect for sharing with little ones during the Christmas season! Three wise men of the East, having seen a new star symbolizing the birth of a great king, follow the star to Bethlehem where they present gifts to the newborn Jesus. This beautiful rendition of the well-known tale is sure to delight young readers.

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Christmas Rose* Wendy Blaxland, 2022-10-05 A beautiful Christmas story based on the traditional legend of the Christmas Rose. The fields near Bethlehem are filled with great joy when angels appear telling of the birth of a very special baby. Madelon's uncle, his men, and the magnificent kings riding on camels all have gifts for the Saviour. But Madelon has nothing. What could she possibly give hi

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Gingerbread Man Loose at Christmas* Laura Murray, 2015-10-13 The holidays are for giving thanks and nothing can stop this Gingerbread Man from delivering his to his favorite member of the community! Everyone in class is busy practicing songs and making goodies for their trip to town to thank community helpers, and the Gingerbread Man has made a card for someone extra sweet. But before he can deliver his gift, whipping wind and swirling snow come to town, too. Slushy sidewalks are no place for a cookie, but this Gingerbread Man won't let a little bad weather stop him! "I'll search on my own, as fast as I can! I'll dash through this snow. I'm the Gingerbread Man!" With all the flavors of the season and generous dashes of kindness and gratitude, the Gingerbread Man's newest adventure makes for a perfect read-aloud throughout the holidays. Look for all of this hilarious Gingerbread Man's adventures: *The Gingerbread Man Loose at School*, *The Gingerbread Man Loose on the Fire Truck*, *The Gingerbread Man Loose at Christmas*, *The Gingerbread Man Loose at the Zoo*, and *The Gingerbread Man and the Leprechaun Loose at School*!

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Legend of the Sand Dollar* Chris Auer, 2011-04-23 Eight-year-old Kerry loves the ocean. But on this visit to the beach, she discovers a little-known treasure and learns of the story of easter revealed in the sand dollar. Now you and your child can discover the story behind this small ocean treasure as stunning illustrations form the backdrop for this familiar seaside legend. Seen through the eyes of children, *The Legend of the Sand Dollar*

shares the timeless hope of resurrection and new life---the promise of Easter.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Milagro de la flor de nochebuena* Brian Cavanaugh, 2017 The story about the Christmas cr  che is from *The Life of St. Francis (Legenda maior)* by St. Bonaventure.--Title page verso.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Tony's Bread* Tomie dePaola, 1996-04-16 Tony dreams that one day he'll become the most famous baker in northern Italy. His poor daughter Serafina wants to be allowed to marry. Each of their dreams seems far away until Angelo, a rich young nobleman from Milan, appears and devises a way to make everyone's dreams come true.

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Cultured Chef* Nicholas Beatty, 2014-11-15 A not-so-ordinary cookbook for kids filled with unique recipes, whimsical illustrations, and stories about fascinating people and places in all corners of the globe.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Queen Esther* Tomie dePaola, 2020-03-05 Queen Esther, the Jewish wife of King Ahasuerus of Persia, bravely risked her life to save her people. Tomie dePaola's imaginative artwork brings new life to this beautiful retelling of an inspiring Bible story.--Provided by publisher.

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Wild Christmas Reindeer* Jan Brett, 2018-10-16 Little Teeka thought she had to be firm with the reindeer to get them ready for Santa's important flight, but when her bossy yelling only got their antlerstangled up, she knew she had to try something different.Beautifully conceived and finely wrought. -- Booklist (starred review)Brett's precise, glowing illustrations, drawing on Swedish folk art, make this a beguiling Advent calendar of a book. -- Kirkus ReviewsAA? sweet Christmas fantasy that shows Brett at her best. -- Publishers WeeklyThis tale with its humorous close-ups of stubborn reindeer and a sharp child protagonist should prove popular at story hours. -- School Library Journal

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Family Christmas Tree Book* Tomie dePaola, 2013-11-05 One family tells the history of the Christmas tree while decorating its own In this warmly illustrated book, a family trims its Christmas tree. As the mother, father, grandmother, and children decorate together, they tell the story of how Christmas trees came to be, including the changes in size and appearance over time, and the way ornaments were first introduced. Tomie dePaola effortlessly weaves together little-known historical facts with the story of one family's traditions. This fixed-layout ebook, which preserves the design and layout of the original print book, features read-along narration.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Tomie DePaola's Big Book of Favorite Legends* Tomie DePaola, 2007 Presents a collection of favorite legends of the author.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Country Angel Christmas* Tomie DePaola, 1995 Excluded from helping to prepare the Christmas celebration in Heaven, three small angels find a way to light up the night sky on Christmas Eve.

