

HOUSE OF FIFTY

ideas for *inspired* living



Savor
the moments this
Holiday season!

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Home FOR THE HOLIDAYS



Interior Design by Margot Jagger Design
Photography by Tracey Ayton
Story by Janell Beals

Interior Designer Margot Jagger and her family of five live in a 1929 stucco Georgian located in a leafy old neighborhood of Vancouver, BC. She appreciates how the home has retained many of its original components and features over the years: coved ceilings, wood floors with inlay detailing and an abundance of lead glass windows resulting in light filled rooms.

After moving in six years ago, during updates to the home, the priority was placed on maintaining its character while increasing functionality. Bathrooms were modernized and built-ins were added for additional storage. Then simply painting went a long way towards transforming the home to reflect Margot's design aesthetic. "It was one of those homes in which the previous owner had gone crazy with the color wheel! Mustard in one room, teal in another." Painting the rooms a soothing and beautiful neutral, Olde Silver from Pratt & Lambert, worked magic in the home.

Margot has been interested in design since she was a child, but when it came time to pursue a degree she focused on Political Science. After graduation she worked as a fundraiser for charitable organizations, including United Way, while dabbling in design on the side in her own home and those of friends. Once her third child arrived however, she realized returning to long days at an office was no longer appealing. And so with her husband's encouragement, it was time to see if a career in design would be a better fit for this stage of her life. The business quickly grew based solely on referrals, one job and satisfied client leading to the next until Margot found herself running a thriving business and enjoying the benefits of working from home.

"In some ways this work is a continuation of my fundraising career. I help people decide what funds are available to improve their

home in a way that will make a difference in their lives. Need help refreshing a kitchen or a bathroom? Let me find the right people to make that happen." An aspect of the work she prizes is the interaction with a diverse range of people: the clients, the tradesmen who are really artisans, designers of goods and those representing the products used in transforming the rooms.

Many of Margot's clients invite her back to their homes during the holiday season to decorate for the festivities. "It's a favorite time of year. I enjoy decorating not only our own home but those of others as well! The holidays are all about family and entertaining at our household and having it dressed for the season encourages a festive spirit." An ever-green wreath is hung on the front door with cedar garland draped around the entry. Paired with lights, candles and a fire burning in the living room fireplace, the house simply glows in the evening light.



"Neighbors have shared how much they enjoy walking past the house on a holiday evening, seeing the flickering glow through the windows."



A fire burns from early morning into the night during the holidays. Margot loves the crackling sound, "What creates a holiday atmosphere more than this?" The family stores up wood over the year, giving it time to dry before the season arrives. Relaxing in the living room during the evening is a cherished time with all the Christmas lights on, the roaring fire lit and the candles glowing. She and her husband may be sipping cocktails while the kids work on drawings or play a game at the coffee table, sitting on the 1940's schoolhouse chairs. "I enjoy how dusk arrives earlier in the winter and how the house looks lit up against the dark backdrop."

Margot utilizes many large pine cones in her holiday decor. On the coffee table sits a 60-year-old, very large pine cone that her grandfather brought home from California. After it was given to her she painted it silver and it has since become a favorite "family heirloom" that is brought out each season.



A tree stump carried home from a favorite beach during a summer visit sits beside a freshly cut Burton Blue Noble Fir from Oregon. It's the tree brought into the house each holiday, which stands decorated for three to four weeks. What is the secret to keeping a tree fresh throughout the month? A cold air humidifier tucked behind the tree, hidden by presents! This little tip helps the tree stay fresh and beautiful with hardly any needles falling to the floor.

On the tree is a combination of handmade, gifted and "collected over time" assortment of ornaments. The key to making such an eclectic mix work is the range of size and shapes in a limited color palette of grays, silvers and whites - with a touch of color here and there including Margot's signature color chartreuse.



A holiday palette of grays, silvers and whites with a touch of *chartreuse* fits in perfectly with the existing décor.



Owls are a "family symbol," showing up throughout the house. So it's only natural they make an appearance on the tree!



Silver birch log vases look appropriate throughout the year, but become festive when filled with flowers and paired with silver-tipped pine cones.



Hung over a convex mirror, a plain twig wreath becomes a *beauty* with its layer of silver spray paint.

