

Bring on the — CHEER —

THERE ARE THOSE WHO DECORATE FOR THE HOLIDAYS AND THEN THERE ARE THOSE WHO REALLY DECORATE FOR THE HOLIDAYS. IN THIS CASE, GOING ALL OUT FOR CHRISTMAS WAS ALL FOR A GOOD CAUSE — AND A WHOLE LOT OF FUN.

STORY **ADRIENNE BROWN**
PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**

Carolann Mackie, who, along with her team at **The Frugal Decorator**, transformed a Carriage Crossing home for the annual **HopeSpring Cancer Support Centre Holiday Tour of Homes**, creating a space with many great examples of how every homeowner can add festive cheer around a home.

Above all else, Carolann advises having fun with holiday decorating. “Be playful yet classy! We had the privilege of working with these homeowners to pick all of their surface decisions, decorative palette and furnishings when they were building with **Heisler Homes**,” she says. “The clients are fun, youthful and high energy people with busy lifestyles. It was important for the surfaces to be activity proof! The décor in this home reflects their personalities and we developed the holiday theme to reflect this too.”

No matter the size or style of your home, Carolann has a few tips to up your game this holiday season and make your décor the best it has ever been. Here are her top tips for decorating for the holidays:

1 Keep the scheme neutral winter instead of Christmas or holiday specific. “That way the décor can be displayed longer and you can enjoy the festive feeling well into the new year,” says Carolann.



2 Add extra sparkle on a console or hall table. “Keep it simple and elegant with candlelight that is contained in clear or clear-cut glass for sparkle. Milk glass is also lovely and mixing and matching works nicely, too. This creates a lovely warm welcome to holiday guests,” says Carolann.

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3 Don't overdo your holiday table. You still need space for the food. "Consider elevating your décor higher than the serving plates, for example up on cake platters or pizza servers, so the decorating doesn't interfere with serving food," says Carolann.



The transoms and stained glass panels in the cabinetry were created by Kara's Stained Glass. They add beauty to the space year-round.

4

Keep your holiday table scheme to one or two colours and a metal. No more than this, says Carolann, or you will be competing with the food palette.

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5 Get creative. One year for the holiday tour, Carolann and her team used natural-coloured wool leg warmers (a steal at \$3 per pair) scrunched up to hug the base of clear dollar store glass cylinders and added pillar candles. She says the effect was pretty and cost effective.

7 Opt for warm white lights for your tree. They show off your tree best and look cosier than cool hue lighting.

8 Don't forget the base and top of your tree. Carolann says fabric remnants can make a great tree skirt; find cost-effective unique remnants that suit your theme at fabric stores. Pocket-rod drapery panels and vintage tablecloths do the trick, too. "Just be sure to gather them softly under the tree, perhaps raising them underneath with cotton batting for dimension," she says.

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MIX UP SOME HOLIDAY CHEER

Elevate your holiday gatherings with signature cocktails. Here are two recipes The Frugal Decorator team shared in their holiday bar:

THE SNOWBANK

1 ½ oz Malibu Rum
3 Tbsp Coconut Cream
6 large ice cubes

Blend until smooth and serve in a martini glass.

THE MRS. CLAUS

1 bottle Champagne
1 bottle Ginger Ale, chilled
2 packages of frozen strawberries

Combine all ingredients in a pitcher and stir.

6 Easy additions can make a big difference. An unexpected wrapped gift on a side table can add to the overall holiday feel (whether real gifts or fake for the effect). Write an inspirational message on the tag for a surprise and to spread cheer.





9 Don't omit your bedroom – it deserves some holiday love too. "Add some sparkle in the master, perhaps to a dresser, above a headboard or at the window ledge," says Carolann. "It's a good way to infuse love and romance as well."

10 Whites and mixed metals are classic in any space and will fit into any décor colour scheme. Aim for "winter wonderland" and you're set. *Continued on page 34*



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11 Add holiday cheer in unexpected places: "Repurpose extra photo frames, add holiday sheet music to them and group them together on a shelf or interweave with your family photos. Paint the frames metallic or use mirrored ones if you choose to buy some new."



12

For the top of the tree, think nature. Consider a "stellar star" made from twigs dipped in sparkle glue as a frugal touch."

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14 Think outside the tree. Get creative with how you decorate your tree, says Carolann. "Improvise using non-ornament ornaments," meaning items that aren't traditional ornaments per se. Try botanical orbs, floral picks and wool. **OH**



13 Use fresh florals and greenery to add that true holiday scent. Artificial greenery just can't compare. If fresh is too costly, try intertwining the fresh with artificial to achieve the look you're after.

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