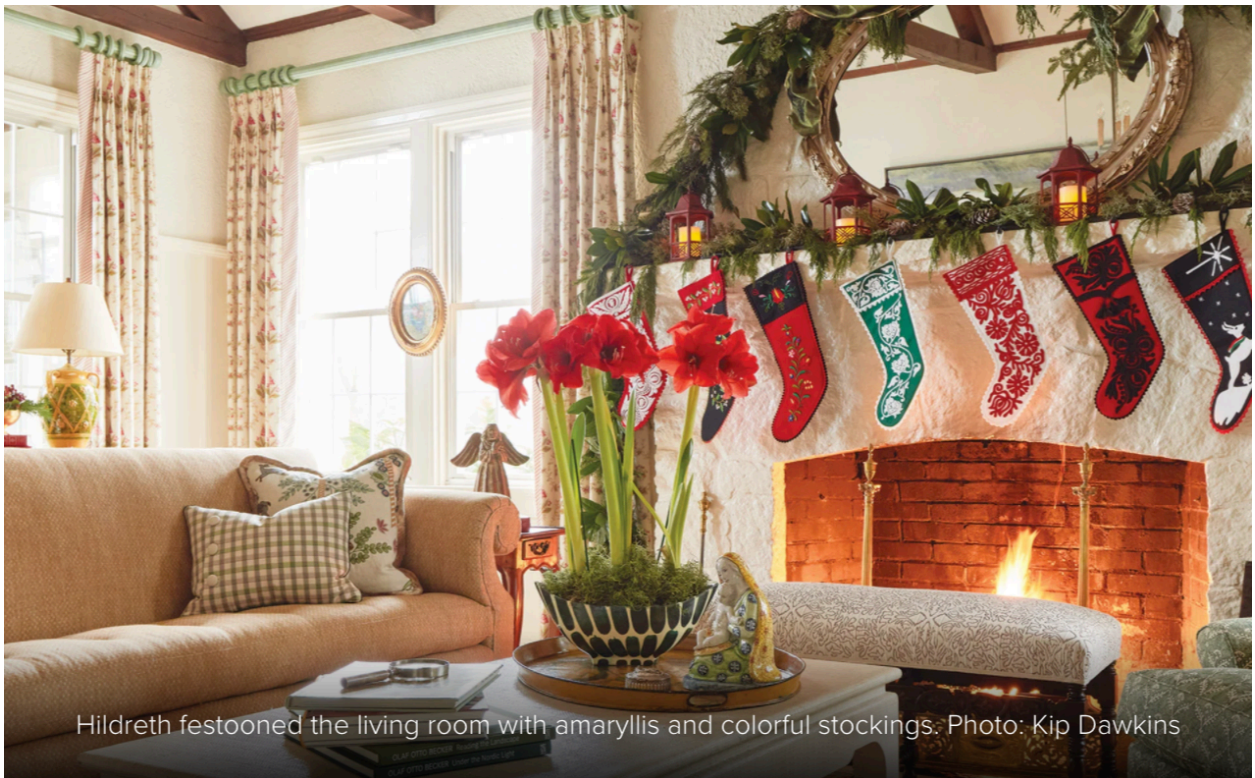


HOME&DESIGN



Josh Hildreth extended a holiday welcome at his parents' front door with grapevine reindeer and a fresh Christmas tree bedecked with wreaths of faux-sugared fruit. Photo: Kip Dawkins



Hildreth festooned the living room with amaryllis and colorful stockings. Photo: Kip Dawkins



DC designer Josh Hildreth enhanced his parents' dining room with paperwhites and fresh-cut greens and laid the table with hand-painted Herend china and his grandmother's silver flatware. Photo: Kip Dawkins



Pamela Harvey trimmed the tree in her Oakton, Virginia, home with ornaments collected in Europe. Photo: Stacy Zarin Goldberg



Cedar and fir garlands dress up the living room fireplace in designer Pamela Harvey's home.
Photo: Stacy Zarin Goldberg



The garland is strung with dried oranges. Photo: Stacy Zarin Goldberg



Harvey's festive table awaits. Photo: Stacy Zarin Goldberg

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Deck the Halls

Local designers infuse the season with memories and meaning

By Sharon Jaffe Dan

Holidays revolve around home. As Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukah and Kwanzaa near, busy schedules wind down and our focus turns inward to occasions spent with near and dear ones. According to local designers Josh Hildreth and Pamela Harvey, there's more to holiday décor than simply creating a festive mood. It is a way to bring meaning to the moments by remembering loved ones and cherishing family traditions.

In 2019, Hildreth transformed his parents' 1931 Richmond cottage for the holidays. They moved out for two weeks so that he could update the interiors, painting the kitchen cabinets sage-green and reviving oak floors with a checkerboard pattern. Then, he layered every room with treasures from the attic, greenery and a Christmas tree adorned with 5,000 white lights. "Opening up the ornaments each year was a retelling of family memories through ornaments we made as children or bought on family trips, and remembrances of people who gave them to us," Hildreth reflects. "Some were exquisite, others naively made—and a few, spectacularly tacky."

Sadly, it was the last Christmas for Hildreth's mother Maureen, who was battling cancer at the time. "When I began, it was about wanting to help my mother live longer by making her feel like the queen she was in my life," says the designer. "We made sure that there was a party on the day my parents returned to see their refreshed home because, for Mom, the joy in beauty was in sharing it with others."

Designer Pamela Harvey also conjures memories when decorating for the holidays. She fills her Oakton, Virginia, residence with keepsakes collected by her three daughters, who are now grown. "I like decorations that are classic, fresh and color-coordinated to my home, paired with holiday ornaments from the girls' childhoods," she says.

Harvey likes to mix fresh greens—including branches of magnolia, boxwood and spruce—with berries or dried citrus for color. "Purchase some beautiful ribbon to combine with the greens; it works from Thanksgiving through the end-of-year holidays," she suggests.

"Though the holidays happen at the darkest time of year," Hildreth reflects, "they're about getting together and celebrating the hope of light coming into the world. Think about decorations like candles that create light, as well as scents like living greens and flowers that add cheer to your home."