A dollar store snow globe can be
personalized
by switching out messages.





Each year Margot's mother gifts her a special ornament, and it's a tradition she has continued with her children.



What child doesn't peek down the stairs on the night before Christmas? Instead of a traditional garland wrapped banister, Margot wraps strings of little lights around the spindles at their base. It's a modern take on a staircase decorated with garland, one Margot finds much more practical with no garland getting in the way of little hands coming down the stairs. Plus, look how the staircase glows with the lights from below!

In the kitchen dishes and glassware on open shelving manage to look great on a daily basis with their simple arrangement. For an extra dash of color during the holidays, fruit and a few ornaments are added to the mix.

What advice does Margot share for decorating a home for the holidays? She suggests staying true to the style of the home, with the holiday décor a natural extension of what the home typically looks like, only dressed up! This allows the seasonal décor to look its best, complimenting the home while creating a comfortable and welcoming environment for family and guests.

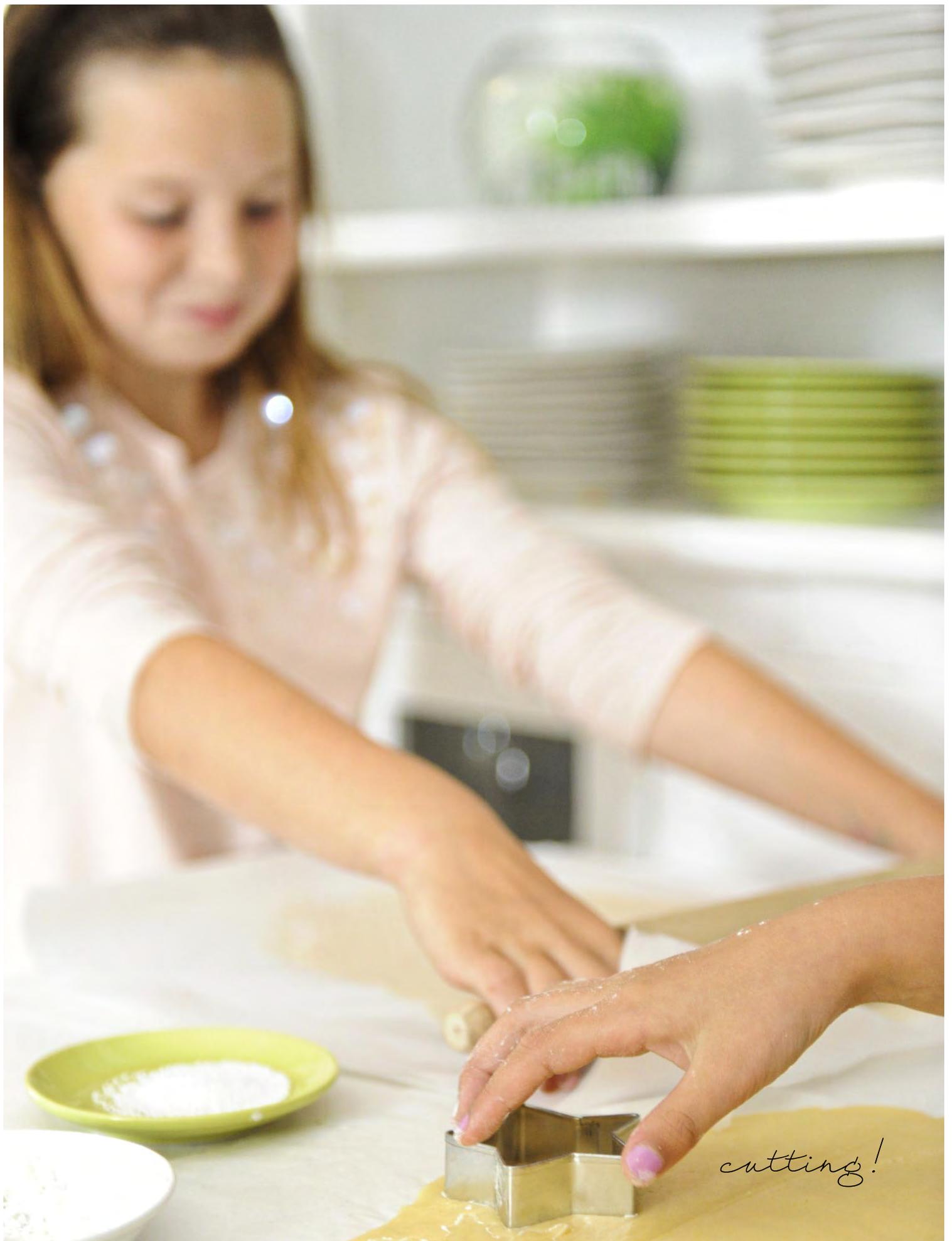


Holiday *baking* is a tradition the children look forward to each year in this household.





