

# NorthernVirginia



HOME & DESIGN

## A Local Designer Shares His Advice On Upping Your Outdoor Holiday Decoration Game This Year

Make the outside of your home especially merry and bright this year.

By [Kelly Magyarics](#) | November 20, 2020

**W**ith indoor holiday gatherings beyond your immediate family highly discouraged this year to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, the focus is on (in the words of Clark Griswold) exterior illumination. While stapling 25,000 twinkle lights to evoke his “fun, old-fashioned family Christmas” is decidedly a bit much, we could all use more sparks of joy this season. Josh Hildreth of [Josh Hildreth Interiors](#) gives his advice for eye-catching holiday decor:

**What ideas or advice do you have for stepping up your exterior holiday decorations this year?**

“Have an outdoor tree and decorate your outdoor living areas. I take a more organic approach to outdoor trees, but when I incorporate fruit into the design, artificial fruit is better because it does not rot or mold with our increasingly warmer December weather. Natural pine cones coated with peanut butter and birdseed is a great children’s project and invites Mother Nature to join in on the holiday revelry.”

### **What trends are you seeing?**

“I like to celebrate the natural beauty of Virginia in my approach to outdoor holiday decorations. I always try to incorporate things I find in my yard; our magnolia tree provides boughs for garlands, boxwood for the kissing ball (not 2020 COVID approved!), and beautiful holly sprigs and silvery cedar to embellish store-bought fresh wreaths. I buy wreaths from Trader Joe’s and strip them so that we can personalize them with things we find in our yard or the woods near where we live.”

### **If you are entertaining or gathering outside, how can you decorate your deck or patio in a festive way?**

“Hang mini-wreaths on the backs of chairs, make fun holiday place cards to welcome guests and let them know where you want them to sit and use lots of lights and lanterns to provide a warm glow now that the days are shorter. Use your good silver and nice table linens for these one-a-year occasions—I have found that in the time of COVID it has been a real lift to create special moments that rise above jammies and sweats.”

### **Any do’s and don’ts’ for outdoor holiday decorations?**

“Have fun and show joy in your own way! This is a time of year where we should all be our most generous and kind selves. I love the exuberance of those who go for broke and fill the yard with blowup characters and endless lights. For our home, I tend to favor the classic approach that I learned from my mother, such as wreaths on the doors and garland mixed with white lights and of course bows. My mother loved bows and ribbon.”

### **How about those who prefer to outsource their holiday decorations?**

“We offer consultation on holiday decorations to our clients or as part of a larger project; It is impossible for me not to imagine the possibility of magical holiday celebrations when we are designing a client’s home. This is the time of year where every home should look its very best and provide a warm welcome to those we love and care about. I recommend local farmer’s markets for beautiful wreaths and American Plant, Merrifield Garden Center and Terrain for beautiful assortments of holiday decorations.”