

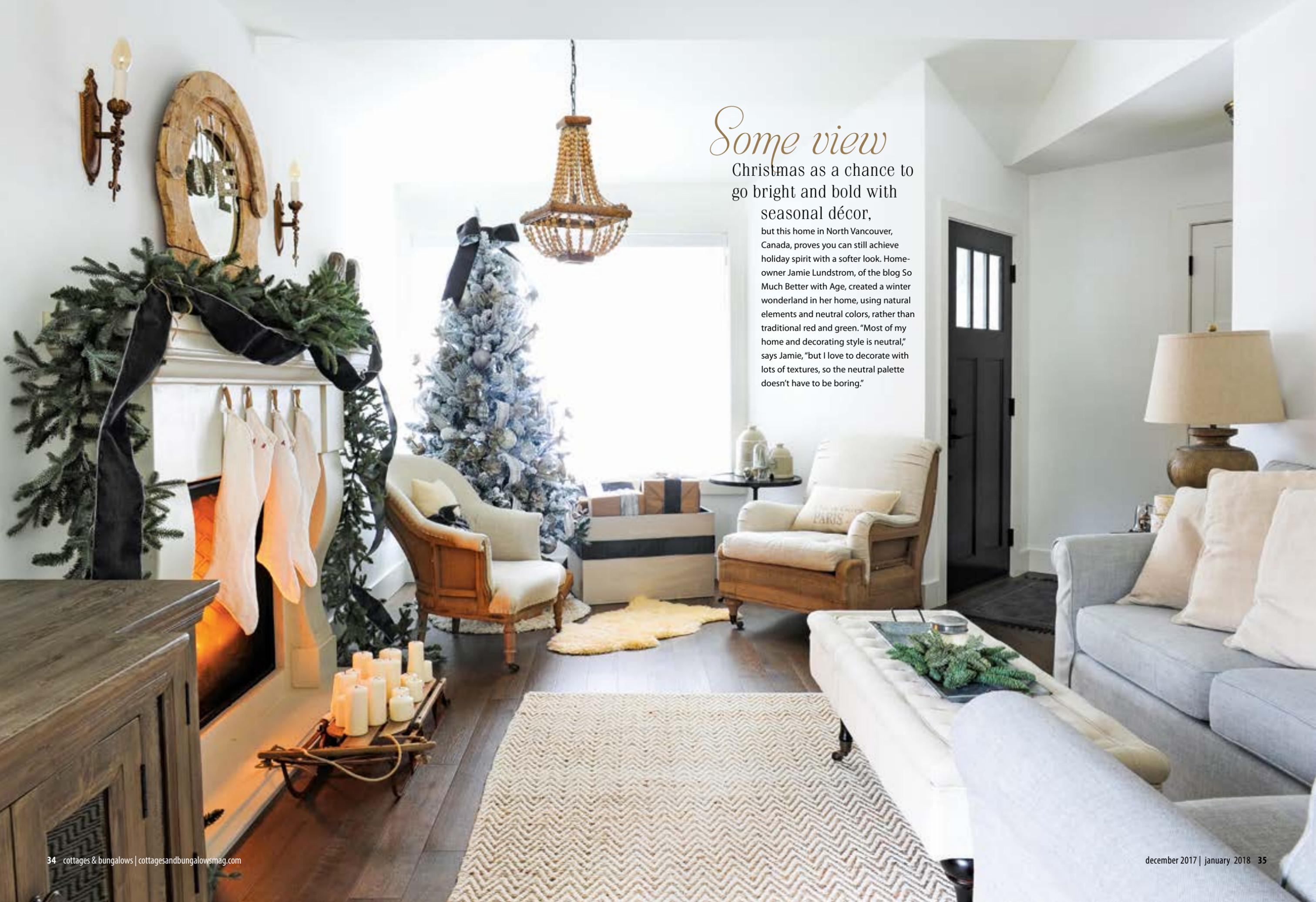
GREENERY GALORE. A variety of textures, including greenery, rustic accents, a beaded chandelier and a patterned rug, keeps the neutral palette intriguing and provides a chic and subtle holiday look.

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Dreaming of a **French** **Christmas**

A French-inspired home uses natural elements and a neutral palette to create a winter wonderland.





Some view

Christmas as a chance to go bright and bold with seasonal décor,

but this home in North Vancouver, Canada, proves you can still achieve holiday spirit with a softer look. Homeowner Jamie Lundstrom, of the blog *So Much Better with Age*, created a winter wonderland in her home, using natural elements and neutral colors, rather than traditional red and green. "Most of my home and decorating style is neutral," says Jamie, "but I love to decorate with lots of textures, so the neutral palette doesn't have to be boring."

