

CANADIAN

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Cory Vitiello's
Ultimate Roast Chicken

HOUSE & HOME

CANADA'S MAGAZINE OF HOME & STYLE

DECORATING IDEAS FOR
A MAGICAL SEASON

Holiday!

10 of the
BEST FAUX
WREATHS

PLUS!

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EASY HOMEMADE CANDIES

DESIGN LESSON: DRAMA IN
THE DINING ROOM

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CONTRIBUTORS



TRACEY AYTON Photographer, "A New Leaf" (page 74)

How will you be spending the holidays?

At home with my very large family! Last year, my husband and I had 30 people over ... imagine two 10' farm tables with 15 people at each one! **Go-to holiday decoration?**

Candles and tons of luminaires. They create a magical ambience in any room. **Favourite room to decorate?** Our living room. We have a big fireplace and we place our Christmas tree beside it — it's such a beautiful scene.



NICOLE SJÖSTEDT Prop stylist, "A New Leaf" (page 74)

Favourite holiday pastime? Every year to kick off the holiday season, my husband and I serve up a few cups of glögg and hot chocolate, turn on Harry Connick Jr.'s "When My Heart Finds Christmas" and decorate the tree as a family. **What's your holiday decorating style?** Very Scandinavian — I like simple decorations in a nude palette, like white and natural linens with pops of metallics.



CHANTAL BRAGANZA Writer, "White Magic" (page 84)

How will you be spending the holidays?

Usually the holidays are full of turkey dinners and lasagna lunches with family, but this December might look a little different. I'm expecting, and due right around Christmas day! **Favourite holiday decoration?** When I was a kid, we used to visit family in Mexico for Christmas. One year, I bought a pressed-tin tree topper of Felix the Cat, which I've put up for the nearly 20 years since.

A New

Text by JEREMY FREED | Photography by TRACEY AYTON

LEAF

INSTEAD OF DREAMING OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS, THIS FRESH TAKE ON HOLIDAY STYLE WILL HAVE VISIONS OF SUCCULENTS DANCING IN YOUR HEAD.

THE WEST COAST'S grey winters and Christmas don't exactly go together like hot cocoa and marshmallows, but that doesn't stop Corinne Isherwood from decking the halls of her house all the same.

Instead of glittery baubles and poinsettias, she uses Vancouver's rainy weather and towering pines as the inspiration for a pared-down approach. "Christmas is huge for us," says Corinne, co-owner of succulent design company Botany Living. "But it's not overdone. It's more about simple and green with lots of natural elements."

This less-is-best approach filters into Corinne's surroundings beyond the festive season, too. Much like her business, which specializes in plants artfully potted in simple, rustic containers, her 5,600-square-foot west side home combines organic elements like wood and brass with a contemporary sensibility. The mix is airy and open with a life's-a-beach easiness. It's the perfect vibe for a hectic home: four teenagers — Jay, 16, Corinne, 15, Cosette, 13, and Graham, 13 — as well as Boston bull terrier, Chester, and Siberian cat, Kiska, also share the space, and grandparents live nearby. "Our house is in constant motion," Corinne says. "As someone comes through the front door, another goes out the back."

Corinne and her husband, Jamie, who works in banking, bought the cottage-style house in 2013.



To tie the traditional house to its coastal location, homeowner Corinne Isherwood scoured Vancouver to find a flooring shade reminiscent of driftwood. The family's Boston bull terrier, Chester, likes to greet guests at the front door. **Flooring** (throughout), BC Hardwood; **coffee table**, Spencer Interiors; **artwork** by Steven Nederveen.

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Drawn to its bright, southwestern exposure and charming 1920s bones, they snapped it up, then called on architect James Bussey of Formwerks Architectural and builder Xavier Massey of Ronse Massey Developments to spearhead a renovation. Among other things, the remodel saw an ensuite added to the principal bedroom — one of five upstairs — and french doors put in in the kitchen and family room that open onto the garden. “It’s a traditional home, so we kept that style on the outside and combined those touches with a modern aesthetic on the inside,” says Corinne. In a final alteration, part of the garage was transformed into a light-filled studio that became the home of Botany Living.

This year marks the family’s third Christmas in the house, which swells with friends and relatives every December. “I grew up with all the bells and whistles at Christmas,” says Corinne. “It was a big production.” She has since created her own traditions, including a holiday brunch for 20 with savoury stuffed croissants and cinnamon buns. “We get all the kids together and decorate the tree and the house,” she says. Family members are even encouraged to write on the walls; a chalkboard and mirror serve as canvases for holiday doodles and seasonal greetings. “It’s low-key and relaxed,” Corinne says of their approach, then adds, “It’s very West Coast.”



Brass accents play off white walls in the formal living room, where streamlined modern furniture surrounds a handsome herringbone-pattern brick hearth. "The blue brings so much life to the room," says Corinne of the vibrant rug by Jan Kath. **Sofas**, Country Furniture; **armchair**, The Cross; **throw** by Linen Way, Provide; **yellow throw pillows**, vintage **tray**, **sculptures** (on tray), Gild and Co.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

Succulents with evergreens are a modern take on classic Christmas greenery. **Succulent**, Botany Living. A framed chalkboard in the kitchen is used for hand-drawn holiday menus and messages.

Casual touches like the bucket-style tree stand and burlap cover give the home its relaxed feel.

Warm metallics, from light fixtures to decorative vessels, punctuate the cool palette. **Candles**, At Home.

Small side tables in the principal bedroom provide space for bedside essentials. **Side table**, The Cross; **carafe**, glass, CB2.

Traditional Shaker-style cabinets balance the contemporary feel of the principal ensuite. **Cabinetry**, Wilms Architectural Millwork; **towels**, The Cross.