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Clown of God* Tomie dePaola, 2018-03-06 This beautiful new edition of Tomie dePaola's 1978 classic retelling of a French legend stars a little juggler whose unique talent leads him to what might be a Christmas miracle. Little Giovanni is poor and homeless, but he can do something wonderful: he can juggle. The people of Sorrento marvel at his talents, and before long, he becomes famous throughout Italy for his rainbow of colored balls that delight the nobility and townspeople alike. But as the years pass, Giovanni grows old, and his talents begin to fail him. No longer a celebrated performer, he is once again poor and homeless, begging for his food. Until one Christmas Eve, when Giovanni picks up his rainbow of colored balls once more. And what happens next just might be a miracle...

the legend of the poinsettia: *Tomie dePaola's Mother Goose Favorites* Tomie dePaola, 2000-01-10 Presenting a delightful collection of children's favorite Mother Goose rhymes, illustrated with full-color paintings by Tomie dePaola. Young readers and their parents will enjoy meeting up with familiar friends, including Old King Cole, Little Bo-Peep, Jack and Jill, and many more in a book that is sure to be a story-hour favorite.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Merry Christmas, Strega Nona* Tomie dePaola, 2023-09-12 In

this holiday follow-up to Tomie dePaola's Caldecott Honor-winning *Strega Nona*, our favorite Grandma-Witch is back and bringing her magic to Christmas with a town feast—can she count on Big Anthony as her only helper? It's Christmas time in Calabria and with *Strega Nona's* annual feast around the corner, she has no time for her usual magical tasks. Christmas has a magic of its own, and no one knows magic like *Strega Nona* does, especially Big Anthony. But with the clock ticking on her preparations, will Big Anthony finally be able to prove that he can be counted on with some magic of his own? With warm illustrations in Tomie's classic folk-art style, this refreshed addition to the *Strega Nona* series is a must-have for fans of all ages.

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Lady of Guadalupe* Tomie dePaola, 2013-06-18 A gorgeously depicted story of the Lady of Guadalupe and her love for the people of Mexico In stunning words and images, Tomie dePaola renders the beautiful story of the Mother of God appearing to an indigenous man in Mexico to teach true peace to the native people. In these visitations, the Lady of Guadalupe shows her great love for the Mexican people, and proves that culture need not be obliterated to bring the Christian faith to others. The beauty of the Lady's love is reflected in dePaola's spectacular watercolor illustrations. This is a fixed-format ebook, which preserves the design and layout of the original print book.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Creepy Carrots!* Aaron Reynolds, 2012-08-21 In this Caldecott Honor-winning picture book, *The Twilight Zone* comes to the carrot patch as a rabbit fears his favorite treats are out to get him. Includes audio! Jasper Rabbit loves carrots—especially Crackenhopper Field carrots. He eats them on the way to school. He eats them going to Little League. He eats them walking home. Until the day the carrots start following him...or are they? Celebrated artist Peter Brown's stylish illustrations pair perfectly with Aaron Reynold's text in this hilarious picture book that shows it's all fun and games...until you get too greedy.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Nine Days to Christmas* Marie Hall Ets, Aurora Labastida, 2017-10-18 Ceci anxiously awaits her first posada, the special Mexican Christmas party, and the opportunity to select a piñata for it.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Tough Cookie* Edward Hemingway, 2018-09-11 When a cookie discovers he does NOT taste delicious, he has to find a new identity in this clever picture book twist on a holiday classic. Once upon a time, while Fox was visiting the land of Holiday Treats, a little cookie—still warm from the bakery oven—burst out the front door looking sweet and ready to be devoured. But, as it turns out, Cookie is not as fast as he thinks and when Fox finally catches him, they're both in for a big surprise: Sugar Cookie does not taste delicious—and he's certainly not fit to be eaten. What's an unsavory cookie to do? Is there another option for this not-so-sweet treat? This inventive story celebrates the joy of being accepted for who we are. Includes recipes and instructions to cook up your own Tough Cookies! Christy Ottaviano Books

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the legend of the poinsettia: *Days of the Blackbird* Tomie dePaola, 2005-02-17 At the request of a kind duke's loving daughter, La Colomba, a pure white bird, braves the bitter winter of the northern Italian mountains to sing for the gravely ill man.

