



Industrial designers Sallyann Corn and Joe Kent bring forward-thinking ideas, a fascination with unique materials and a commitment to American manufacturing to their company, fruitsuper.

Made in the U.S.A. *fruitsuper*

Seattle product designers elevate everyday objects with their contemporary flair, making sure each piece in their collection is American made.

fruitsuper is a Seattle-based design studio founded in 2008 by Sallyann Corn and Joe Kent. The brand came to my attention when a friend gifted me a trio of powder-coated metal shapes – a circle, a square and a triangle – each one about 5 inches in diameter, perforated with openings to accommodate flower stems and large enough to balance on the rim of an ordinary tumbler or glass vase.

Aptly named “Anywhere Vases,” the set of versatile and graphic vase-toppers turns any vessel into a pretty bud vase. Cork backing ensures that the metal shapes won’t slip off. I look closely at packaging – always – to determine where products that catch my eye are made. “Made in the USA” is printed on the front of the Anywhere Vase box, making this thoughtful gift even more special.

Interested in what else fruitsuper has introduced in the product design marketplace, I discovered a playful website filled with clever, modern objects. I learned that fruitsuper works with domestic makers and factories.

“That’s one of our core values,” Sallyann explains. “In the early stages, we started doing U.S.-made for logistics reasons. The more we got into it, we started falling in love with our manufacturers and building relationships. We’re directly connected with the jobs that we’re helping support, and that’s important to us. If we can’t figure out a way to make



A set of three playfully simple shapes instantly transforms vessels into vases. Designed to accommodate a variety of containers and stem diameters, the cork-backed Anywhere Vases make it easy to display and arrange flowers and foliages.

Add stylish structure to your indoor jungle with this trio of Plant Sticks. These sculptural pieces of brass are designed to accommodate a wide range of plant types.



(a product) here, then we won't make it."

Industrial designers, Sallyann and Joe are entrepreneurial about each product they bring to market. The partners also own JOIN Shop, two retail stores in Seattle and Walla Walla, Wash., which feature fruitsuper's signature collection along with goods from 60 makers.

Design inspiration comes from many sources, including the desire to "play with stuff in our studio just to see how far we can push something," Sallyann says, such as the "Lift Coaster," a solid-brass X-shape that reimagines a prosaic round drink coaster.

Her search for a better bud vase inspired fruitsuper's Anywhere Vase collection, available as a set of three white stem organizers or as a tan/mint/cobalt set (\$38 retail). "One day we came home with a bundle of tulips, and we didn't really have a vase," Sallyann recalls "We found one sad little glass piece, and when I put the tulips in it, they looked pathetic and puny."

Thinking there had to be some way to make those flowers look better, she and Joe played around with various shapes. They recalled how flower shops use a tape grid across a vase opening and experimented with different-sized cutouts to accommodate everything from a chunky sunflower stem to a wispy wildflower stem. "We were fascinated with the idea

that if you have these three flat shapes, anyone, anywhere, can turn a Mason jar or a tin can or a big vase they're trying to make smaller into a beautifully arranged display," Sallyann explains.

On a visit to Seattle's Volunteer Park Conservatory, Sallyann and Joe noticed that most of the plants were supported by hidden stakes. "We came home and quickly prototyped as many plant sticks as possible, whether it's an arch shape that pushes up a tilting plant or a looped stick that can hold up a weak stem," she says. "We had all of our friends test them with various types of plants and landed on using brass because it's such a nice color and material complement to greenery."

Earlier this year, fruitsuper introduced "Plant Sticks," its second botanically inspired product. Stylish and functional, the 7-, 9- and 11-inch solid-brass sticks are intended to replace the chopstick or pencil (\$32 retail). In the works for 2019 is a product that addresses how to water plants, but Sallyann can't reveal details at this point. ■

Details: fruitsuper

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Wholesale: fruitsuper offers wholesale pricing for orders beginning at 12 units per style.