0 CHRISTMAS TREE. A prelit flocked tree gets a makeover with twigs, faux flower stems and large ornaments. Jamie created a tree topper by tying velvet ribbon in a large bow and then cascading ribbon down the sides. "I tried something new and it worked," she says.



|BOTTOM LEFT| SANTA'S STATION.

Jamie turned this old Craigslist table into a wrapping station for the holidays, with her usual pieces—an antique dough bowl and prayer beads—and added ribbons, scissors and a bowl of tiny bells.

|BOTTOM MIDDLE| RIBBONS AND BOWS.

Wrapping her presents with plain craft paper and last year's ribbons contributes to the neutral color palette of the room and saves money too.

|BOTTOM RIGHT| CHRISTMAS CORNER.

Antique stoneware crocks and a few ornaments of various heights create the perfect Christmas vignette. One of these pieces is a broken ornament from Jamie's collection of French Eiffel Tower ornaments that she repurposed rather than throw it away.



BY CANDLELIGHT. Jamie tied two long garlands together and placed them over the mantel, letting them puddle onto the floor for a casual, natural look. She hung glittery letters from a rustic mirror to create a festive sign and added ribbon to the garland to coordinate with the tree. A collection of candles graces a miniature sled, and becomes an alternate lighting source during the holidays.



Create a snowy centerpiece for your Christmas table

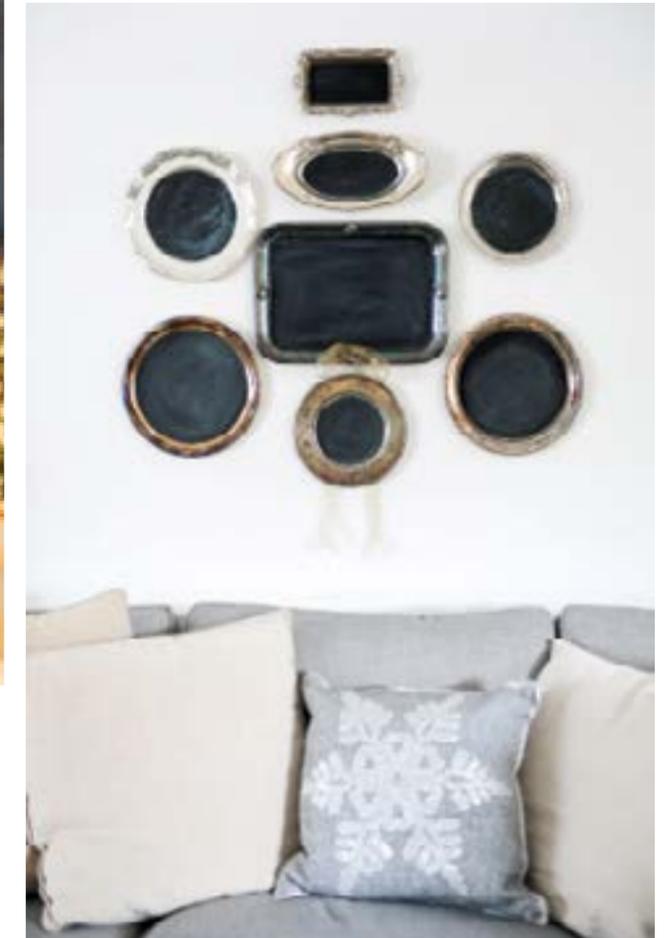
What You'll Need:

- Bottlebrush trees, candles and ornaments
- White and gold paint (if your trees have pots)
- Foam brush
- 4 rectangular 12" x 8" trays (available at the Dollar Store)
- Epsom salts
- White glue or Mod Podge
- Frosty snow
- Buffalo Batting

What You'll Do:

1. If your bottlebrush trees have pots, start by painting on a layer of white paint, let them dry, and then add a coat of gold paint.
2. While the pots are drying, lay down some Buffalo Batting on your table like a runner.
3. Cut the four corners of each tray, so they can lie flat.
4. Coat each tray with a layer of Mod Podge or glue, remembering the edges. Sprinkle the frosty snow over the trays until the entire surface is covered.
5. Add Epsom salts all over the trays to fill in the gaps. Top them off with another generous layer of the frosty snow.
6. Place your bottlebrush trees, candles and ornaments in the snow in a staggered line, and you have a beautiful snowy centerpiece that will be easy to clean.

SILVER AND GOLD. Jamie painted chalkboard paint on her collection of silver platters to create mini canvases for her family to draw and write on. The bottom three are made of real silver, and their aged patina adds character to the collage, with a loose organza ribbon for festive flair.





WINTER WONDERLAND. The dining room is filled with Christmas cheer, with its flocked tree, distressed furniture and bottlebrush-tree centerpiece. "I wanted a snowy winter wonderland, and there was so much going on with the tree that I didn't want a big, tall centerpiece," says Jamie. The tree is decorated with gold ornaments and her collection of French Eiffel Tower ornaments, as well as gold organza and Merry Christmas ribbons.

