

Add some pizzazz to your holiday entertaining



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DECORATING WITH STYLE

Tis the season, time yet again to prepare and get into the mindset of entertaining, being entertained and gathering with loved ones.

It is likely that we all feel somewhat pressured to 'perform' during the holiday season, and yes, some of it is just that. I see it a balance of performance and heartfelt expression. It doesn't have to be difficult.

The best way to exterminate the festive feeling of the season is to battle the crowds in the parking lots and halls of the local mall,

I prefer to venture to a fabulous neighborhood nook tucked in the area of Yonge and Summerhill which is chock full of cozy restaurants, shops and fabulous boutiques which offer delightful options for the discerning shopper.

Begin at your front door with a lush and very full collection of greenery such as juniper, pine and spruce which you can find at any grocery store, or you can go for a walk and provide some pruning services to mother nature in your local park (be aware of areas which do not allow such behavior). Adorn these greens with pinecones, Christmas balls, and string lights (I love the tiny LED variety).

Stroll to Decorium where you can find useful furniture accents like a handsome bar cart in a shiny chrome finish, useful all year round but especially during the holiday season.

Add an ottoman or two which can provide additional seating for your unexpected guests, I like the Alida Round ottoman, it's easy to incorporate into your décor after the holiday entertaining season is over.

One of my favourite shops in the City is Putti, with its fabulous collection of authentic French accessories. During the Christmas season, Putti fills the shop to the brim with festive finds which will make you feel as though you travelled to France for the holidays — minus the travel costs.

Department of Interiors is fantastic for fabric and trim which you can use to spice up your existing seasonal décor. They have a basement with odds and ends which are priced very well — consider a beautiful navy velvet for a table runner and some fancy trim wrapped which you can temporarily Velcro to your table edges or pin to your existing pillows.

So many of the shops in the area are so well-decorated that you will be inspired for your own decorating and entertaining needs simply by visiting them, and you will be sure to find something unexpected.

Below are some additional quick inspirations which I dreamed up while strolling the neighborhood.

- A set of Christmas balls with a wide colorful velvet ribbon can be tied to a chair, a door handle, around a vase or the bottom of a chandelier.

- Add slipcovers to your dining chairs for a seasonal change to your dining room.

- Begin preparing now with traditional amaryllis and paper whites by forcing the bulbs in pots which suit your colour scheme. I like a metallic finish for added sparkle.

- Buy sparkly and glamorous napkin rings to add that festive feeling at each table setting.

- I always say, pillows are the easiest way to inject a 'theme' into your sitting area. Add pillows finished with sparkly trim or adorned with rhinestones to your side chairs or sofa.



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- Fill glass vases to the brim with Christmas balls, arrange them in various heights on your credenza or dining table.

Aroma should not be left out — the best memories are enticed by our sense of smell.

- Get some quality candles which do not have any lead in the wick and use them freely. Tip to keep in mind is to extinguish the aromatic can-

dles while eating a meal, the conflicting smells may take away from the meal you eat.

And finally, be sure to check out The Yonge and Summerhill neighbourhood Holiday "Cavalcade of Lights" event on November 30th, many of the design shops will be serving festive goodies and offering one day in store specials and one day festive holiday decor seminars.

For more information, visit www.rosedalemainstreet.ca or call 647-456-2411.

— *Toronto-based interior designer Evelyn Eshun is principal of Evelyn Eshun Design and has more than 15 years experience doing custom designed residential projects throughout the GTA. Visit her at www.evelyneshun.com.*



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