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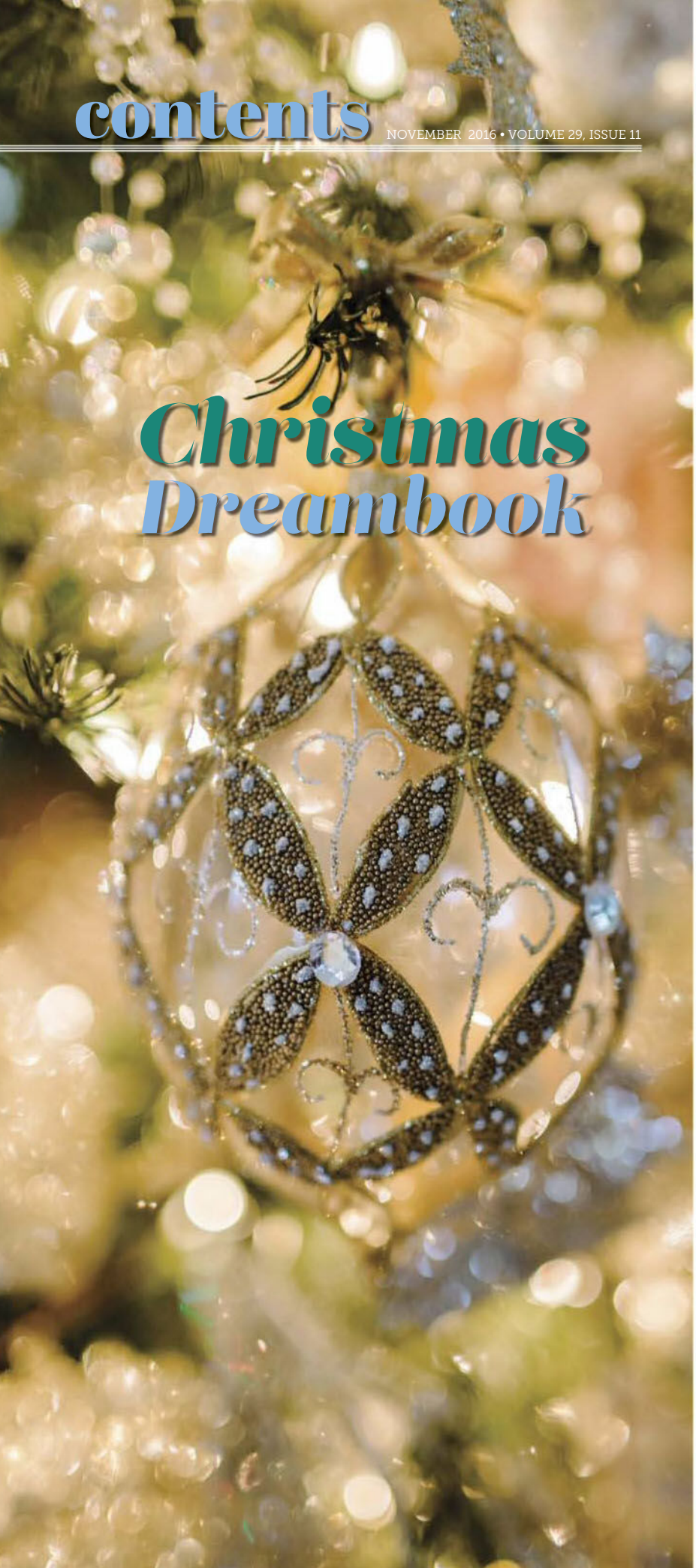

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Holiday Staples

The first year my parents were married,

they could not afford much in the way of Christmas decorations. Fortunately, the previous inhabitants of their rented apartment had left behind several boxes of ornaments—classic red glass balls that are still very much a tree-trimming staple 50 years later. Some of the balls have broken over the years, and their glamour has been eclipsed by fancier store-bought ornaments and an abundance of handmade trinkets, but the family Christmas tree would not be the same without their solid presence peeking through the branches.

These found treasures play an important part in our family mythology. As my sisters and I grew up, moved out and started families of our own, my parents gifted each of us with our own box of shiny red ornaments. Newly purchased, but loaded with the symbolism of a dearly held family tradition.

It's easy to get caught up in what's shiny and new when it comes time to decorate for the holidays. The stores are filled with brilliant ornaments I can't resist, and magazines offer up scores of crafty projects that I simply must try. But no matter what direction my holiday décor takes, I know for certain my red glass balls will have a place of pride. They represent my family and my childhood, and all the best things that Christmas means to me. And some day, when my kids move out on their own, I'll give them each a box of red glass ornaments of their own, so they can carry on a family tradition filled with love.

In this issue, you'll find plenty of new ideas for decorating your home this holiday, along with much love for classic traditions and vintage charm. What are your special holiday decorating traditions? Share with us on Facebook and Instagram, or reach out to me on Twitter at @always_rh. I'll be waiting to hear from you! Until then, I'll be busy decking the halls!

Always,
Staci Dumoski, Editor

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Yours Truly

Collected Blessings

I use a lot of your vintage ideas and love using old pieces of china that others don't want and have for sale. I also collect beautiful platters in rose patterns, which I hang on my walls. I loved your article on pink roses. I also collect teapots. I probably have 22 or so: beautiful, some very old, also beautiful cups and saucers, old sugar and creamers. The creamers I serve salad dressing in for a formal [meal] or just a luncheon.

My favorite collection is one of many beautiful hankies I buy wherever I go. It is my Hankie Ministry. That means I send them in cards (get well, birthdays, someone who has lost a child or husband etc.). I keep a large supply on hand. I just sent a beautiful hankie and card to a 107-years-young lady I did not know in a home. I receive a blessing every time I tuck one in a card and send it on its way. I don't always know the lady, but I hope and pray as she receives one, her day will be blessed.

I also decorate my home with hankies. Bathroom window curtain, pinned with clothespins to the rod. I use them on my hutch, in my bedroom on shelves, and display them in the dining room over a sliding glass door. I also tuck one in my purse before going out. Maybe I will take pictures of my collection and send them to you.

I hope I have not bored you with all this, but I just get excited every time I go to the mailbox and there is my beautiful *Romantic Homes*.

WANDA L. EDWARD
WASHINGTON, IL

We hope you will take photos to send us, Wanda! We encourage all our readers to share photos of their favorite collections with us, either by post or via social media. It's so wonderful to hear stories like the one about your Hankie Ministry.

YOU HAVE INSPIRED US ALL TODAY.
EDITORS

Just wanted to tell how much I enjoy your magazine. I just received my September issue and enjoy it so much, because on every page [are] such wonderful ideas. The magazine is not filled in with advertising and other things as fillers. On 99% of the pages are such lovely ideas that the readers can enjoy and put into their own version of ideas in their own homes. Thank you very much for the wonderful magazine.

BRENDA DOOLEY, VIA ROMANTICHOMES.COM

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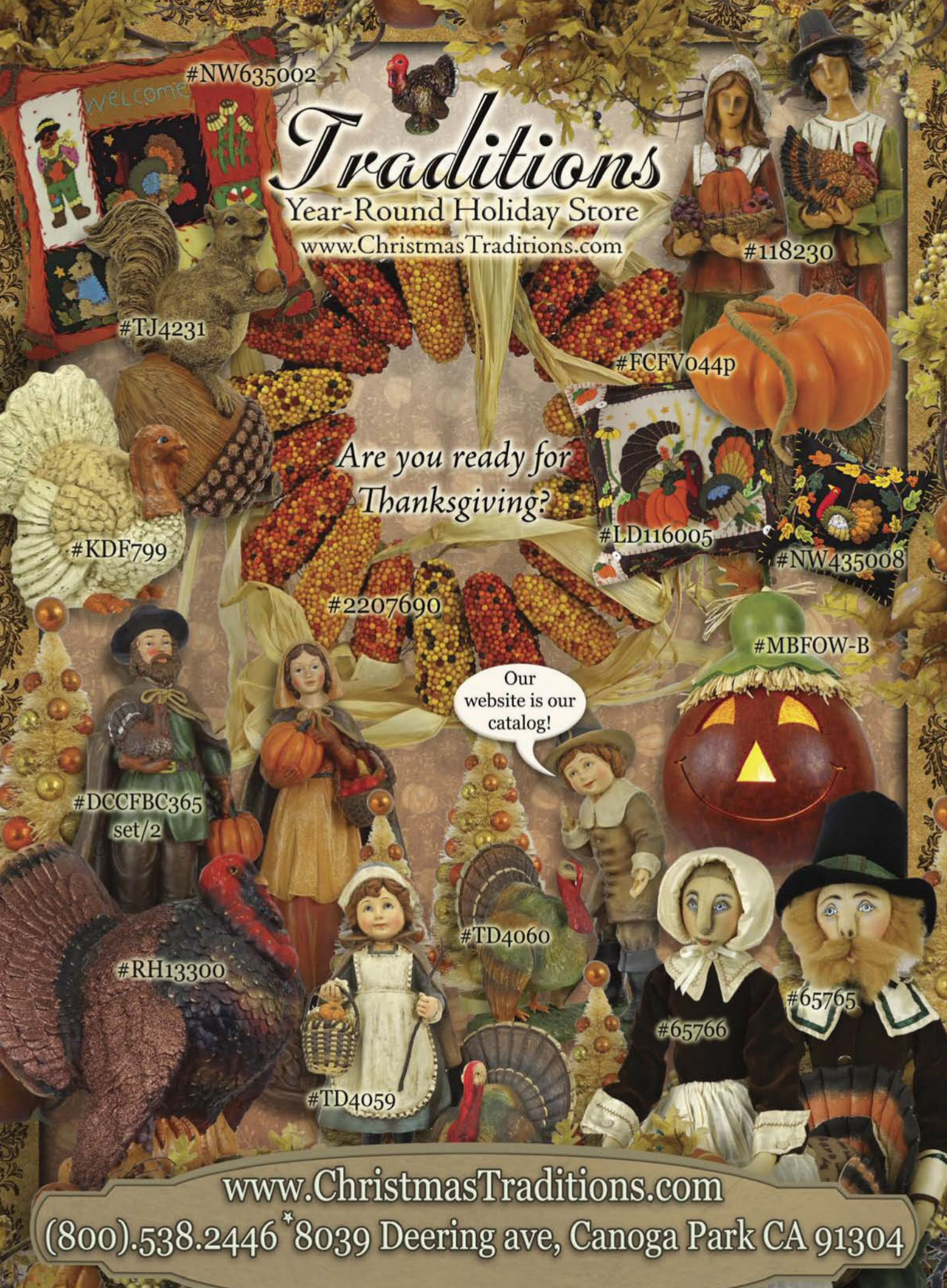
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Christmas IN THE KITCHEN

By Staci Dumoski

Spread seasonal cheer throughout your home with these holiday accessories for your kitchen and table.

