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The
Holiday
ISSUE

DESTINATION
WEDDINGS

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THE PERFECT
GUEST ROOM

HOLIDAY
RECIPES

HOMIE *for the Holidays*

by Lisa Kooistra

Ah, home for the holidays – for many it's a welcomed wish, but for some, it can be a source of stress. The parties, the guest lists, the build-up... it's enough to make anyone break a sweat. Believe it or not, much of your party prep comes down to having a holiday-ready home. So, when the pressure to host is on, here are some of my simple tips to ensure your home is dressed for the occasion.

Go Green

Evergreens are probably my favourite festive décor item to include throughout your home. Plants are a neutral element that goes with everything, so you don't have to worry about matching it with existing décor. Many of us are missing the vibrancy of the outdoors at this time of year, so fresh greens bring a little life and glorious scent back into the home when we need it most. When the holidays have come and gone, you can keep your greens in place as long as they still look vibrant.

Light It Up

Holiday décor can go one of two ways: elegant or loud. The same can be said for festive lights. There are lots of options available on the market, and each seems brighter and more dazzling than the last. But buyer beware – it's a fine line between merry and messy. Given the option, choose simple strings of "warm white" lights, which complement and enhance most existing lighting schemes and decor by nestling in around your home and echoing the subtle warm glow of candlelight. Then, add in some additional sparkle and shine with mirrors, polished metal accessories and crystal candlesticks.

Get Cozy

Cocooning is a hot trend during these cold months, and the easiest way to cozy up is through layers. So, pile on those pillows and throws, and layer area rugs to add physical and



visual warmth to your home. Choose heavier textiles, such as velvet, thickset corduroy, faux fur, wool and chunky cable-knit designs. Pattern also comes into play, but don't overdo it. Vary the scale of your motifs and create contrast, such as pairing a plaid – a holiday favourite – with a stripe and a floral.

Decorate Every Room

You don't have to go all out, but you should go "all in." What do I mean? Keep your décor choices simple and decorate in every room, rather than overdoing it in just the living room, for example. Doing this shows that you've left no detail overlooked, adding some festive flair throughout. This creates consistency throughout your home and gives your festive theme continu-

ity that you – and your guests – will appreciate. Style the usual suspects like the fireplace mantel, living and family rooms and kitchen, but don't forget about powder rooms and bathrooms, bedrooms, and even those unconventional areas like hallways, entryways, the laundry room and the front closet. After all, your entryway sets the tone for the whole home. Your holiday décor can be as simple as some seasonal evergreen sprigs, wreaths, ribbons or light strings.

Don't forget to decorate your home's exterior, too. Remember, details matter. Create a warm welcome at your front door with some rustic touches like pinecones and wood elements. Winter "welcome mats" are functional and festive. Flank your front door with some hearty, winter-friendly greenery, like evergreens, boxwoods or red cabbage.

As they say, "it's the most wonderful time of the year." When it's all said and done, you've hopefully made many lasting memories with family and friends, and your thoughtfully decorated home as the warm, welcoming backdrop. Take some time to sit back and take it all in, because truly, it'll be over before you know it. Then, keep these decorating tips in mind and embrace this wonderful season ahead with some sparkle and joy.

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