



HOMES

Set for  
the season



Deb Kuffner recently finished a renovation on the home she shares with her husband and sons. Now, it looks as though it were made for Christmas alone.

A Glebe couple's recent renovation has made their home the perfect setting for stylish Christmas decor with unconventional aubergine accents.

Decorated in neutral tones of white and warm grey with plenty of mirrored surfaces and crystal accents, Deb and Joe Kuffner's traditional 1920s red brick house in the Glebe sparkles and twinkles with light, both natural — flooding in through front and back windows — and refracted through glass.

In spring, summer and fall, it's a calming, contemporary decorating scheme, but come December, it's the perfect house for Christmas. Just add a layer of decorations and the home looks as though it were made for this season alone.

Deb Kuffner has recently finished a renovation project with interior designer Irene Langlois and the pair has turned the ground floor into a jewel-box-like interior. Accents such as an enormous mirror covering one wall in the dining room, a crystal chandelier over the dining room table (found at Yardley's Antiques on Bank Street) and a pair of silver-framed tall mirrors flanking the fireplace offer the perfect backdrop for the pair's decorating scheme.

A crystal bowl of aubergine hydrangea flowers was the inspiration for Deb's accent colour, set



By Hattie Klotz  
Photographs by Ashley Fraser



against plenty of silver, white and grey. This strong colour appears on the Christmas tree in a few carefully chosen balls against an otherwise white, silver and green backdrop. It also appears on the ribbon of several wrapped presents underneath the tree and in a bowl of real, striped Italian aubergines, cleverly bringing natural elements into the mix.

In the living room, a pair of tall cylinder vases filled with pure white snowflakes and a couple of rustic branches hung with two-tone silver balls draw the eye up towards the mantel, decorated with white fairy lights, twigs and solid, clear glass balls, all from Bloomfields Flowers on Bank Street. Taking centre stage above the fireplace is a stunning grey and silver feather wreath.

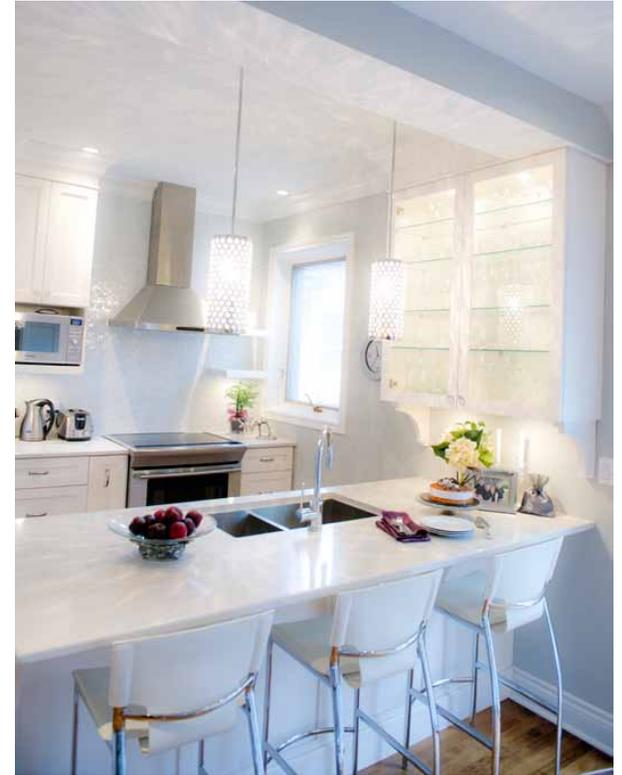
The dining table is set for a feast. "Christmas is all about family and friends," Deb says, "and we entertain throughout the holiday season. We've even had the same five couples for dinner on New Year's Eve for the last 20 years."

A pine centrepiece decorated with peacock feathers, silver napkins, silver and grey striped

Kuffner's eat-in kitchen table, under a painting of peonies by Ottawa artist Katherine Jeans, is set for Christmas morning, while a miniature Norfolk pine provides a hint of green against the white kitchen counters.



The kitchen features stainless steel appliances, a pearly mosaic tile backsplash, crystal cabinet handles, and Caesarstone white and grey countertops.



chairs and huge glasses rimmed with silver can't fail to lift the spirits. "I will sometimes serve an appetizer in those giant glasses," explains Deb, "or they're perfect for ice cream."

Even the kitchen is allowed to shine. The stainless steel appliances, pearly mosaic tile backsplash, crystal cabinet handles, sparkling tubular crystal and stainless light fixtures and Caesarstone white and grey countertop cry out for Christmas. With the clever addition of a hit of green in the form of a miniature Norfolk pine tree in a square glass vase from Bloomfields, another mid-sized tree on an occasional table and silver and crystal accents on the glass and polished chrome kitchen table, everything twinkles. Once again, Deb chose to highlight deep purple, pulling the colour from a large painting of peonies by Ottawa artist Katherine Jeans on the wall behind the silver upholstered bench, tying it in with table napkins and a bowl of rich, purple plums.

Deb and Joe celebrate Christmas with their two sons, Brendan, 16, and Ryan, 17, and plenty of other family. "We will typically have a potluck dinner on Christmas Eve before heading to midnight mass, then on Christmas Day, we will open stockings and presents," says Deb. "I love all things traditional — hot apple cider, turkey,



stuffing, homemade cranberry sauce and shortbread cookies. And an important part of Christmas for us is giving back."

Recently retired, Deb worked with the Ottawa Carleton District School Board for 25 years, most recently as principal at Devonshire Community Public School. There, she used to organize hampers and Christmas baskets for those less fortunate, and over the years she's taken her boys to volunteer at the Mission.

The Kuffners' Christmas also involves plenty of outdoor activities. They snowshoe, cross-country ski and play hockey. For years, Joe has built a rink in their backyard — a neighbourhood attraction when the boys were young. For Deb, "my favourite things about Christmas are connecting with family and friends, singing carols with our neighbours at our annual block party and seeing the joy on the faces of children throughout the season."

**Blumenstudio  
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The formal dining room has a more subdued holiday palette with golds and greens while the front hall gets a feathery treatment.

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