1. **"From the Kitchen of" tags**, $22. Visit papermash.co.uk.
2. **Sleigh bowl,** $55. (612) 338-9100 or juliaknightcollection.com.
3. **Brass trivet,** $38. (877) 822-7277 or jeffersonbrass.com.
4. **Spoon rest,** $10. Visit qsquarednyc.com.
5. **Oil bottle,** $28. Visit jubileegiftshop.com.
6. **Tea towels,** $22. Visit aprilcornell.com.
7. **Cheeseboard,** $29.99. (866) 634-2628 or picnic-plus.com.
8. **Placemat,** $16, and napkin ring, $20 for 4. Visit essenceofprovence.com.
9. **Glass pitcher,** $80. Visit portmeirion.com.

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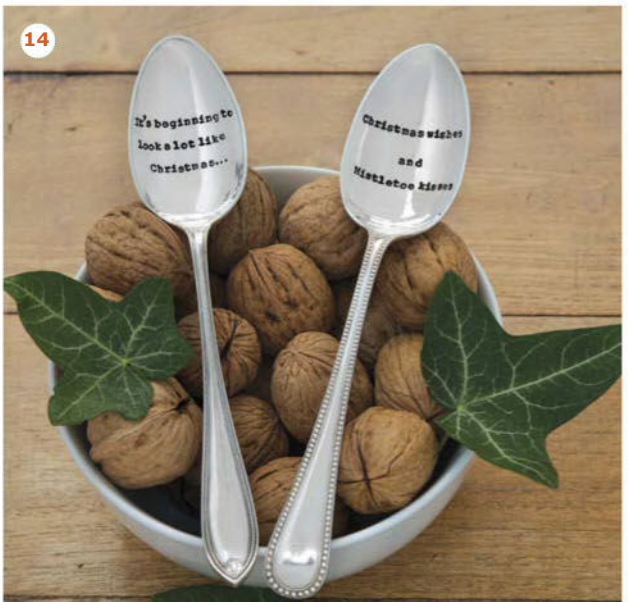

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10. Comfort mat, $75. Visit ballarddesigns.com.

11. Ornament stencil, $3.50. Visit lindyscakes.co.uk.

12. Mince pie sticks, $4.50. Visit gingerray.com.

13. Homemade treat tags, $4. Visit gingerray.com.

14. Stamped vintage spoons, $22. Visit oakroomshop.co.uk.

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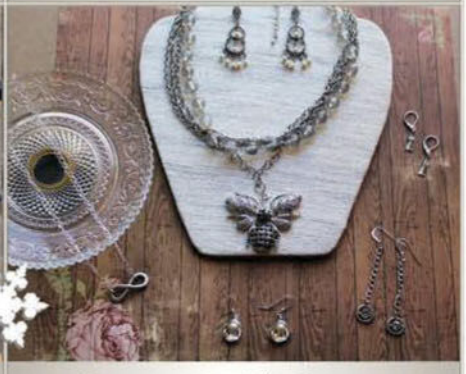

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18. Teapot, $35.99. Visit willowtreeridge.com.

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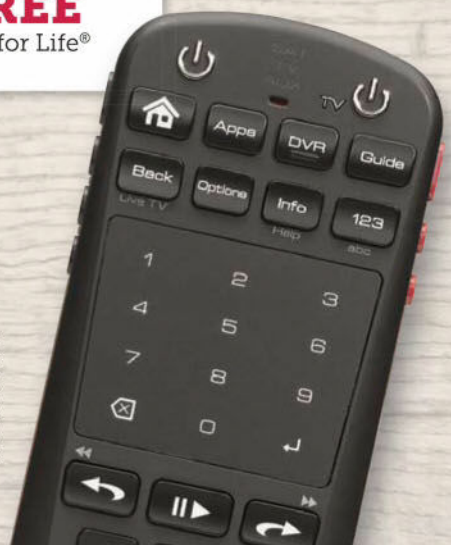

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VINTAGE Christmas

Deck the halls with enchanting old-fashioned details perfect for the season.

By Elizabeth Delehanty
Photography by Kay Ellen Hammar
Styling by Kay Ellen Hammar and Jickie Torres

Many of the Christmas traditions we're familiar with today began during the 19th century

in New York, where Dutch settlers kept their customs from the Old World alive. Wealthy Victorians took notice of the lovely European Christmas decorations and adopted them for the opulent style they're known for.

Use these six tips to emulate classic Americana décor this Christmas, for a look that takes you and your guests back to simpler times.

1. VICTORIAN SILHOUETTES: Portraits made by tracing someone's profile became standard in homes during the 18th and 19th centuries. Decorate your walls with this classic art by collecting antique silhouettes or making your own.

2. FORGOTTEN CRAFT: Before industrialization, the town blacksmith would work metal by hand—hence the term "wrought iron." Honor this lost tradition with antique candlesticks with pretty floral details.

3. TIME AND PLACE: A rustic farmhouse-style clock is mounted high, elegantly tying everything else on the wall together.

4. KEEP IT SIMPLE: Here graceful pine sprigs are draped atop picture frames. More robust varieties of evergreen, like fir and spruce, don't provide the gentle form pines do.

5. SNOW WHITE: A vintage-inspired sofa in white highlights the traditional red and green used throughout the room.

6. SWEET TREAT: Fresh pomegranates add continuity to the color scheme and celebrate the season with their long-standing symbolism of abundance.

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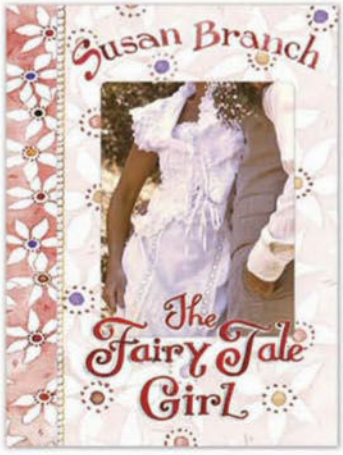

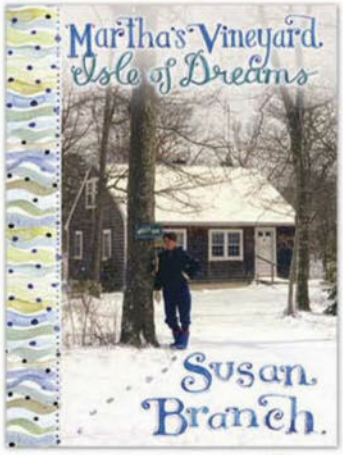

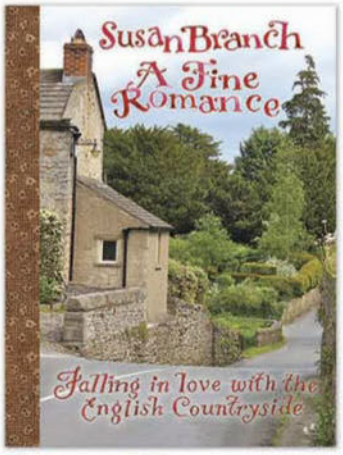

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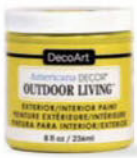

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AUCTION-BLOCK GIFT GUIDE

This year, think outside the prepackaged box with some expert advice about buying gifts from auctions.

By Jolene Nolte • Photography by Jen O'Connor

Every year it can be hard to think of gifts for the people on your shopping list.

You want something as special as they are, but where to begin? Perusing the enduring, well-made objects of the past gives you a range of unexpected and beautiful choices to suit the tastes of people on your list and your budget too.

To learn more, we went to an expert, founder and head of content at Barnebys.com, Pontus Silfverstolpe. He has 20 years of experience with fine art and antiques, and offers his advice for shopping at auction houses or auction aggregator sites like Barnebys.com.

BEFORE YOU BUY

First, Pontus says, you've got some homework. "Set yourself a budget—it can be easy to get carried away with the excitement of an auction!" Know your price range going in, so you don't give way to in-the-moment impulse and can still afford presents for the others on your list.

There are other logistics to consider about buying through an auction house, whether in person or online. Pontus elaborates: "Is there a cost for delivery? What is the rate of buyers' premium? How long will the auction house hold the item before you have to collect it and are there any storage costs? When is the auction? Using Barnebys, the auction aggregator, you can easily track what auctions are coming up and when."

To avoid any surprises, Pontus suggests some simple things you can do. If it's an international auction, be sure to check the currency. The auction house should give you a condition report with information about the object's size and state. "Read all information carefully … You don't want to end up with a doll-sized piece of furniture when looking for a sideboard for the dining room!"

Once you read the information, if you still have questions, ask. "Speak with the auction house prior to bidding; the experts are there to ensure you have a pleasant and transparent buying experience," Pontus says.

EXPERT GIFT IDEAS

Pontus recommends photography and prints—"prices can start [at] as little as $100 or below for an original piece." If that's a bit steep or you know the person you're shopping for would prefer something else but you still want something with "wow factor," Pontus suggests, "Unique items such as unusually shaped trays, antique screwdrivers or ornate candlesticks make beautiful gifts, and will surely be a [delightful] surprise."