Dusting and...



cutting!





White royal icing is a *classic* and what makes it fun are the silver balls, sprinkles and sanding sugars.





The family enjoys their baking sessions during the holiday season; it's one of the kids' favorite holiday activities and traditions. Once baked and decorated - and after enjoying a few themselves - the cookies are placed in bags and tied with ribbon to share as hostess gifts, teacher gifts and party favors when throwing a holiday cocktail or dinner party.

To bake your own, see the recipe on the following page!

About the Photographer

Being a fourth generation "Vancouverite" is something Tracey Ayton is proud of, as is having a passion for something and doing it for a living. When beginning her further education, being creative and not knowing how to apply it proved to be frustrating. She decided to study graphic design only to realize drawing was not for her. Fortunately, a fellow student suggested she try a photography class, and the rest is history. Shooting for nearly 20 years, Tracey believes she can finally call herself a veteran.

Holiday Sugar Cookies

Cookie Dough Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 cup unsalted, softened butter
1 cup sugar
1 large egg, lightly beaten
2 tablespoons skim milk
1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Directions:

Whisk together flour, salt and baking powder in a medium bowl, set aside. Cream together butter and sugar then add the egg, milk and vanilla. Mix until well combined. Shape dough into 2 balls, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

On a sheet of parchment paper, roll out dough to 1/8 inch thickness. Chill for 5-10 minutes to make cutting easier. Remove from refrigerator and cut into desired shapes. Then lift excess dough from around shapes and slide entire sheet of parchment onto a baking sheet. Repeat with excess dough. Bake until lightly golden, about 10 minutes. Do not allow to brown. Transfer to wire racks to cool. Once cookies are room temperature, ice the cookies.

Royal Icing Ingredients:

2 large egg whites
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
3 cups sifted confectioners' or icing sugar

In the bowl of an electric mixer (or with a hand mixer), beat the egg whites with the lemon juice until combined. Add the sifted powdered sugar and beat on low speed until combined and smooth. Test the consistency by lifting the icing with a knife. If it's too thick, add water with a spray bottle. Transfer icing to a piping bag with tip or simply into a sandwich bag with a corner snipped off.

Pipe cooled cookies and immediately afterwards add sprinkles, dragees and sugars to decorate the cookies.



Enjoy *sharing* with family and friends!

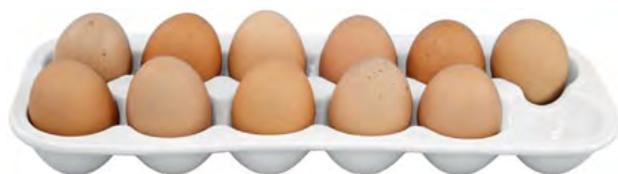
The House of Fifty Baker's Dozen

Baking Essentials Gift Guide!

1.



2.



3.



4.



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6.

1. KitchenAid Mixer
2. Pyrex® Measuring Cups
3. Elizabeth Karmel's Porcelain Egg Crate
4. Rolling Pin from Crate & Barrel
5. Cuisipro Stainless Steel Measuring Cups & Spoons
6. Ceramic Mixing Bowls from Martha Stewart



7.



8.



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13.



The Holidays are the season for baking! Select a few baking essentials, wrap them with a pretty ribbon & surprise the baker in your life.

7. Star Cookie Cutters from Martha Stewart 8. Pro Line Non-Stick Baking Sheet 9. Emile Henry Utensil Holder 10. Silicone Spatulas from Martha Stewart 11. Sur La Table Crank-Handle Sifter 12. OXO Silicone Spatula 13. Ateco® Decorating Set