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BLOGGER MONIKA HIBBS'S CHRISTMAS DECOR

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# HELLO, lovely

# H O L I

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PHOTOGRAPHY TRACEY AYTON

For lifestyle blogger Monika Hibbs, Christmas is all about sentiment and style. Here are 12 ways she pulls off a fresh look filled with meaning to commemorate a family milestone.

# HOLIDAY

1

Lifestyle blogger and unofficial queen of fresh and elegant holiday decor Monika Hibbs has three main tips for trimming a tree: Start with a colour scheme (“You don’t have to use every ornament in your box – save the ones that don’t suit your theme for another year,” she advises); instead of buying one-off ornaments, go for groups of three for visual impact; and organize them by category (like glass balls or felted figures) before hanging them to ensure balanced distribution.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN**, Su Casa Design; **CONTRACTING, MILLWORK** (throughout), Wescraft; Behr Polar Bear 75 **WALL PAINT** (throughout) and Ultra Pure White 1850 **MOULDING PAINT** (throughout), The Home Depot; flocked **CHRISTMAS TREE**, Hunters Garden Centre; **SIDE TABLE**, Joss & Main; **DRAPERY**, Q. Design Perfect Drapery and Shades; **RUG**, RugsUSA.com; pink **LUMBAR CUSHIONS**, Arianna Belle; **TEA LIGHT HOLDERS**, The Cross Decor & Design; wooden **STARS**, HomeSense.

2

“There’s something special about a fire this time of year,” says Monika. The one here in her family room is not the only staple flame of the season – tea lights are strewn on surfaces throughout the house, and the outdoor fireplace plays host to many a morning coffee or evening cocoa. “I love a fire’s warmth and random crackles, which add to the magic of the holidays.”

Custom **FIREPLACE MANTEL**, Lyonstone; sheepskin **RUG**, Joss & Main; custom **STOCKINGS**, **STOCKING HOLDERS**, house **MANTEL ORNAMENTS**, The Cross Decor & Design; cedar **GARLAND** (customized, also used as wreath), Hunters Garden Centre; **RIBBONS**, Shy Myrtle.



## Christmas

wouldn't be Christmas without family and tradition, sure, but in Monika Hibbs's home, Christmas also wouldn't be complete without her signature styling. Based just outside of Fort Langley, B.C., the blogger, who has quickly become a master of holiday decor, switches up her style almost every year. But regardless of the theme, these aspects always remain: A classic look and neutral scheme, metallic touches, a hint of whimsy and sheer covetability. Seasonal styling is a talent Monika has honed since she was a little girl. “Even when I was young, I loved adorning the tree and wrapping gifts,” she says. “Plus, my mom *always* let me be in charge of floral arrangements and tablescape.”

Now that Monika has her own family (including hubby Troy, three-year-old Liam and 11-month-old Lillya), she shares the tasks with her children. “Liam’s really into it,” says Monika. “He decorates cookies, hangs ornaments and arranges the manger.” Though Lillya is too young to get involved, her arrival just two weeks before last Christmas inspired the entire feminine theme, executed with dusty rose-hued accents like tea light holders, wrapping paper and delicate raw silk ribbon.

Holiday decorating with the kids isn't the only tradition the Hibbses have – they enjoy hot chocolate by their outdoor fireplace in the evenings and always make time for charity. But a highlight is taking the Bright Nights Christmas Train through Stanley Park with Troy's family. “There’s around 60 of us – we fill the whole train,” says Monika, noting that the park is lit with millions of lights – perhaps the perfect place for this family-oriented champion of Christmas who also happens to have a penchant for sparkle.



3



4



5

**3** Style meets sentiment in chic pieces that commemorate family milestones, such as the decorative houses arranged on Monika's fireplace mantel. "Each one represents a huge moment for us, from the purchase of our first home to the construction of this one," she says. "And I write a note on the bottom of each so I never forget."

**4** Monika doesn't switch out much of her everyday decor come Christmastime. In fact, furniture placement, artwork and accents mostly stay the same, save for a few toss cushions that get traded for more festive ones.

**SOFA**, Restoration Hardware; **SELECT ARTWORK**, Annawithlove Photography,

Minted, Sarah Swanson Design, SS Print Shop, Stephanie Jean Design; **JOY TOSS CUSHION**, Indigo; **TOSS CUSHIONS**, The Cross Decor & Design.

**5** When it comes to garlands, Monika goes all out: She orders a massive length of fresh cedar (last year it was 75 feet!) to string along her banister, mantel, exterior trim and garage. She starts by measuring everything she wants to adorn and then adds an extra foot of cedar for every four feet to accommodate swag. Here, the garland is garnished with eucalyptus, cypress, pine cones and raw silk bows with cascading tails for a fresh, feminine look.