TIP

"Speak with the auction house prior to bidding; the experts are there to ensure you have a pleasant and transparent buying experience."

TIP

"There are auctions underway around the globe around the clock! If you want a bargain, look out for an auction house's 'House Sale.'"

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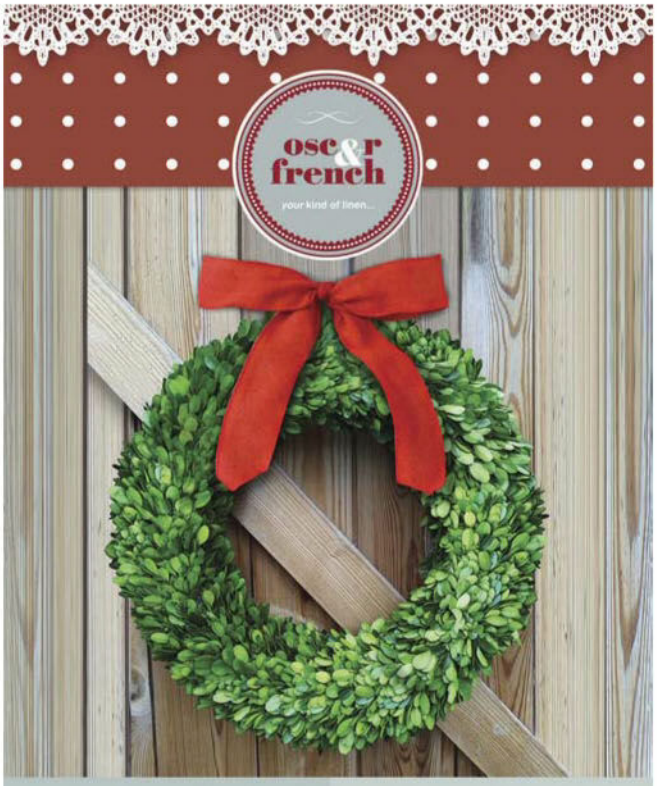

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THE ELEGANT FRONT PARLOR'S bejeweled tree and mantel positively shimmer with lights and decorations. Fresh flowers on the table and pots of white poinsettias throughout add a natural element.

"Our goal with the parlor's tree was to make it look like a beautiful piece of jewelry *through extensive layering with mostly gold and silver holiday decorations."*

CLASSICALLY CHRISTMAS

Pull out all the bells and whistles with this opulent look for the holidays.

Written and styled by Charlotte Safavi « Photography by Robert Radifera

After once preparing his longtime client's Eastern Shore home for the annual Christmas in St Michael's Home Tour,

Jamie Merida, owner of Bountiful Interiors, a home store and design studio in Easton, Maryland, was enlisted to decorate her primary Potomac residence last year.

"Our client absolutely loves Christmas; it's her favorite thing. She has her grown children living nearby and lots of grandchildren. They all come over for the holiday," says Jamie. "Her old decorations were worn. She'd had them for years and wanted us to make the house look really spectacular. We get in 2 to 3 tons of holiday decorations in the shop every year, so we knew how to do it."

Jamie and his holiday design associate, Paula Siedlarz, came up with a game plan. The idea was "no holds barred" with the intention of tackling multiple spaces inside and outside the house, layering holiday magic all over, while maintaining the home's distinct identity.

"I think Christmas sings in a traditional home," says Jamie. "The house is in a Colonial Williamsburg style, with lots of amazing architecture. It absolutely lends itself to decking out for Christmas."

BEJEWELED ELEGANCE

The homeowner, however, is not a big fan of red and green when it comes to holiday decorating, so Jamie and Paula had to come up with fresh colorways. "We went, instead, with silvers, golds, whites and natural greens, adding peachy pinks and robin's-egg blues in the parlor to play off the existing décor," he says, adding, "The palette is both elegant and traditional, a sort of restrained opulence."

"We went, instead, with silvers, golds, whites and natural greens, *adding peachy pinks and robin's-egg blues in the parlor to play off the existing décor."*

One of the principal architectural features in the home is the expansive foyer hall and its grand staircase wrapping up the landings. The holiday decorating tone had to be set there, as the parlor and dining room are also immediately visible upon entry into the house.

"We ran an elaborate garland up the staircase. It's thick and lit, encrusted with silvered balls and jeweled ornaments," says Jamie. The garland is very attractive from a distance, and when viewed close up, it reveals a plethora of goodies, like little sparkly birds or glittery nests with eggs. It becomes all about those tucked-in, hidden details.

"We applied the same idea to the big arrangement on the round hall table. It has a prelit central feature, but is also layered with riches," adds Jamie.

The home also has multiple fireplaces. Each mantel is decked with garlands filled with twinkling lights and accent ornaments, but each room's mantel exudes its own flavor and identity. For example, the dining room mantel has magnolia blossoms intertwined in its garland, while the parlor's mantel is shimmery and glittery, dripping with jeweled berries and gold-dusted holly leaves.

"Our goal with the parlor's tree was to make it look like a beautiful piece of jewelry through extensive layering with mostly gold and silver holiday decorations. The trick is varying the different sizes, shapes and textures of the ornaments. The result is controlled chaos and dense shimmer," adds Jamie.

The family room tree has always held the special ornaments passed down through the generations, so Jamie and Paula were respectful of this. They kept those, but added more ornaments in red and plenty of white flocking. It's a holiday tradition for the homeowner and her daughter to wrap Christmas presents in special papers with pretty bows. These become part of the holiday décor under each of the trimmed Christmas trees.

In the kitchen, the decorations are more rustic and relaxed. "It has more of an English woodland feel, with red berries, evergreens and pinecones without the glitter, and of course, there are the nutcrackers," says Jamie of the overall effect.

When all is decked out and done, it's hard to imagine that holiday decorating by Bountiful Interiors won't become another annual tradition for the homeowner. "It's always nice when you have a patron who allows you to be as creative as you want to be," adds Jamie.

SHIMMER AND SHINE

There are two tall Christmas trees in the home: one in the parlor and one in the family room.

IN THE FOYER, the central foyer table is decked out, as are the banisters leading up the stairs. Beyond the table, curved glass French doors lead into the dining room.

THE DINING ROOM TABLE is formally set with crystal, china and silver, as well as with white tapers and a holiday centerpiece. Both the sideboard and mantel are also filled with dazzling holiday sparkle.

DESIGNER TIPS: LAYERED RICHES

CREATE AN OPULENT LOOK FOR YOUR HOLIDAY DÉCOR BY USING THESE GUIDELINES TO DECK THE HALLS.

1. **CHOOSE A PALETTE:** Work with the home's existing colors, as well as with neutral white, silver and gold.

2. **MAKE AN ENTRANCE:** Set your design tone in the foyer. Go all out. Do a console/foyer table, as well as the staircase.

3. **DECK THE MANTEL:** Use a prelit garland and layer in lots of glittering and shimmering accents. Choose accents according to the room they are in.

4. **MAKE THE TREE COUNT:** Lots of lights and lots of layering make for a perfect tree. Vary texture, size and shape of the ornaments. Be bold.

5. **TAKE ON SURFACES:** Wherever possible, create mini displays, with small holiday trees, faux greens and pretty accents.

6. **LOVELY LAYERS:** Go beyond the obvious. Tuck in accents that people will notice upon closer inspection and make them spectacular.

7. **IT'S A WRAP:** Beautifully wrapped presents in your color palette can become an important part of your décor. They add the final polish.

8. **VARY THE THEME:** Deck out each space in keeping with key décor in each room. For example a dining room should have a different vibe than a kitchen. Be equally committed to both; just make one more formal and elegant, and one more casual and everyday.

9. **DON'T NEGLECT THE OUTDOORS:** Whether you do a simple wreath or go all-out, the exterior of the home should hint at the holiday décor inside.

10. **AU NATUREL:** Even if you go faux for your tree and accents, add in flower bouquets, potted poinsettias, cut magnolias, fresh greens and more.

11. **CENTERPIECE:** Leave a centerpiece on your dining tables for the holiday's duration. It can be contained in a silver bowl or a vase, or laid out in the center of the table.

12. **KEEP IT LIT:** There's nothing more magical than fairy lights at Christmas. Bring them in on prelit wreaths and garlands, as well as tree lights.

SEE SHOPPING GUIDE, PAGE 112.

A CASUALLY LAID WOODLAND-INSPIRED CENTERPIECE, with chunky candles, red berries, pinecones and evergreens, sits on the kitchen's eat-in table. The sideboard has a similar display that is also lit up with fairy lights.

FOOD FEST

CHRISTMAS AND FEASTING GO HAND IN HAND—HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR INCLUDING FOOD IN YOUR HOLIDAY DÉCOR.

1. **CANDY LAND:** Keep out holiday treats, like sugared almonds or red-and-white mints, in pretty bowls on coffee tables or side tables throughout the season.

2. **HOST A HOLIDAY TEA:** Bring out your annual Christmas china and host a simple holiday tea with friends or neighbors. All you need during this busy time are decorated iced cookies.

3. **FINE DINING:** Set your holiday table a few days before Christmas, so you can enjoy it. Bring out your silver, china, crystal and linens. Make a beautiful centerpiece. Wrap napkins with take-home ornaments. Layer in candles and holiday accents on the table.

SMALL CONSOLE tables scattered throughout the home get holiday treatment, with miniature trees, leafy garlands and bright baubles.

{OPPOSITE} MINIATURE TREES and festive nutcrackers sit on either side of the kitchen sink, with a lush wreath hanging above it. In the foreground, Christmas tea is about to be served.

BENEATH THE EAVES ARE TWO GUESTROOMS designed by Bountiful Interior's Amanda Friend. The blue bedroom boasts a robin's-egg blue headboard and plaid bed-skirt. Atop the bed are presents wrapped by the homeowner and her daughter.

