

Southern Living Show Plans Mean Spring's Close By!

In Hamilton, Virginia, thousands of spring bulbs are being nurtured for early blooming; in the North Carolina mountains, Estella Barnes is weaving her quilts and in designers' offices around the Carolinas the special colors and textures of spring are being carefully coordinated.

Why this early spring fever? Why else? The Southern Living Show will be at the Charlotte Merchandise Mart, February 25 through March 4 - one month before spring officially appears on the calendar. And at this annual prelude to our Southern springtime everything has to be picture perfect.

If you talk with Robert Zimmerman, president of Southern Shows, Inc., which produces this popular family spectacular, he'll tell you the plans really began before the doors closed on the 1983 show.

"We ask visitors what they'd like to see at the show," said Zimmerman, "and we do our best to have it for them the following year."

"Last year, for instance, men and women asked for more on home improvements, especially refurbishing their homes. And so this year we have a section just filled with banisters, moldings and a huge array of out-of-the-ordinary fix-ups for your home."

"The section," he con-

tinued, "is sponsored by the Carolinas Lumber Dealers Association, and the items are included in beautiful mini-room settings. Plus, the whole area is landscaped in a walk-through-and-learn atmosphere where you can really see the variety of products available. I feel sure folks will love it!"

The designer rooms are always crowd pleasers, and no wonder! There's something for country lovers and city slickers - and ideas you can take home and use to brighten your own spring home. Zimmerman says this year the designers promise even more ideas that will give a face lift and don't cost a fortune.

If you've been to the show you know the gardens are enough to make you green with envy and inspired enough to work miracles in your own yard. There are daffodils, tulips, azaleas, unique fountains and practical paths. And the trees! A lot of folks ask, "Are they real?" The answer is a resounding "Yes!"

All foliage, flowers, horticulture - everything in the gardens must be the real thing. No artificiality is allowed. And, something else many visitors don't realize - according to the show producers the flowers are changed halfway through the show, so those visiting the last weekend see a show just as fresh as

those who attended the first weekend.

Crafts, like precisely turned out pottery, delicate baskets, stained glass and rugged wooden toys are just a few of the heirlooms on sale. And even if you don't buy a thing, you'll enjoy talking with the talented artisans who create these treasures.

The Orchid section, Bon-sai Pavilion, travel booths, home and garden and the gardener's market places are all fresh and exciting for 1984. The

Charlotte Council of Garden Club's annual Standard Flower Show has more horticulture and helpful ideas than in previous years.

Apparently the Southern Living Show has become such a Southern tradition, some folks even plan their trip from the North to Florida so they'll come through Charlotte while it's in progress. Now that's a compliment!

Show hours are 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. week-days and Saturdays and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays. Show pro-

ducers say late afternoons and evenings are great times to attend if you're a "browser."

Admission is \$3.50 in advance, \$4 at the door, and \$3 for 30 or more tickets. Children under six, excluding groups, are free all day and after 4 p.m.; children under 12, excluding groups, are free, with adults.

For more information, or to order tickets, write or call the Southern Living Show, Box 36859, Charlotte, North Carolina 28236. Telephone 704-376-6594.

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