Flocked trees and furniture with a patina help achieve a nicely textured aesthetic, giving her home an elegant simplicity that has a calming effect. White, soft gold, green and gray make up the neutral palette that complements Jamie's natural accents, giving her a clean background for her wintry escape.

JOYEUX NOEL

Jamie loves including old and antique pieces in her home, giving her year-round style a French flair that crosses over into her seasonal décor. "I love French vintage, and I try to keep it in line for decorating at Christmas as well," she says.

Her French Eiffel Tower ornaments hang on her flocked tree in the dining room, along with glittered gold snowflakes and strips of Merry Christmas ribbon, blending her French treasures with



LET IT SNOW. The kitchen's white foundation is an ideal backdrop for Christmas décor, as a few added pieces will allude to a snowy surrounding. Miniature trees in stoneware crocks and a couple wreaths add holiday flair to the space.

“I love to decorate with lots of textures, so the neutral palette doesn’t have to be boring.”



FESTIVE ACCENTS. Jamie keeps it simple in the kitchen by adding to what’s already there. Hanging wreaths in the windows and planting a mini tree in one of her crocks adds just enough festivity to complement the snowy white foundation.

[BOTTOM LEFT] COZY KITCHEN NOOK.

The children have their very own nook in the corner of the kitchen, where reindeer sacks and a stuffed Santa bring Christmas cheer to their meals. “When the walls came out during our remodel, I had a lot of extra space, so it’s a transitional area where my kids eat,” says Jamie.

[BOTTOM RIGHT] KID’S CHRISTMAS.

Though Jamie has a specific style for her seasonal décor, she always puts up an Ikea Christmas tree in a galvanized bin, so the kids can go all out with their handmade and whimsical ornaments. “It’s on the opposite wall of the dining room, so people can still see it,” says Jamie.

seasonal décor. Another favorite of Jamie’s is her antique stoneware crock collection that remains in her home all year, but serves a special purpose when winter comes. “I love using crocks to put trees in,” she says. “I add greenery throughout the house and bring in natural and rustic touches, so it doesn’t scream ‘Christmas’ and can be used for winter as well.”

SIMPLE ADDITIONS

Many of Jamie’s year-round vignettes remain the same at Christmas, with a few festive updates for the holidays. “I like to use different vessels to display things in a unique way—things that aren’t necessarily Christmas that might have touches of green and glitter, so I can keep them out all year,” she says.

The rustic mirror over the fireplace mantel is one such example, as it’s used as a backdrop for hanging glitter letters that spell “Noel.” Another unique piece is the terrarium in Jamie’s office that holds mini bottlebrush trees in the winter and succulents in the summer. These small changes allow her to decorate for Christmas without having to switch out all her décor and buy new pieces. “Most of the décor in my kitchen was already there,” says Jamie. “I just tied red ribbon everywhere, added pinecones and a couple wreaths. It’s fun to decorate with items already used in the house.”



“I add greenery throughout the house and bring in *natural and rustic touches*, so it doesn't scream ‘Christmas.’”

DECK THE WALLS. Using an illegible script stencil from Muddaritaville, Jamie painted one of the bathroom walls for an elegant wallpaper look. A golden tree and some evergreen clippings tie in the winter theme.



[ABOVE RIGHT] FESTIVE ADDITIONS. A printer's tray is decorated with twine and ornaments, while a terrarium that usually holds succulents has bottlebrush trees in winter instead, proving that the smallest of additions can turn an everyday corner into a Christmas tribute.

[RIGHT] DIY WREATH. Instead of buying a wreath for her front door, Jamie made one out of Styrofoam and an old sweater. “I covered the parts where it's cut with ribbon and greenery,” she says

Jamie uses greenery on multiple surfaces to add a winter touch in the kitchen, dining room and even the bathroom. “I snip sprigs of evergreen to tuck in places around the house,” she says. “I like to mix real with faux, and it brings pops of the outdoors in.” Candle holders, bottles and window sills are some of the surfaces she chooses to sprinkle with greenery.

HOLIDAY PROJECTS

Some of Jamie's Christmas décor is handmade and adds a personal touch to her home. With inventive thinking, she made a wreath with sleeves from a sweater, Merry Christmas banners with strips of ribbon, a vintage banner with print-outs and clipboards and a stunning dining room table centerpiece, reminiscent of a winter village. As Jamie's décor demonstrates, all you need is some greenery and a touch of creativity for a seasonal look you'll love. **CB**

SEE SOURCES, PAGE 128.

For more on Jamie and her DIY projects, visit somuchbetterwithage.com.