THE PINK GUESTROOM, with its cherry-patterned wallpaper and coral pinks, has touches of Christmas décor on its dresser, including a couple of petite holiday trees.

OUTSIDE IS MORE ABOUT TRADITIONAL REDS AND GREENS, with a large prelit wreath and an ornate garland around the front door. Red ball ornaments pop against the greens, and everything else, including the adjacent bushes, is filled with fairy lights, making for a winter wonderland.

THE FAMILY ROOM tree is full and flocked. It's where everyone gathers in cozy plaid chairs to open gifts on Christmas Day. Holiday treats are always plentiful at this time of year, arranged artfully on a tray set out on the ottoman.

WHITE as Snow

Magically transform an all-white home for the holidays with accents of gold and tulle.

By L. Tirapo and Staci Dumoski
Photography by F. Bedón
Styling by O. Gil-Vernet

THE ALL-WHITE ROOM is anchored by the natural wood floor, which adds warmth and depth to the space. Candlelight further enhances the glowing ambience, including a fireplace filled with candles when the weather is too warm for a fire. Simple stars hung with tulle over the built-in bookcases lend a somewhat Nordic feeling to the room.

Wrapped in snowy whites, this home feels a bit like a winter wonderland at any time of year.

But at Christmastime, when gold adornments and fresh greenery unfurl between the white walls and furnishings, an almost magical transformation takes place. It's as if the Fairy of the Snows has visited and left her glittering touch everywhere.

Built in 1865, this home was once dark, with many rooms that left it feeling closed off and uninspiring. The current owner began the transformation by pulling down walls and building openings, creating a sweeping space through which light and life could flow.

Then she painted everything white. Walls, cabinets, furniture … "My husband says that if he hadn't gotten out of the way, he would have been painted white too!"

During the makeover, the homeowner tried to preserve some of the original character of the old house. The bookcases flanking the fireplace in the living room, for instance, were constructed from antique doors and cupboards. "I ordered the kitchen cupboards, but with the same molding [as the original], and painted

It's as if the Fairy of the Snows *has visited and left her glittering touch everywhere.*

THE DINING TABLE IS WRAPPED in tulle and tied with a huge bow, a lush adornment that makes it feel almost as if you're dining on a cloud.

ANTIQUES
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When it's time to decorate for the holidays, *the homeowner turns to gold and green to add warmth and festivity to her décor.*

Dining in a Dream

DRESSING UP THE DINING TABLE FOR A BIG MEAL DOESN'T HAVE TO STOP WITH A CENTERPIECE AND FANCY FOLDED NAPKINS. HERE ARE FIVE IDEAS FOR TAKING YOUR TABLE DÉCOR TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

LAYERED TABLECLOTHS: Start with a plain linen tablecloth that pools on the floor. Top with one or two complementary cloths of different color or texture, each one smaller than the next. For the final layer, use lace, tulle or organza for a dreamy, fanciful look.

DECORATED CHAIRS: For simple decorations, tie a combination of ornaments, ribbons or fresh flowers to the backs of dining chairs. Or look for festive slipcovers or skirted chair cushions that make even simple, mismatched chairs look elegant.

CANDLES: Dining by candlelight isn't just a quaint idea, it's a holiday must. Plan your table décor around one, two or three tall candelabras, and sprinkle the rest of the table with glowing votives ... including a small lit votive for each guest.

TABLE ORNAMENTS: Start with stacked plates and bowls, which are little works of art all by themselves (you can take away extra dishes when it's time to serve). Then add baubles and balls scattered across the table, or gathered in serving dishes and platters.

PERSONALITY: Be sure to add a beautifully crafted place card for each guest. You can also create menus for everyone: Print the menus on plain paper and attach them to sheets of decorative paper; roll and tie with a tulle ribbon to make a pretty adornment for your table that is also practical.

WHITE STARS are hand-appliqued onto the tulle tablecloth and seem to float over the natural linen underneath.

Dress Up Your Holiday Kitchen

KITCHENS ARE OFTEN OVERLOOKED WHEN IT COMES TIME TO DECORATE FOR THE HOLIDAYS. HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR ADDING CHRISTMAS CHARM TO YOUR KITCHEN WITHOUT LOSING ANY FUNCTIONALITY.

KEEP IT SIMPLE: Kitchens can be busy places—and messy, especially around the holidays when they are in high use. Don't add excess clutter to your workspace. Instead, choose two or three spots where Christmas décor will be out of the way, like overhead pot racks and cabinet shelves.

KEEP IT CLEAN: Avoid using decorations that will show grease and grime, like glass and delicate fabrics. Natural décor is best; try a rosemary tree in a corner, a fresh wreath on a cupboard front or an arrangement of pinecones and lights over the cabinets.

KEEP IT FUNCTIONAL: Look for Christmas décor items that are functional as well as pretty. Think of canisters, cookie jars, salt and pepper shakers or dishcloths that add holiday flair.

{ABOVE} WELCOME GUESTS WITH a casual arrangement of candles on the doorstep.

{OPPOSITE} THE POT RACK OVER THE TABLE was made by a local blacksmith and is decorated with an evergreen garland, in keeping with the simple, almost rustic feel of the kitchen décor.

DECORATIVE PILLOWS—one with a subtle deer appliqué—add texture and just a hint of glitter in the bedroom window embrasure.

PEACEFUL AND LOVELY, the master bedroom features only the simplest holiday décor, while lush textures like velvet and faux fur add visual interest and comfort.

them with a mixture of pigments, lime and white carpenter's glue." This painstaking attention to detail adds a patina of lived-in age to the home that masks the extensive renovations.

HOLIDAY MAGIC

When it's time to decorate for the holidays, the homeowner turns to gold and green to add warmth and festivity to her décor. In the living room, the natural tree is adorned with twinkling lights, white tulle and gold stars. Candles in glass and gilded holders are everywhere, lending their soft glow to the room.

Every surface is layered with Christmas magic, but the uniform color scheme of white and gold unifies the décor and keeps it from looking chaotic. The only break in the palette is the introduction of fresh greenery, with sprays of baby's breath and mistletoe, the white berries and blossoms blending delicately with the interior.

Christmas comes to the bedroom in subtler fashion, with a textural richness of faux fur, soft cashmere and luxurious crushed velvet. The glitter is present in this peaceful sanctuary, but more restrained, creating a haven where the homeowner can escape from the hustle and bustle of the holidays.

SEE SHOPPING GUIDE, PAGE 112.

CALM, COOL Christmas

Enjoy the holidays in a relaxing haven filled with seaside beauty.

By Staci Dumoski
Photography and styling by Janet Coon

Christmas is a season of extravagance, filled with parties, feasting and an abundance of holiday décor everywhere you look.

But even the most devoted fans of the season need a break from the glitter now and then. If the holidays leave you feeling overwhelmed, a beach-inspired retreat may be just what you need.

Home stylist Janet Coon has owned this 2800-square-foot beach house on Florida's Treasure Coast for more than 14 years. "I love that you can look right out on the beach," she says. "To sleep and listen to the ocean is so awesome. I feel so fortunate, and it's so relaxing just to hear the ocean."

HOLIDAY RICHES ABOUND ON THIS LONG CONSOLE, designed and constructed by Janet and her husband. A lush faux garland adorned with pinecones is the focal point, with a few seashells and Christmas baubles for visual interest.

"Things can suggest Christmas *without being Christmas."*

THE TABLE SETTING IS AS SIMPLE AND NATURAL AS THE REST OF THE HOME DÉCOR, with a plain burlap runner decorated with fresh eucalyptus. Janet forgoes placemats to let the natural beauty of the wood table show through.

The home's open floor plan and ocean views have influenced her decorating choices. "I'm trying to declutter," Janet says. "Trying to just have a nice, soft flow of things."

An all-natural color palette supports that flow, with neutral hues inspired by the beach, and touches of aqua to highlight the ocean outside her door. The effect is calm and soothing … an ambience she doesn't want to lose when it comes time to decorate for the holidays. "I'm not there that much, but when I am there, I don't want to have it overwhelming. It's just kind of relaxing, but holidayish. Things can suggest Christmas without being Christmas."

NATURAL SIMPLICITY

A Christmas tree is still a necessity, but here it's decked out with minimal fuss, maintaining the overall natural look of the décor. "In my house we have a bunch of different trees. Some real, some faux for the kids. But here I just do one tree. I use nonbreakable ornaments. We have so much company, people coming and going, and three dogs. I try to keep it simple and add some texture with pinecones."

Nature inspires the decorating choices throughout the home, like evergreen garlands (some real, some faux) draped across tabletops and picture frames. Pinecones and driftwood decorations bring the outdoors inside. Touches of Christmas pepper the home—like a row of tiny

JANET PREFERS A SIMPLE TREE for her beach house, and uses nonbreakable ornaments in creamy white, gold and silver. The pinecones add an extra layer of natural texture.

THE SIMPLE PLACE SETTING features antique terre de fer dishes from France and Johnson Brothers ironstone. What really makes the setting pop are the blue enameled glass goblets, another vintage find. The silver is a family heirloom.

"I don't pay a lot for my stuff," she says, *"I just find it, or it finds me."*

IN THE KITCHEN, a simple blue vase filled with fresh eucalyptus is the only holiday adornment. She recommends eucalyptus for people who use a faux Christmas tree—its pleasing scent is a fresh alternative to pine.

Get the Look:
Coastal Christmas

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN CREATE A HOLIDAY HAVEN FOR YOURSELF, WHETHER YOU LIVE ON THE BEACH OR IN THE SNOWBOUND WOODS.

COLORS: Start with a neutral palette drawn from the beach itself. Think sandy creams, the weathered browns of driftwood, and blues and greens like the sunlit ocean waves. Against this background, a pop of red can have great effect, but don't overdo it.

