

DECK THE HALLS

By Emma Gordon, of Eye Candy Interior Design

December is the month for festive frivolity! When hosting family and friends at Christmas, everyone wants their home to be looking it's best, but creating a cohesive festive look that reflects your own style can be a minefield.

Hopefully I've come up with all the Christmas trends, ideas and inspiration you'll need to create your own unique and beautiful look. I personally think it's nice to mix and match a bit to achieve a more eclectic, personal feel.

One of the big trends around this Christmas is Birds. Look out for sparkly, spangly birds! To dress your tree or as festive ornaments, 2011's most stylish birds are OTT! The more sequins, glitter and bright colours the better.

When it comes to baubles and decorations this year, the trend is either very natural and pared down, think wooden stars, feather

baubles, silver pine cones, ceramic birds and bristle animals or the other extreme, really kitsch and colourful glass peacocks, shiny santa's, painted nutcracker soldiers etc.

A nice idea is to decorate the house with baubles hung on coloured ribbons or fabric, don't restrict baubles to the tree, they look fantastic hung from a light fitting or chandelier. Load it down with an array of colourful, sparkly decorations. Add some festive sparkle with coloured crystal drops, in blue, green, red or purple or hang them from garlands for glamorous decorations. (www.chloealberry.com)

Cover a window with a twinkly curtain of baubles strung on a thin clear wire, for real impact, the more the merrier. Another idea is to string together a garland of Christmas crackers, all the same colour looks more effective, bright gold or shiny silver and lots of them. Pin them up around your window frame to create some seasonal sparkle.

The most important part of Christmas is the tree, it's the focal point of the room. In my opinion you can't beat a real tree, I love the whole tradition of choosing a tree with the children and then taking it home and decorating it together, the smell of pine needles in the air. Who can resist a tree adorned with edible decorations? For a bit of old fashioned charm, hang boiled sweets and candy canes using cotton or ties or if it's a fake tree, simply twist the branches round the sweets to hold them. Add some oversized lollipops and marshmallow canes, homemade biscuits and gingerbread men and scatter the floor with candy striped paper bags filled with chocolate and sugar mice.

Want advice on how to achieve a fantastic look in a room in your home? Emma is offering her 'Inspiration Hour' for only £50. It's a chance to get Emma's expert advice and tips on how to achieve your dream room. For more information about Eye-Candy visit www.eyecandy-interiordesign.co.uk

I'm sure you won't get any complaints about the new tree decorations, baubles don't taste nearly as good! However if you must fake it, then do it in style My top three faux trees are ;

1. 'Woodland with Snow' (6ft) at M&S - £120
2. 'Slim Green' (6ft) at House of Fraser - £70
3. 'White Spruce' (6ft) at Argos - £59.99

Why not think about dressing your table in a different colour this year to the standard Red and Gold? Blue and Silver for example? For a magical feel, double the brightness of fairy lights by stringing them around the ceiling and the floor. Choose shiny pieces for the table to reflect the glittering lights.

Finally, don't forget to put out some lovely Christmas scented candles. If you're feeling flush Jo Malone's new 'Roasted Chestnut' candle is a luxurious treat at £80.

Merry Xmas everybody!

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