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Holiday Charm

A palette of red, gold, and green mixed with meaningful seasonal accents enliven a Little Rock family home at Christmas

Story: Tiffany Butgess Adams Photography: Reti Peek Styling: Chip Jones and Mandy Keener



From the front entry, visitors can take in the Christmas scene in designer Krista Lewis's family living room. Fresh greenery and vivid red poinsettias pop against the room's neutral background. Other natural elements, including holly berries and pinecones the Lewis children gathered from their yard, complete the homey, welcoming look. Facing page: Magnolia branches in wire urns tied with red-and-green ribbon greet guests at the front door.



Spend a few minutes with designer Krista Lewis and you'll know just why the West Little Rock home she shares with her husband Dan and their three young children overflows with life and holiday spirit. Whether she's working on a client's renovation or freshening her own home for guests, Lewis is relaxed, welcoming, and ready for a challenge. Much like Lewis herself, her two-story home appears to bustle with its own sense of merriment; from the traditional red-and-green Christmas décor to the flurry of family-centered holiday activities, every wall is alive with the spirit of the season.

BASE LAYER

After living in Dan's hometown of Baton Rouge, Louisiana for seven years, the couple moved back to Krista's home state of Arkansas eight years ago and settled into this West Little Rock home. "We fell in love with this house in particular because of the more open floor plan and the vaulted ceilings," Lewis says. While the bones of the house were great, Lewis was eager to put her own spin on the interiors by dousing the formerly dark walls throughout the home with a fresh coat of white paint and adding furnishings that are more characteristic of her own style. "I'm really more casual so more things are wood or painted," she says of the home's furniture and accessories, adding that she is drawn to items that are primitive, comfortable, and durable enough to withstand pets and kids.

WARM WELCOMES

However, at Christmastime the home's neutral décor will most likely be the last thing you notice. Guests at both the house's front and back doors are greeted with fresh greenery, including magnolia and holly branches and leaves that were clipped from her yard, along with cheerful, winter-inspired displays as soon as the Thanksgiving holiday passes. "Many people don't usually decorate their back door, but that's the way you come into your home, so it's special to have that decorated as well," Lewis says. These traditionally adorned outdoor areas hint at the Christmas displays beyond.

The holiday décor in the home's formal dining room takes a classic, less colorful approach. A centerpiece made from fresh greenery is accented with clementines to incorporate Lewis's favorite color. Facing page: Dan and Krista Lewis with their children Eliza, 12, Eleanor, 10, and Noel, 7, family dog Lola, and cat, Rigby.





The centrally positioned tree is adorned with pictures of the Lewis children as well as Christopher Radko ornaments. Facing page: Krista's husband, Dan, built the wooden crèche building, while the figurines were collected through the years. Sepia-toned pictures of her children through the years line the stairwell. Lewis says she chose the sepia versions of the prints for a cohesive look. "I feel like it's more timeless, and keeps things from looking dated," she adds. Large, vintage paper geese decoys were framed on burlap to hang on the wall space between the staircase and rafters.

TRADITIONAL FLAIR

"We get our Christmas up early so we can enjoy it," Lewis says of the family's holiday décor, which features a traditional palette of red, gold, and green. "Those are not necessarily the colors that are in my house, but because my house is so neutral I think it works...I feel like they are more traditional and timeless and I don't want to replace everything all the time," Lewis says of her selected palette.

"If you have red and green you can add more ribbon or accessories, but if you do turquoise and green, for example, that might not be the thing next season, and you'll have to start over with your décor—which can get expensive," she adds. There is one exception to this rule in the home—Lewis's favorite color: orange—which appears as a natural accent thanks to the addition of holiday-appropriate clementines found on the dining table.

Since family gatherings and the much-anticipated gift exchange take place in the living room, the majority of the Christmas décor is focused here. Aside from the stockings hung along the mantel and a crèche that Dan built himself, the family tree is the focal point. Decorated with pictures of her children through the years, along with special ornaments, including Lewis's collection of Christopher Radko ornaments—many of which were wedding presents, the tree has a sense of nostalgia and meaning.



The same neutral hues flow throughout the downstairs portion of the home, providing a sense of calm. Facing page, clockwise from top left: The family enjoys making sugar cookies and gingerbread houses each Christmas. The home's back door is dressed to be equally as festive as the front entry. Lewis addresses Christmas cards in her home office.



A FAMILY AFFAIR

All three of the Lewis children help to decorate the large tree in the living room, in addition to a smaller one in their playroom. Each of their three bedrooms has a touch of Christmas as well. "They had wanted decorations in their rooms for so long," Lewis says of the recent additions to the home's holiday décor. In their oldest daughter Eliza's room, a bright ornament garland is draped across the headboard, while a coordinating wreath hangs on a nearby mirror. Son Noel's room features a more rustic pinecone garland that coordinates with the room's palette and nature-inspired accents.

In addition to helping decorate the home, the Lewis' three children enjoy being kids at Christmas. "We love baking and decorating cookies, and creating a gingerbread house," adds Lewis. After all, it's not only the décor that makes a home feel like Christmas, but the memories being made there as well.





Lewis's son Noel's room takes a natural approach to holiday décor with a pinecone garland that Lewis made. Facing page: In daughter Eliza's room a colorful ornament wreath and garland blend with the vibrant color scheme and add just a hint of holiday cheer.



Design Resources

Interior design Krista Lewis, K. Lewis Interior Design, Little Rock, (501) 952-6952, klewisinteriordesign.com
 Art—photography Ocken Photography, Little Rock, (501) 663-1868, ockenphoto.com
 Accessories K. Lewis Interior Design, Little Rock, (501) 952-6952, klewisinteriordesign.com; Park Hill House, Conway, (501) 358-3537; Pottery Barn, Little Rock, (501) 663-0181, Rogers, (479) 246-0118, potterybarn.com
 Christmas décor Tipton & Hurst, Conway, Little Rock, North Little Rock, West Little Rock, (501) 666-3333, tiptonhurst.com
 Draperies K. Lewis Interior Design, Little Rock, (501) 952-6952, klewisinteriordesign.com; Mountjoy's Custom Draperies, Mabelvale, (501) 455-2216
 Fabrics Cynthia East Fabrics, Little Rock, 501-663-0460, cynthiaeastfabrics.com
 Framing The Showroom, Little Rock, (501) 372-7373, theshowroom.com
 Furniture, hardware, lighting, and mirrors K. Lewis Interior Design, Little Rock, (501) 952-6952, klewisinteriordesign.com
 Headboard Mountjoy's Custom Draperies, Mabelvale, (501) 455-2216
 Linens Williams-Sonoma, Little Rock, (501) 663-3019, Rogers, (479) 636-0153, williams-sonoma.com
 Rugs Cobblestone & Vine, Little Rock, (501) 664-6249, cobblestoneandvine.com; K. Lewis Interior Design, Little Rock, (501) 952-6952, klewisinteriordesign.com; Pottery Barn, Little Rock, (501) 663-0181, Rogers, (479) 246-0118, potterybarn.com
 Upholstery Howard's Upholstery, Little Rock, (501) 225-0476