SIMPLICITY: Beachside living is relaxed and simple. Keep clutter to a minimum. Choose one or two areas as focal points for your holiday décor, like a tabletop or console. Elsewhere, simple touches like a few ball ornaments, white pinecones or a pretty vase filled with holiday greens are all that's needed to convey a feeling of Christmas.

NATURE-INSPIRED: Choose natural adornments over manufactured ones. Seashells, starfish and sea fans are naturally decorative, as are pinecones and evergreen garlands. White flowers, like bunches of hydrangeas or bouquets of roses, call to mind sea foam on the sand.

RUSTIC: Easy-care fabrics are a necessity near the beach, so think of washable linen and cotton for slipcovers and throw pillows. When it comes to decorations, instead of velvet, lace and satin, choose grainsack or burlap for table runners, placemats and tree skirts. For a little more frill, try crocheted pieces in shades of tan and beige.

GLITTER: It wouldn't be the holidays without a little glitz and glitter. Add touches of gold and silver here and there to remind people that it's time to celebrate.

trees perched across a picture frame, and bowls of vintage ornaments on display—but always in the calm, sea-inspired shades of aqua and turquoise, silver and white, and just a hint of gold. Overall the effect is soothing and restful, exactly the holiday haven needed in the midst of the season's busyness.

VINTAGE ADDICTION

A long-time vintage collector, Janet fills her home with items she has collected from yard sales and flea markets over the years. "I don't pay a lot for my stuff," she says, "I just find it, or it finds me." The chandelier over the dining room table she found when she happened to pass a yard sale years ago. The complementary chandelier in the bedroom she brought home from a trip to France.

But not every piece has a vintage history. The enamelware pitcher on the dining table, for instance, was a recent Home Goods find—proof that good design can be found for any budget.

Janet also has a knack for DIY. Both the dining table and long console were designed and built by Janet and her husband, using a nail-free technique they developed themselves (you can find more information on her blog, shabbyfufublog.com). She chose a driftwood-like finish for the top of the dining table, and matched it with chairs from Restoration Hardware.

Subtlety is the key to Janet's decorating style, whether her home is decked out for holiday entertaining or presenting year-round coastal charm. Just the suggestion of the theme is all that's needed to bring refreshing style into your home.

SEE SHOPPING GUIDE, PAGE 112.

IN THE GUEST BEDROOM, vintage iron headboards require little in the way of extra ornamentation. A simple garland, a plush stocking and a beachy driftwood Christmas tree are all it takes to create a holiday atmosphere.

Pinecones and driftwood decorations *bring the outdoors inside.*

JANET PAINTED SEA FANS with wall paint in a pale blue; she displays them on burlap in glass-front frames. A little Christmas greenery lends a festive charm.

The Subtlety of Textures

Homeowner and stylist Janet Coon likes to keep her vacation home as uncluttered as possible. Instead of relying on things, she layers in textures to add depth and visual interest. Here are some ideas for adding texture along with your holiday décor.

SOFT AND COZY: Throw blankets are a natural way to add both texture and warmth on a winter sofa, and pillows can be piled up with abandon. Mix cable knits with soft furs, and toss in some delicate ruffles for good measure.

BRIGHT AND SHINY: Gold and silver are the most natural choices for adding some glimmer to your holiday décor, but any metallic or reflective items can shine. Look for ornaments with faceted or glittered surfaces that really catch the light.

TRANSLUCENT: Glass (clear, opaque or colored) turns light into magic. Add glass votives and hurricane lamps throughout your space to maximize the effect of candles. Sheer curtains are another way to turn light into a tangible feature of your home.

WEATHERED AND WORN: Furniture finishes that are worn smooth from use make you want to reach out and touch them. Driftwood is a natural fit for a beach-inspired home, but chippy paint and rich patinas are always inviting too.

POETIC Christmas

Transform your home into a dream retreat using soft pastels and a touch of lace.

By Staci Dumoski
Photography by Anneke Gambon/ CocoFeatures.com
Styling by Linda van der Ham and Sandra Morsink / Lindividu.com

OLD SHUTTERS PLACED over the windows mask newer building details and make the room feel cozier. On the table there are two tablecloths, one with beautiful lace, which gives the dining table a festive look. Blue satin is combined with the lace cloth, completing a pastel trio with the pink ribbon and green branches.

"I love to decorate with lace *and faded colors."*

YOU CAN LAYER VINTAGE PIECES TOGETHER to create visual interest, like the shutters, mirror and iron vase placed on top of this cabinet. The ostrich feathers soften the display, while a small dish holds pink lace and vintage Christmas ornaments.

Styling a home is a little bit like writing a poem.

While there are certain rules and formulas to follow when it comes to what goes where, true artists know when they can bend or break those rules to great dramatic effect. Marion van der Vliet, a Dutch brocante owner, is one such artist. Her terraced home is a work of visual poetry, filled with delicate romantic style that is as beautiful as it is inspiring.

Not unlike a sonnet, Marion's style is deceptively simple. Starting with a blank page—white walls, white floors and chippy white furniture—she adds strategic layers of velvet, lace and satin. Treasured vintage items and fresh greenery are placed with a sensitive touch, achieving the perfect balance between abundance and restraint. The result is like something out of a Christmas fairy tale, a dreamy setting rooted in the Old World, brushed with color and just a little magic.

The result is like something out of a Christmas fairy tale, a dreamy setting rooted in the Old World, brushed with color and just a little magic.

VINTAGE SATIN CURTAINS in soft blue add color to this otherwise all-white room. It's dark early at this time of year, so the chandelier lights are on. A pink festive dress decorates the armchair, and a vintage paper calendar above the cabinet counts down the days until Christmas.

MAGIC TOUCH

Simple green branches above the kitchen door. A small ornament tied to a chair back with pink velvet ribbon. Dried rosebuds hanging from a crystal chandelier. These small details make Marion's décor effervescent. The trinkets and baubles she displays come from the flea markets she visits regularly to find treasures for her house and shop.

"I love old French furniture," she says, "and when I can see the age of the pieces. I don't mind seeing the torn and worn [parts] of the object. I love to decorate with lace and faded colors." Most of the items she finds on her weekend outings end up in her shop, but once in a while she finds one she simply can't part with. "When I have found at least one item that I love, I can return home happy. It's all about falling in love with a piece."

She loves to find ways to utilize her vintage finds in new and inventive ways, a talent that has helped her business grow. "I'm always busy inventing new styles and ideas … I love to show you what you can do to make a new home have the same feeling as an old home. For example: I have big windows in my home, but by placing old shutters and using old lace and other curtains, I tried to create a cozy atmosphere."

Getting the look just right sometimes takes a little trial and error, but Marion doesn't mind. "Creating and decorating are the most lovely things for me to do. I can't stop until everything is in the right place. When it just feels right."

A LACE CURTAIN separates the living room and kitchen, garlanded with green branches plucked from the garden. Pink ribbon and silver ornaments complete the simple festive look. Marion's collection of antique dishes and plates, all in shades of white, can be seen through the doorway, along with vintage stockpots, forks, knives and spoons, all on beautiful display.

FOR MORE ON MARION, VISIT BROCANT-ELLE.NL.

Tips & Tricks:
Harvesting Holiday Greenery

WHETHER YOU LIKE SMALL TOUCHES OF GREEN LIKE MARION VAN DER VLIET OR ABUNDANT SWAGS, GARLANDS AND WREATHS, YOU CAN SAVE A LITTLE ON HOLIDAY EXPENSES BY HARVESTING YOUR HOLIDAY GREENERY IN YOUR OWN GARDEN.

VARIETY: Pine, fir and cedar are traditional for indoor décor, since they dry out slowly and hold their needles even in warm interiors. Spruce, boxwood, eucalyptus and juniper are also popular choices with pleasing aromas. In warmer climates, try magnolia leaves or southern smilax.

HARVESTING: When collecting branches from your shrubs and trees, prune evenly all around the plant so it keeps its shape. Use sharp clippers and cut long branches to work with in your arrangements.

CONDITIONING: To help fresh greens stay that way, cut the stems at an angle and pound the cut ends with a hammer; the crushed stem will allow it to absorb more water. Soak the greens overnight before arranging them, and spray them with an antidesiccant (available at nurseries) to extend the life of the greens.

CARE: Place arrangements with fresh greens out of sunlight and away from heat sources. Mist them daily to help keep them moist. Most greens will last about two weeks before starting to dry out.

SAFETY: Berries on holly, mistletoe and some other decorating greens are poisonous, so be sure to keep them away from kids and pets. Replace cut greens when they start to dry out, to avoid the risk of a fire.

SILK AND SATIN LINGERIE BAGS, stacked together on a chair, become a single object of beautiful, faded colors. A Christmas rose corsage with a long gold ribbon feels simple but indulgent. Marion made the seat cover herself from white linen with a brushed edge.

DEEPER HUES OF BLUE create a restful haven in this bedroom, with the velvet cushions and bed-covering inviting a long winter's nap. The subtle touches of festivity—the pink feather boa draped over the curtain rod and the paper bell hung over the bed—don't intrude on the peaceful atmosphere.

"I never had a red and green tree; they're very beautiful ...
But my choice is to go into the white."

Festive JEWEL BOX

As this holiday home shows, good things do indeed come in small packages.

By Devlin Smith
Photography by Kristen Wheeler

A SLENDER TREE WAS THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR THIS SMALL APARTMENT. Though artificial, the tree is given vibrancy at the holidays with carefully placed layers of ornaments, animal figurines, swags and garlands. Once the holiday ends, Geri leaves the decorations on the tree, covers it in plastic and stores it in one of her closets.

The magic of Christmas is found in the people and things that mean the most to you.

Surrounding yourself with beautiful, sentimental décor adds to the fun, festive feeling of the season.

Geri Sadusky's holiday home is a reflection of her passion for shabby-vintage style. Methodically filled with an assortment of white and pastel secondhand and upcycled finds, as well as personal treasures, the Florida apartment presents a softly romantic take on Christmas styling.

"I never had a red and green tree; they're very beautiful, don't get me wrong. But my choice is to go into the white," Geri says.

