

HOME RENEWAL: IS A FIREPLACE FOR YOU? GO TO P. 83

NEW ORLEANS HOMES & LIFESTYLES

A Festive Season

Modern and Traditional Looks
for HOLIDAY DECORATING

A GARDEN DISTRICT HOME
adorned inside and out

FIVE CHEFS SHARE what they
are serving for holiday dinner

Solutions for
holiday leftovers

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A VERY ECLECTIC CHRISTMAS

Two Distinct Homes Find Common Ground
with a Modern Mix of Holiday Décor

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STYLED BY CHET POURCIAU AND BENTLY GRAHAM
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Traditional with a modern twist.
That's local designer Chet Pourciau's style mantra.
With the help of decorator Bently Graham,
the two set out to prove that opposites really
do attract to result in a fresh, festive holiday
look that can transcend style boundaries.

CLASSIC UPTOWN CHARM

The façade of this classic two-story wood-framed home looks much like the others on its oak-lined street Uptown, but inside, it's anything but typical. Homeowner Tim Fields has been an avid collector of all things antique for nearly 20 years. From Tiffany sterling silver to Persian rugs to metamorphic walking sticks and Baccarat crystal, there is a story behind each museum-quality piece.

"Like so many New Orleanians, Tim has an affinity for time-kept traditions," says Bently Graham. "We were mindful of that sentiment, but still wanted to kick things up a notch by adding some unexpected, youthful elements."

To begin, the halls were literally decked with a pine-garlanded banister dressed with dangling gifts and oversized ornaments. But the real transformation took place in the dining room—the very heart of the home for Tim and partner Chris Bergeaux. The two are known for their hospitality and lavish gatherings (and not just during the holidays). The table was set using Tim's rare antique sterling-silver medallion flatware. Accompanying each place setting was a petit sterling-silver cordial filled with red roses and green hypericum. But his 19th-century Limoges dinnerware was replaced with something sassier and more seasonal—red square chargers and funky holiday plates. Soft candlelight—hailing from traditional sterling-silver candlesticks and more whimsical glass votives—kept the Baccarat stemware sparkling, and showcased the "souvenir de la fête" placed inside each goblet, a hand-blown fleur-de-lis ornament by local artist Mitchell Gaudet. To keep things glistening, red mirror trees in varying sizes were placed atop the Continental dining table as an alternative to potted poinsettias. Atop the sideboard, bejeweled cones with thick sage sashes flanked a dramatic arrangement inside a large red vase also by Gaudet.

"Our biggest challenge was also our greatest triumph," says Chet Pourciau. "Tim had so many treasures to work with that it was difficult deciding what to use, not to mention how to use it. What I ended up liking best was the way we bridged the old and new. Not only did it look great, but it was actually very do-able for anyone looking to add a bit of an edge on an otherwise traditional holiday."



OPPOSITE PAGE: Tim Field's home is a treasure trove of decorative arts history. His extensive collection of antique tableware comes to life when surrounded by contemporary accents.

ABOVE: Red votive candles shine like spotlights from underneath the stylish and spontaneous look of the pine garlanded banister adorned with gifts and glass ornaments. Below, an upholstered armchair designed by Chet Pourciau provides a tired guest a cozy place to rest his feet.

In Tim Fields' home, the walls and windows—swathed in creamy taupes, soft golds and shades of caladon and sage—balance the heavier woody hues found in the furnishings and on the floors. By adding modern accents in red, the look becomes festive without looking forced.

CLASSIC UPTOWN CHARM





An egg-shaped bowl holds delicately sprayed pinecones and berries, while a frosted vase displays an arrangement of all white flowers symbolizing the purity of the Christmas holiday.

MID-CITY MODERN

The cool-hued palette of this 1930s cottage made the perfect backdrop for a "White Christmas." Though the shades of white, icy blues and specks of silver rule the roost, the look created was anything but stark.

"We added a lot of warmth to the room by adding browns in the form of organic elements such as branches, pine cones and dried bay leaves," says Bently Graham. To further enhance that natural appeal, Graham gently misted the pinecones, branches and garlands with white spray paint to create the look of dew that's only visible when elements are freshly picked. He also used spray paint to mist the logs and leaves inside the mantel to create an ashy appearance that mimics recently burned firewood.

The home's owner, Dr. George Akirtava, called on Chet Pourciau last year to help with the design and décor following a major renovation. He wanted a clean and contemporary look that Pourciau readily delivered by custom designing furniture and hand-selecting artwork. When it came to dressing the home for the holidays, it was Pourciau's goal to apply that same crisp look towards the holiday décor.

"It's easy to get swept away in the spirit of the holidays," says Pourciau, who proved that festive doesn't have to be fussy. "We were able to maintain the same elegant simplicity we have year-round, while adding some extra flair for the holidays." ➤



Basking in the reflection of silver accents and soft light, a flocked tree looks simple without looking sparse. Under the tree, gifts wrapped in wallpaper offer another angle of surprise. The Allison Stewart painting from Arthur Roger Gallery anchors the wall-offering color and texture to the monochrome vignette.

Cool hues set the tone for a "White Christmas," but warmth abounds from the soft light of candles and a strand of small round bulbs surrounding natural elements such as branches and pinecones. *Several items in this article from Judy's at the Risk.*

