

Making the Holidays Homey

Follow some basic decorating tips to create a holiday atmosphere that fits your family's traditions.

by Jana Rosenblatt

When it comes to home decorating, we all like to kick it up a notch for winter, warm up our homes and cheer up our families and friends.

As an interior designer, I get the opportunity to decorate clients' homes for the holidays. Whether you're celebrating Hanukkah, Christmas, or Kwanza, partying on New Year's Eve, or simply enhancing your décor for the season, here are a few of my favorite nondenominational decorating solutions.

Go Green: The term can mean a lot of different things these days, but at holiday time it always means bringing the outside in with greenery for garlands, wreaths, archway toppers and table trimmers. Use lighting to enhance your foliage, and add colored ribbons and bows.

Go Nuts: Place large pinecones in a bowl with nuts and colored balls to decorate the table. Keep them natural, or glitter them up. Surround the bowl with a dry grass wreath to give a light, ethereal transition from the centerpiece to the table.

Get Bobble: Add clear, tinted, or

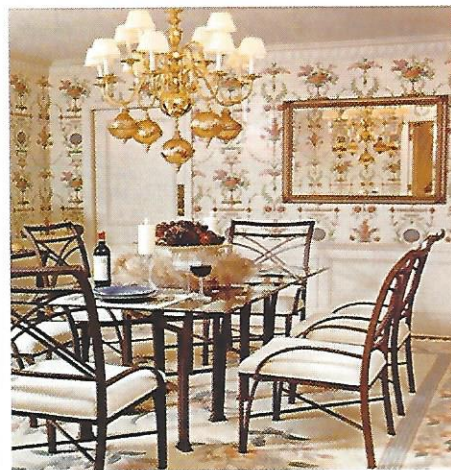
sparkled glass bobbles to your trailing greens. Hang lightweight glittering ornaments from your wall sconces and chandeliers. Play with scale: add lots of tiny ones to reflect a lot of light, or go with oversized orbs for sophisticated drama.

Add Atmosphere

Light Up the Night: You can never have too many candles during the holidays. Nestle candles of every shape and size into your table and hearth greens. Place them anywhere you feel you're decorations are having a dull moment – and light them! Don't plan on saving them from year to year. Lighting candles can create a special atmosphere in any home.

Add a Theme: If your holiday is more about bling, incorporate your favorite things or places into your décor. Your holiday theme could be pets, travel, astrology, family photo – let your imagination go! Start now, so you can have plenty of time to enjoy the fruits of your labors and still have time to share them with your family and friends!

For more of Jana's designs visit our website: janadesigninteriors.com.



Pineapples placed in a bowl surrounded by dry grass add a special flare to a holiday table.

Jana Design Interiors



Green foliage draped over a hallway archway are enhanced with lighting by adding colored ribbons.

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WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A LIVING TRUST?

There is a lot of confusion regarding estate planning, and it tends to make people fearful about the process. A good option is creating a living trust.

A probate is a court process in which the court makes sure that when you die all your debts are paid and your assets are transferred to your beneficiaries as per your will. With a living trust, title to your assets is transferred during your lifetime to the trustee(s) of your living trust (usually yourself to start), to hold as trustee under your living trust. Because title is already in the name of the trustee at the

time of your death, by law the trustee automatically has title or succeeds to title under your trust, and can pay your debts and distribute your trust estate without a court order.

A living trust can be amended or revoked by the grantor unless for some reason he or she specifically provides that it will be irrevocable.

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Attorney Bonnie Marie Bursk specializes in estate planning with a practice in Granada Hills.

Holiday Magic

Decorating with a Theme in Mind



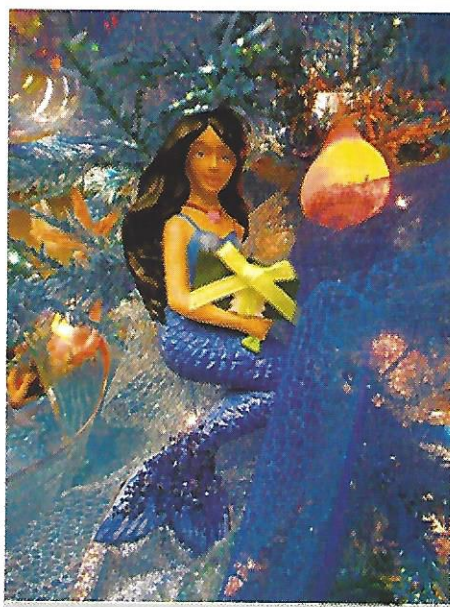
In seven days, the Jana Design team transformed this once-empty living room into a cozy space exuding holiday cheer.

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Hand-crafted fish help bring the 'under-the-sea' theme to life on the blue-sea tree.

Jana Design Interiors



A hand-crafted mermaid, carrying gifts, with ribbons, was part of the 'Seaside Yuletide' tree.

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NEPTUNE SANTA

As part of the 'under-the-sea' holiday tree this Neptune Santa Claus is displayed on a beige blanket encrusted with beach sand and sparkles. It was created as part of Jana Design Interiors' entry for the 'Festival of Trees' fundraising event for Charities and One Generation.

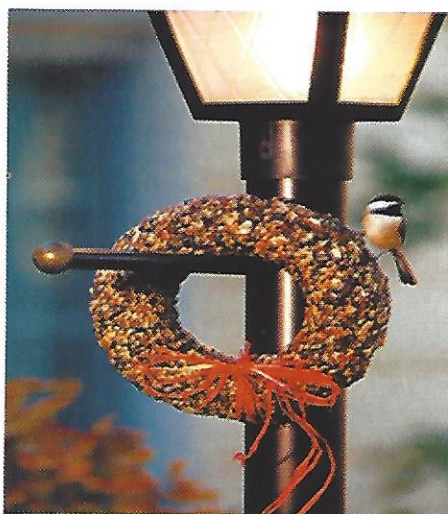
Give the Greatest Gift

The perfect way to give backyard birds that finest gift that you can offer is to hang birdfeeders.

by Lauren DeRosa

During the holidays we all get very busy planning family gatherings, holiday parties, shopping and decorating for the season. Backyard birds and wildlife are entertaining us with their beautiful songs and they need us to remember them during these cold winter nights. The perfect way to give backyard birds that finest gift that you can offer is to hang birdfeeders in your yard to keep them well fed while decorating for the holidays at the same time.

There are so many birds that will visit yards along the Front Range around the holidays. Black-Capped and Mountain Chickadees, Downy Woodpeckers, White-Breasted and Red-Breasted Nuthatches,



Chickadee sitting on the holiday wreath.

Photo Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited

Blue Jays, Juncos, House Finches and more. While we are busy decorating for the holidays and preparing for our celebrations, wild birds are struggling to survive throughout the cold winter nights. They

will eat constantly from the moment the day breaks until the last bit of light remains in the wintry sky. It is necessary to consume enough calories throughout the day to make it through the night and return to repeat the process each and every day. In the wintertime and around the holidays, this is the most perfect food to offer birds in your back yard to help them survive and thrive. It is easy to hang feeders on trees, on an existing holiday wreath or put on a specialty feeder. There are many different craft projects that you and your children can create to feed your birds and have fun while doing it. Why not also consider decorating a tree in your yard for your birds?

Decorations that can be strung and placed on the tree include popcorn, fresh cranberries, and fresh orange slices, peanuts in the shell, dried apples or dried figs on heavy string.