Each room in the house is decorated in layers of white accented with pastels and silver. A slender artificial tree in the living room is carefully filled with ornaments, swags and garlands that are kept on the tree when it is slid into a closet for off-season storage. Geri, who shops year round for home décor and projects, does sometimes add new pieces to the mix but hasn't fully redecorated the tree since her first Christmas in the apartment five years ago.

The woodland creatures, feathers and pastel flowers found on the tree are repeated throughout the living space. The green tree, garlands and wreaths were selected to contrast with the home's pure-white palette.

"I almost got white garland … even a white tree I almost got, but I thought, no, it's going to look a little better if it was green. That would show off the white a little bit, so I'm glad that I went with the green garland and the green tree," she says.

Her thoughtful decorating has made Geri's holiday home a popular destination for neighbors. "Always at Christmastime

tip

If you have a favorite paint shade, record the color formula so you can easily have it recreated in case the shade is discontinued.

ANIMALS ARE A RECURRING THEME IN GERI'S HOLIDAY DÉCOR, found on the tree, in the garland and on tabletops. The small figurines were purchased at different craft and department stores, and even though they're from different sets, they complement each other well.

{Get the Look}

CREATE A BEAUTIFULLY LAYERED CHRISTMAS TREE WITH THESE DECORATING TIPS.

In the five years since she moved into her apartment, Geri Sadusky has had time to perfect the Christmas tree that's the centerpiece of her holiday living room. The slender artificial tree is layered with a variety of ornaments, small animal figurines, florals and swaths of fabric that are left on when the tree is stored. New décor is sometimes added when the tree is pulled out of storage at the start of each holiday season. To recreate this layered look, follow Geri's decorating tips.

LIGHTS. Because her tree didn't come prelit, Geri began by stringing lights on her tree, taking time to carefully conceal the wires and plugs. If your tree already has lights, take time to check the bulbs and connections, and conceal plugs and wires.

BULK. To give her tree a full look, Geri purchased sets of ornaments that could beautifully cover her tree. Consider how many ornaments you'll need to fill your tree, and shop for large single-color or color-coordinated sets.

VARIETY. In order for her decorations to complement but not blend, Geri sought pieces in different white and pastel shades, as well as varying textures and finishes. Consider mixing glass, fabric and glittered bulbs; then accent with feathers, tulle and floral garlands.

SPACING. When placing her ornament sets on the tree, Geri made sure to spread out similar pieces so they don't all blend together. Experiment with different patterns when adding your ornaments to the tree, for instance placing ornaments from one set in a zigzag, X or distributed evenly throughout alternating layers.

BALANCE. An important part of Geri's decorating process is to look at the tree from different points in her apartment. From these varying angles she can catch trouble spots, such as if some areas are fuller than others, or if different groupings are clashing or blending, and make any needed adjustments. Take the time to make these small fixes and you'll create a tree you may never want to take down.

when I decorate, people in the building want to come see my apartment, and a lot of them don't decorate because they're older, they can't or they can't afford it. So they enjoy coming to see my apartment, and I enjoy showing it to them," she says.

MAKING HOME

Though she's been a fan of white décor for years, it wasn't until she moved into this 656-square-foot apartment that Geri was able to fully embrace the style.

"My other home … had different pieces. It wasn't like this," she says. "I had maybe two rooms that looked similar to this, but this is my whole apartment now."

Achieving this look was a process that began months before Geri even moved into the apartment. Not satisfied with the apartment's existing beige interior, she got permission from the building management to make upgrades that included painting the walls and cabinets her favorite pure-white shade, installing new flooring and replacing the standard lighting with chandeliers.

"I just started to decorate, and I would say in about a month, I had it pretty well where I was satisfied," she says. "Over the five-and-a-half years that I'm here, I have been adding … not the major stuff but the decorations and all."

These new decorations range from large pieces like a mantel and faux fireplace in her bedroom (a favorite of Geri's) to small vignettes she creates throughout the year, like a tea party set up for the spring. Geri regularly shops thrift stores and craft stores to find new pieces she'll work her magic on.

SMALL TREES CAN BE FOUND ON TABLETOPS AND SHELVES THROUGHOUT THE APARTMENT. Many are thrift-store finds that Geri updated with scrap fabric and various leftover pieces she'd saved for DIY projects.

ALL OF THE METAL FURNISHINGS in the home were painted white with spray paint. When preparing for her move to this apartment, Geri took advantage of her former home's garage to paint larger pieces like her once-silver bed.

"It is ongoing. I love to treasure hunt; the hunt is really exciting for me," she says. "I'll get an idea, I'll hunt for that thing and I'll drive around until I find it. If I find it and it doesn't look the way I want it to, I'll paint it. I'll add things to it to make it look like I want it to look."

Whatever the time of year, Geri continues to hunt for and create beautiful pieces to complement her shabby-sweet home (which she sees as a little jewel box), thoughtfully selecting the ideal showplace for each and every one. The result is a lovingly curated home that Geri truly adores.

"The thing is I have a little bit of this, a little bit of that, but when it's all together, it's things I love, and they all seem to blend. I just love my apartment; I really do," she says.

SEE SHOPPING GUIDE, PAGE 112.

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TREE-MENDOUS!

Add holiday charm to every corner of the house with these ideas for decorating tabletop trees.

Written and styled by Staci Dumoski • Photography by Henry Z. De Kuyper

TIP

Angle the stems upwards as you insert them in the cone so the flowers drape downward and maintain the tree shape.

FLORAL *Abundance*

Flowers are perfect decorations any time of year and can make a lush, elegant tree. Choose high-quality silk flowers in colors that match your décor, detach them from the stems and arrange them in a Styrofoam cone.

This Christmas, we're thinking small—small trees, that is. Tabletop trees are a crafty and creative way to bring the holidays to every room in your house. So get your glue gun ready, and peruse our gallery of ideas to help you get started.

BURLAP *Beauties*

For a more rustic setting, wrap a couple of tree cones in burlap. Wrap the burlap ribbon from the bottom up, being sure each layer covers the one before. Secure it with hot glue. We gussied ours up with a string of pearl beads and pretty paper flower stickers, embellished with gems.

SWEET Confection

This hot-pink tinsel tree could easily become an eyesore, but bright teal ribbon, chandelier crystals and white feathers tucked between the branches elevate it to the level of extravagant beauty. The secret is indulgence—it is Christmas, after all, so why hold back?

WallWorks.com

The 2016 Heirloom Needlepoint Pumpkin(TM) Harvest starts Sept. 1

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JUST *Rosy*

Craft a decoration that is as pleasing to the nose as it is to the eye. Individual dried rose petals were attached to the cone with sequin pins, layering from the bottom up. Once all the petals were placed, we added a little bling with sequins and pearl head pins. As an alternative, cover the cone with dried rosebuds, using an awl to poke holes in the Styrofoam first.

TIP

Dried rose petals will fill your home with a pleasing aroma, but they can be very fragile. For a sturdier alternative, use silk petals from the bridal section of the craft store.

VINTAGE Glory

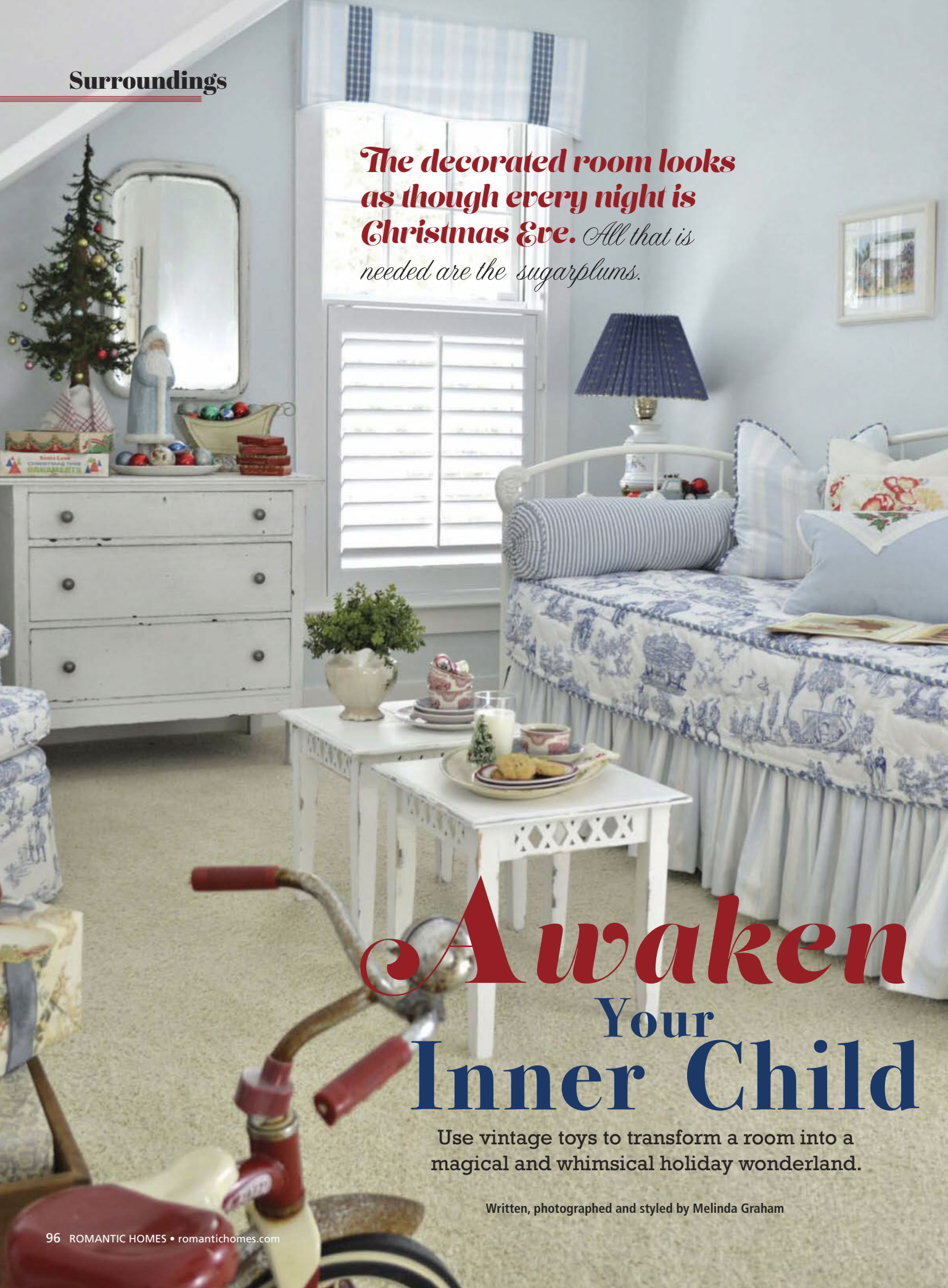
Rhinestone brooches are perfect for Christmastime glitz. We secured creamy lace and organza ribbon (with just a touch of gold) to a Styrofoam cone with straight pins. The brooches are attached with their own pins, with smaller ones at the top and larger ones at the bottom.