**FLOORING**, Divine Flooring; cedar **GARLAND** (customized), Hunters Garden Centre; **RIBBONS**, Shy Myrtle.



6



**6** “You don’t need to cook an entire sit-down dinner for each of the season’s many parties,” says Monika, who prefers to prep for a holiday drop-in with comfort foods like homemade apple pie. “It’s elegant but cozy,” she explains.

Custom **CABINETS**, Nickels Cabinets; marble **COUNTERTOP & BACKSPLASH SLABS**, Marble Industry; **COUNTERTOP & BACKSPLASH INSTALLATION**, SSC Countertops; subway **WALL TILES**, World Mosaic Tile; **FAUCET**, Kohler; **STOOLS**, Ballard Designs; **PENDANT LIGHT, SCONCES, VASE**, The Cross Decor & Design; **CHAMPAGNE BUCKET**, HomeSense; **FLORAL ARRANGEMENT**, Floralista Flower Studio.

**7** Roses may be unconventional Christmas flowers, but they’re perfectly suited to Monika’s pretty-in-pink theme. “Originally, I wanted this piece to be a garland that wrapped around the whole range hood,” says Monika. “But it didn’t look right, so I downsized the idea. It’s perfect proof that sometimes less is more.”

Thermador **RANGE & RANGE HOOD INSERT**, Coast Wholesale Appliances; **POT FILLER**, Kohler; **BOUGH**, Floralista Flower Studio.

**8** A simple wreath hung with thick ribbon serves as another example of less is

more and offers a wink of holiday spirit in an otherwise unadorned area.

**RUG**, Pottery Barn Kids; **WREATH**, HomeSense.

**9** Sparkling rosé served in pink champagne coupes underscores the holiday colour scheme, while whimsical details like frozen-rose ice cubes and sugared cranberries are easy and inexpensive ways to add serious wow factor.

**TRAY, CHAMPAGNE COUPES**, The Cross Decor & Design.





**10** No matter her holiday scheme, Monika tends to stick to neutrals when picking gift wrap. "I usually choose paper with subtle patterns, such as snowflakes or polka dots," she says. "But I always wrap the kids' presents in something more playful."

Kraft **GIFT WRAP**, HomeSense; pink present-patterned **GIFT WRAP**, Rifle Paper Co.

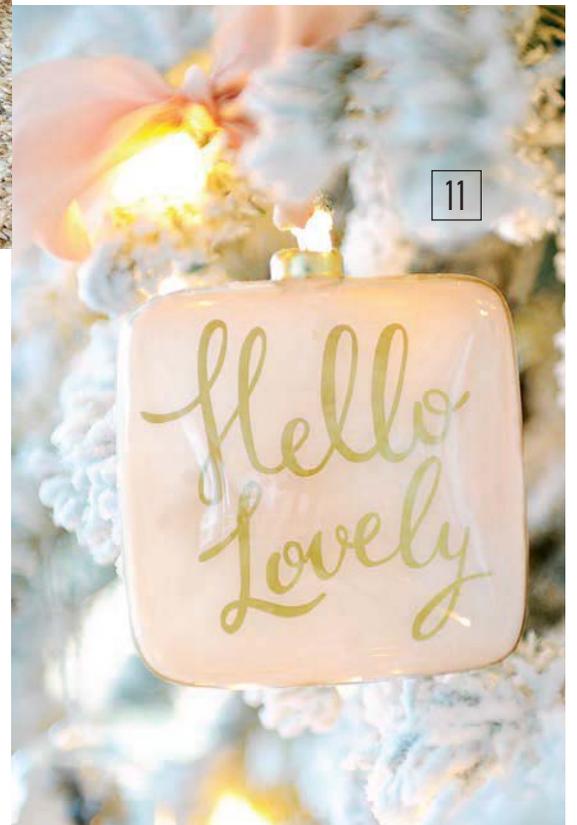
**11** Born six weeks after the Hibbses moved into this house and two weeks before Christmas, baby Lillya was the main source of inspiration for the home's festive decor last year, marked by the powder pink and dusty rose accents with feminine touches. Monika purchased the "Hello Lovely" ornament in honour of Lillya's

birth to serve as a beautiful reminder of when they welcomed her into the world.

**ORNAMENT**, Indigo.

## Monika's Christmas checklist

- A real flocked Christmas tree
- A cohesive colour scheme
- Simple wrapping paper, plus one playful print for the kids
- Candles and a roaring fire
- Sentimental ornaments marking family milestones
- Generous lengths of fresh cedar garland
- Metallic accents that sparkle and shine
- A signature cocktail that suits her holiday palette
- Comfort food to match the coziness of the season



12

From the Fort Langley, B.C., shopping bag to the plaid scarf and blanket to the warm winter boots and even the skull mount, there's always a hint of Canadiana in Monika's winter decor.

**STOOL**, The Cross Decor & Design; **FLOOR TILES**, Cement Tile Shop; custom **BENCH CUSHION**, Stephanie Jean Design; **TOSS CUSHION**, Pottery Barn; **BLANKET**, Bella & Wren; **WREATH**, HomeSense.

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