A tongue-and-groove table in the library becomes a gift-wrapping zone during the holidays. Corinne found the vintage painting over the mantel at an Arizona antique shop.

Plain and glitter-tipped pinecones are scattered throughout the house. **Ornament**, Canadian Tire.



"I've always loved the idea of everyone sitting around a big farmhouse table," says Corinne, who paired the one in her kitchen with a modern chandelier. **Table, chandelier**, RH Restoration Hardware; **chairs**, BoConcept; **succulents**, Botany Living; **coffeemaker** by Chemex, Old Faithful Shop; **bowls, plates** by Royal Doulton, Hudson's Bay.

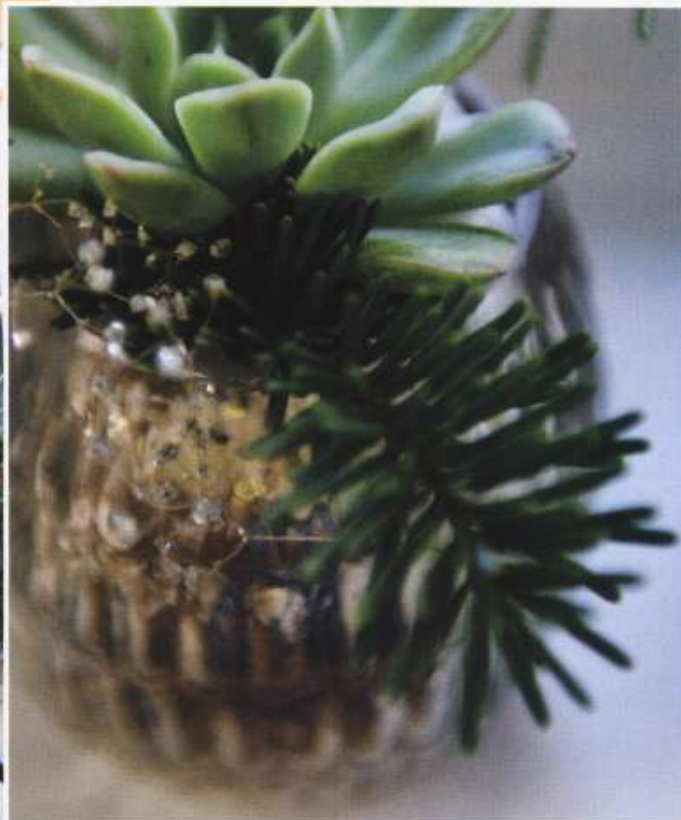




ABOVE: Built-ins around the family room fireplace offer display space for special items acquired over the years. "There are sentimental pieces here that are passed down, plants and wedding gifts," says Corinne. Unpainted wood stair treads add warmth to the white rooms. **Sofa**, Montauk; **end table**, Spencer Interiors; **placemat** by Chlewich, Hudson's Bay; **cutting board** by Lock & Mortice,

Provide; **knit pillow**, Natural Wool Knits. **BELOW:** Glass-front uppers in the kitchen offer lots of storage but keep the look airy. The barstools were refinished to complement the driftwood-toned floors. **Cabinetry**, Formwerks Architectural; **counters**, Bordignon; **stools**, Country Furniture; **utensil crock**, pepper mill by Le Creuset, **toaster**, kettle by Smeg, **mortar**, pestle, Hudson's Bay.





Q+A

IN FINE FORM

AT BOTANY LIVING, CORINNE GIVES HOLIDAY GREENS A SHAPELY TWIST.

GETTING STARTED: "Sophia De Mello (*bottom, right*) and I opened the business a year ago. We both love home decor, so we wanted to find a home item we could work with. We'd seen an air plant being used as decor and thought, 'Great!' ... because the most difficult thing is finding those finishing touches."

SIGNATURE STYLE: "We're really particular about our pots: we keep them white, gold or concrete, but we don't stray from what we love: simple, rustic, traditional — a very clean look."

WHY SUCCULENTS AT CHRISTMAS WORK SO WELL: "They're not too fussy, but they're nice accent pieces, plus they work in modern *and* traditional homes."

MOST UNUSUAL ARRANGEMENT: "We once created a succulent bikini, hat and summer bag for Vancouver floral event company *Fleurs de Villes*."

SUCCULENT OF CHOICE: "I love firesticks, which are a type of euphorbia. They're very coral-like and modern-looking, and they have a long lifespan. People think of succulents as just being green, but there are so many different colours out there!"





1

HOLIDAY IDEAS

Forest Fresh

Coastal colours and simple trimmings like pinecones and potted succulents breathe new life into Christmas decorating.

1 BROWN PAPER PACKAGES

When it's time to wrap gifts, Corinne opts for the natural look of brown paper and pinecones, offset by green silk ribbons and elevated by gilded accents. *Gift wrap, Michaels; ribbon, Dressew Supply.*

2 GOLDEN METALS

By mixing passed-down brass and gold accessories into her home's cool palette, Corinne adds warmth and patina.

3 SPLASHES OF SEA BLUE

Instead of the usual holiday jewel tones, pale blues the colour of beach glass create a calm, soothing feel. The colour pops up on vases, tapered candles, cosy throws and bath linens, and pairs perfectly with the soft green of succulent leaves. *Blue vases, West Elm; potted succulent, Botany Living.*

4 GLASS ORNAMENTS

Simple glass ornaments suit Corinne's modern, minimalist approach. Adding some glitter and fresh pine sprigs gives them a festive spin. *Ornament, Canadian Tire.*

5 SEASON'S GREETINGS

Writing holiday messages on a mirror in chalk pen adds a personal touch, making a gilded frame seem simultaneously luxurious and homey. "It's just a fun thing to do!" says Corinne. *Dining table, Once a Tree Furniture.*