TINY Treasures

Craft stores offer a selection of small-sized decorations for tabletop trees, but the offerings are limited and you can seldom find the same kind of ornate and elegant baubles we treasure for our full-size Christmas trees. As an alternative, visit the bead section of the store, where you will find a wide variety of decorative beads that can be easily transformed into tree ornaments.

SNOW Queen

Coffee filters are great for all sorts of crafts, including making Christmas trees. Just fold small filters into quarters, and then attach them to the cone with straight pins or glue. To get a more "natural" look, fold some of the coffee filters unevenly. We added glitter to our filters before pinning them to the cone, and displayed the tree on a silver stand to give it an even more stately appearance.



The decorated room looks as though every night is Christmas Eve. *All that is needed are the sugarplums.*

Awaken Your Inner Child

Use vintage toys to transform a room into a magical and whimsical holiday wonderland.

Written, photographed and styled by Melinda Graham

Are you in search of decorating inspiration this holiday season? Maybe something with a hint of Christmas magic?

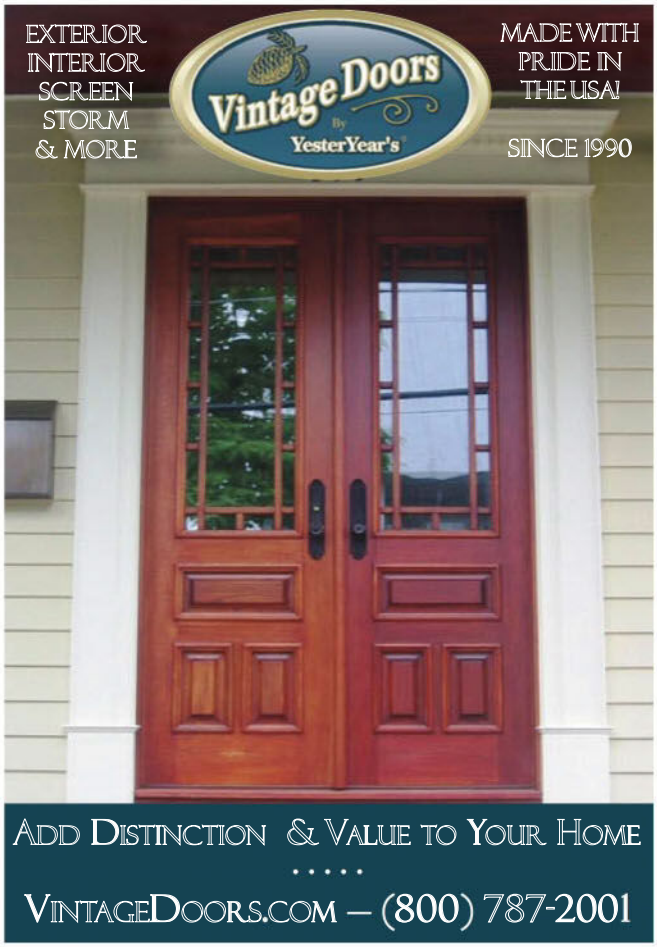
Once the pine boughs have been hung on the porch and the tree has been trimmed, it is time to awaken your inner child. All you need to get started are a few charming, vintage toys to fill your heart with joy as your décor comes to life.

This precious room serves double duty as a sitting and guest room. The creamy white carpet and soft blue walls make a dreamy backdrop for a few thoughtfully selected furnishings. As the holidays approach, this tiny room is transformed into a magical winter wonderland. The inspiration was a tiny red tricycle. The vibrant pop of red explodes in this sea of blue. Additional toys such as a collection of marbles, a few vintage Christmas story-books, a handmade wooden wagon and a treasured childhood stuffed toy continue the design theme. Miniature pencil pine trees are adorned with delicate glass balls and placed in large ironstone bowls.

Of course Ol' Saint Nick needs to make an appearance: a fetching Santa dressed to the nines in a shimmering blue coat is placed prominently on the dresser overlooking the room. The finishing touch to the décor is the collection of old glass ornaments in all shades, shapes and sizes. Some are piled high in beautiful bowls, while others are on display in their original boxes. The decorated room looks as though every night is Christmas Eve. All that is needed are the sugarplums.

This year if you are looking for holiday decorating inspiration, think back to your childhood. Surround yourself with fond memories and treasured tokens of yesteryear. It is a lighthearted approach to design that will help you awaken your inner child and spread Christmas cheer to all who enter your home.

Canterbury Cottage Designs
Life. Home. You.
www.canterburycottagedesigns.blogspot.com
Gay Van Beek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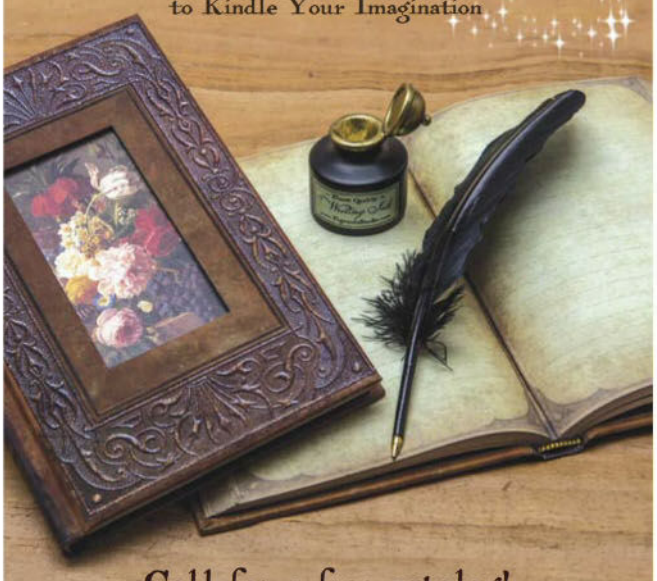

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A SIMPLE SET of hooks becomes a charming display area for vintage aprons. The fabrics are beautifully complementary to the colors in the room.

COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT

IS THERE ANYTHING BETTER than milk and cookies before bed? Whether it's a snack for the children, you or even Santa himself, set a small service in style. Mix and match delightful transferware or other precious china to create a celebratory moment.

OLD MARBLES are fun toys for both the young and the young at heart. They can range in value from very expensive and rare to quite affordable. Sometimes you can find old jars of marbles at flea markets and thrift shops. One of the best things about collecting old marbles is finding creative ways to display them.

HOLIDAY DECORATING doesn't have to be kept to a palette of green and red. If you like the traditional color scheme, find ways to incorporate it into your décor. This stack of blue-and-white china is perfect in this room year round; once the red trimmed platters and transferware are added in, everything comes alive with holiday spirit.

How to Decorate a *Small Space*

DECORATING A SMALL ROOM CAN POSE AS MANY CHALLENGES AS A LARGE ROOM AND SOMETIMES EVEN MORE.

Here are a few things to remember when decorating a small room.

FOR MORE ON MELINDA, VISIT SURROUNDINGSBYMELINDA.COM.

1. COLOR: Restrict the color palette to four colors so it doesn't feel overwhelming. The floors, walls and ceiling should be solid colors. If you are intimidated, start with a soft palette. Then mix in accessories in shades of the wall color, with one to two accents.

2. FURNISHINGS: Find furnishings that meet the needs of the space. Pieces that can serve multiple purposes are also a plus. This daybed is a sofa by day and a bed by night. The "coffee table" is a set of cluster tables that can be easily moved about the room to serve multiple tasks.

3. ACCESSORIES: Items that are as functional as they are beautiful are blessings in small rooms. This room has a number of baskets and even a suitcase that store everything from blankets to books, yet they are aesthetically pleasing and add design presence to the room.

4. ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS: If a room has any special feature, try to make the most of it. This sitting room is full of amazing details, from the sloping ceiling to the sun-filled eaves. The sloped wall is painted sky blue and stenciled with a sun and moon. The eaves have built-in bench seating with simple beadboard facing and custom upholstered cushions.

5. LIGHTING: Illuminating any room needs a great deal of thought, but a small space requires even more. Don't overwhelm a small room with a single large ceiling fixture or too many track lights. First, make the most of natural daylight. Then focus on task lighting for reading areas. Lastly, provide some soft lighting for bed with access to a lamp or switch near the bed.

SEE SHOPPING GUIDE PAGE 112.

tip:

FOCUS ON A SMALL SPACE LIKE A GUEST ROOM OR FOYER, AND SPRINKLE A LITTLE HOLIDAY MAGIC WITH A FEW SPECIAL TOYS FROM YOUR PAST, OUT OF YOUR CHILD'S TOY BOX OR FROM A FAVORITE FLEA MARKET.

STORIES to Tell

Make a statement on your holiday table with classic transferware dishes.