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Legend of the Candy Cane* Lori Walburg, 1997 In this Christmas picture book, children will learn the Christian Symbolism behind the candy cane and the importance of sharing the story of Jesus with others.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Jeanette Winter, 1992-01-15 Illus. in full color. Winter's story begins with a peg-leg sailor who aids slaves on their escape on the

Underground Railroad. While working for plantation owners, Peg Leg Joe teaches the slaves a song about the drinking gourd (the Big Dipper). A couple, their son, and two others make their escape by following the song's directions. Rich paintings interpret the strong story in a clean, primitive style enhanced by bold colors. The rhythmic compositions have an energetic presence that's compelling. A fine rendering of history in picturebook format.--(starred) Booklist.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Piggy Bunny* Rachel Vail, 2012-02-14 Most piglets want to be pigs when they grow up. Not Liam. He wants to be a bunny. Even if it takes a lot of practice to learn how to hop...and to eat salad. Even if no one believes that a piggy can be a bunny. With a lot of determination, and a little help from his grandma, Liam is determined to make his dream come true. For children who put on a cape or a tutu, who dream of being someone or something different, Piggy Bunny offers a reassuring and fun opportunity to believe in themselves.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Strega Nona Takes a Vacation* Tomie dePaola, 2003-05-12 Lately Strega Nona has been distracted-she even gave Signore Mayor the wrong remedy for his headache. One night Nona has a dream about her Grandma Concetta, who has been in heaven for many years, and her little house at the seashore. Nona decides that she will take a vacation there. While Strega Nona is away, Bambolona will do the daily remedies and Big Anthony will do the chores. With these two left in charge, what could possibly go wrong?

the legend of the poinsettia: *Adelita* Tomie dePaola, 2002-09-16 Hace mucho tiempo—a long time ago—there lived a beautiful young woman named Adelita. So begins the age-old tale of a kindhearted young woman, her jealous stepmother, two hateful stepsisters, and a young man in search of a wife. The young man, Javier, falls madly in love with beautiful Adelita, but she disappears from his fiesta at midnight, leaving him with only one clue to her hidden identity: a beautiful rebozo—shawl. With the rebozo in place of a glass slipper, this favorite fairy tale takes a delightful twist. Tomie dePaola's exquisite paintings, filled with the folk art of Mexico, make this a Cinderella story like no other. Please note that the majority of this text is in English, with Spanish vocabulary throughout.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Together for Kwanzaa* Juwanda G. Ford, 2010-12-01 Kwanzaa is Kayla's favorite time of year. But this year, it looks as if a heavy snowstorm will keep her big brother, Khari, from getting home in time for the festivities! Will Khari miss the celebration completely? Or will Kayla and her brother somehow find a way to be together for Kwanzaa? A perfect introduction to Kwanzaa, this book will teach children all about the traditions and practices that make it a special winter holiday.

the legend of the poinsettia: *The Dragon New Year* David Bouchard, Dave Bouchard, 1999 Frightened into sleeplessness by the noisy celebration of the Chinese New Year, a young girl takes comfort in her grandmother's soothing story of a dragon, a mother's sorrow, and Buddha.

the legend of the poinsettia: *No, David!* David Shannon, 2006-02 Have you met David yet? If not, you're in for a treat . . . and children will be tickled pink by his antics and amusing scrapes. See what happens to David in a typical day at home. He doesn't mean to misbehave, but somehow he just can't help but get into trouble. Amusing matching of picture and text will have children laughing out loud and happy to read and re-read the story for a long time to come.

the legend of the poinsettia: *Lucia Morning in Sweden* Ewa Rydåker, 2014-06 Includes traditional recipes, words and music to the Sancta Lucia song, patterns for a Lucia or Starboy gown, plus the legend of Santa Lucia.

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