Written and styled by Lidy Baars
Photography by FrenchGardenHouse

Temptingly graphic, with stories to tell, antique transferware comes into its own at holiday time.

With elaborate borders and endearing scenes, each piece of transferware pottery is a miniature work of art. A few pieces grouped together or a large collection displayed en masse make an exquisite decorative statement. Transferware, with its subject matter, technique and colors, is timeless—a classic that is admired just as much today as it was in the 18th century.

WHAT IS TRANSFERWARE?

Transferware is a type of pottery that is decorated by a process developed in England in the mid-1750s. To produce each colorful design, a master pattern was engraved on copper, glazed with color and transferred to thin paper. These sections of paper were applied one by one to a piece of pottery before the piece was put into the kiln. Many patterns were so complex that it took over a month to engrave the copper master sheet.

HISTORY

Transferware was made all over Europe and the United States in many colors and patterns. Before transfer printing was developed, each piece in a dinner set had to be painted by hand, a costly process, making decorated dishes completely out of reach for working class families.

The industrial revolution in England changed that. The transfer process meant pottery patterns could be reproduced repeatedly, allowing middle class families to enjoy appealing dinnerware similar to that found in the homes of the gentry. By the 1800s, factories were producing entire tableware sets, most in romantic patterns featuring a man and woman in lush landscapes.

TRANSFERWARE was sold for a few pence each, so that a working class homemaker would be able to purchase one piece at a time for her household.

What to Look For

Most transferware on the market today is from the mid to late 1800s. Especially appealing are pieces from the late 1800s Aesthetic Movement, when artists believed that creating something for beauty alone justified their artwork. Look for Oriental patterns, free-flowing asymmetrical designs, lavish florals and garden scenes filled with exotic birds, trees and lush landscapes.

Most transfer pieces are marked on the bottom with the maker's mark, and often with a pattern name. Some early pieces are unmarked; they are just as valuable. The older the transferware, the more "misses" you will see where the pattern joins at the seams. Unless it truly is a huge miss, this does not devalue a piece.

Prices can range from a lucky find at a flea market for well under $100.00 to thousands at an auction house, depending on rarity, size, and who else wants to add that piece to their collection. Of all the colors of transferware, yellow was the least produced, therefore the rarest and most costly to acquire.

Next time you come across a striking platter, bowl or cup, don't hesitate to add it to your antique collection. The darling of decorators, transferware is decorative as well as useful. Whether you display your collection on your walls, or set a holiday table, these pieces have survived for over a hundred years and are meant to be used and bring joy.

FOR MORE ON LIDY, VISIT FRENCHGARDENHOUSE.COM.

The darling of decorators,

transferware is decorative as well as useful.

THE FIRST TRANSFER PIECES (and most popular to this day with collectors) were blue, then black. The other colors weren't produced much before 1828, when brown, purple, green and red, or pinkish red, became quite popular.

Lovely LIBATIONS

Quench everyone's thirst with these easy entertaining ideas.

Written, photographed and styled by Gay Van Beek

Satisfying your guests' many liquid refreshment needs at your holiday gathering can be a daunting proposition. The following options provide ways to please any fussy guest, so you too can revel in the merrymaking.

The first thing my guests say to me upon arriving is, "I'll start with water." Have a designated area only for water and keep it closest to the food, preferably in the kitchen. If you are using a large decorative water dispenser as opposed to water bottles, infuse it with fresh cucumber slices. Water will have a stale taste after sitting for even an hour, and the cucumber keeps it tasting fresh and light. Add a sprig of mint to each glass instead of directly to the water; adding it to the water tends to overwhelm the taste. Serve water in your best glasses, not plastic; your guests deserve to feel special no matter what they are drinking.

Another great way to satisfy your friends is by setting up a wine bar. Always have more white wine than red available, as white is always the most popular choice. Rosé is an excellent option around the holidays as well, and it looks particularly festive in a pretty wine glass. Set out all the stemware you own and when you run out, it is perfectly suitable to substitute clear plastic cups at your wine station. Offer individual-serving-

"When guests walk through the door, I like to have a table in the foyer with *champange flutes filled with sparkling cider topped with fresh raspberries."*

OFFER CHAMPANGE FLUTES
filled with sparkling cider and fresh raspberries.

size bottles in wine glasses lined with vintage napkins for a decorative touch.

When guests walk through the door, I like to have a table in the foyer with champagne flutes filled with sparkling cider topped with fresh raspberries. This is an alternate option and, when the bubbly flutes are placed next to a beautiful bouquet surrounded by white sparkly lights, it can add an elegant yet inexpensive touch.

Lastly, a coffee station is an essential. Be it iced or hot, your coffee should be in ample amounts and served up in your largest urn or decorative thermos. Always use your best china! In addition to milk, cream and various sweetener options, offer Baileys and Kahlua in small vintage milk bottles.

The key to a successful evening is planning in advance. Having fully stocked beverage stations throughout your home ensures that your guests will never have to approach you to tell you what's missing, only to compliment you on a great evening.

FOR MORE ON GAY, VISIT CANTERBURYCOTTAGEDESIGNS.COM.

ALWAYS USE your best china when serving coffee.

IN ADDITION TO milk, cream and variouss weetener options, provide Baileys and Kahlua in vintage milk bottles.

Be it iced or hot, your coffee should be in ample amounts and served up in
your largest urn or decorative thermos.

Shopping Guide

Classically Christmas
pages 28–43
Bountiful Interiors: (410) 819-8666 or bountifuldecor.com.

White as Snow
pages 44–55
Gold heart, vintage box: Foimpex, foimpex.com.
Holiday décor: Velafusta, velafusta.com.
Holiday décor: Cottage Little House, cottagelittlehouse.com.
Rugs, living room and bedroom: Ikea, visit ikea.com.
Pillows, cutlery, dishes: Zara Home, visit zarahome.com.
Bedding: Monaco and Sierra by Casamance, visit casamance.com.
Garlands and wreathes: Jardiland, visit jardiland.com.

Festive Jewel Box
pages 80–86
Wall and furniture paint: Glidden, (800) 454-3336 or glidden.com.
Décor: Pier 1, visit pier1.com.
Décor: Sears, visit sears.com.
Décor, craft paint: Michaels, (800) 642-4235 or michaels.com.
Ornaments, décor: Hobby Lobby, (800) 888-0321 or hobbylobby.com.
Ornaments: Kmart, visit kmart.com.

Tree-Mendous!
pages 88–95
Styrofoam trees, silk flowers, tulle, ribbon, beads, garland: Michaels, (800) 642-4235 or michaels.com.
Ornaments: Hobby Lobby, (800) 888-0321 or hobbylobby.com.
Dried petals and flowers: Flyboy naturals, (800) 465-5125 or flyboynaturals.com.
Mercury-glass bowl, vase and silver stand: Home Goods, visit homegoods.com.

Surroundings
pages 96–101
Vintage ornaments, aprons, Santa, books and toys: Surroundings by Melinda on Sanibel, (239) 579-0409 for more information.

Coming Next Month

WELCOME, Christmas

The holidays are almost upon us, and in the December issue we'll help you prepare for the big event with table settings, entertaining ideas and great-tasting recipes you won't want to miss. Plus, our annual gift-giving guide will make Christmas shopping a breeze. Don't miss out on our next issue, jam-packed with romantic holiday inspiration!

PHOTO BY ANITA DIAZ

PHOTO BY BRET GUM

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COMFORT & Joy

By Elise Portale
Photography by Ferran Freixa/RBA Images

From tactile fabrics to unique color palettes, turn any room into a cozy, warm winter paradise.

TEXTURE: From faux-fur throws to nubby woven pillows, the tactile quality of the pieces in a room can lend a comfy, cozy feel. Swap out your sofa pillows for cushions with beautiful embroideries or large-gauge knits, and make sure to keep around plenty of large, plush throws in cashmere or microfiber for cold feet or snug body wraps.

COLOR: Traditional red and green may be classic holiday colors, but if you long for a warmer palette during the chilly months, opt for something nontraditional. Ivory, dusty rose, taupe, copper and rose gold offer that soft, romantic feel while keeping the luster and shine of a classic Christmas. Carry the theme from mantel to tree to gift-wrap for a truly cozy room that surrounds and engulfs you like your favorite blanket.

LIGHT: The perfect ambience is nothing without proper lighting, and for snug surroundings, choose natural incandescent light. Eschew bright, colorful lights on your tree for glistening yellow bulbs, and bring in your favorite antique lamps with tungsten bulbs for a beautiful antique glow. And don't forget lots and lots of candles in varying heights, widths and textures.

SCENT: Complete your comfy winter wonderland with delightful aromas. Pick out candles in your favorite holiday scents, from cinnamon and warm vanilla sugar to cranberry or allspice. Bring out some potpourri for a centerpiece that tantalizes all the senses.

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Table lamp, brass, model 7407
Estimate: $35
Bukowskis

Andy Warhol, screenprint, 1986
Fixed price: $22,500
Artspace

Bronze tree glass top sofa table
Estimate: $4,100
Inside-Room

Herman Miller molded chair
Estimate: $100–200
Aspire Auctions

Native American pottery
Fixed price: $520
Cultural Patina

Robert Indiana, Four, 1978-2003
Estimate: $41,100
Phillips

Anna Church, Oh Deer, print
Fixed price: $2,500
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Pair of Gene Summers F37 chairs
Fixed price: $35,000
Wright

Aquamarine and diamond ring
Estimate: $2,800
Adam's

Ansel Adams, Moon and Half Dome
Estimate: $220
Leland Little

Frank Stella, Pitchpoling (D-17)
Estimate: $320,000–508,000
Sotheby's

RJ Thornton, Garden of Nature
Estimate: $54,500–81,800
Christie's

Fireplace frame, Treviso limestone
Estimate: $6,000
Auctionata

Candlesticks, 20th century
Estimate: $70
Eppli

Breguet, yellow gold wristwatch
Estimate: $2,600
Antiquorum

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