

ALL THAT GLISTENS

The holidays are a time to unbox treasured heirlooms, but mixing in some modern pieces can freshen up winter home decor.

BY EILEEN KEIGHLEY



Fresh-cut greens and metallic flatware are among colors to incorporate for winter flare at home this season.

Create a chic and cohesive holiday look in your home this season by showcasing mixed metals, unscented candles, natural flatware and metallic colors.

“Decor can be used to create balance and calm,” says Balboa Island resident Wendy Blackband, co-owner of Blackband Home & Design, who likes to take a holistic approach. “I like to go with things that are a bit more cohesive and complement each other. ... If your [house] tones are ... monochromatic, you might want to stick with tones that flow ... [and] work together.”

Those who incorporate a Christmas tree covered in color may want to pull a hue from that palette, then use different shades in the same color family and tones that pair well with it like white, beige, caramel and gold. Blackband chooses this toned approach. “It’s calmer, which is helpful at such a busy time of year,” she says.

To cover the dining room table, Blackband recommends crisp white linen—an heirloom cloth, if available. “That said, if it’s a beautiful wooden table, I’d show it,” Blackband says. For a table runner, her approach is simple and sophisticated: Use a palette of fresh-cut greens (eucalyptus goes with everything and adds a nice scent), some whites and a splash of color. Incorporate foods you might find in the meal, perhaps shell-on walnuts or pomegranates.

Depending on your space, this centerpiece might be in situ for more than a day; if so, change it up with different place settings. Try flat, matte black—especially natural, black flatware and cookware—then complement with gold stemware. Candles are a must, in assorted sizes and shapes, but Blackband suggests avoiding scented pieces. “People have a tendency to over-scent in their flowers, in their candles. ... Not every guest

is going to like that cherry and vanilla candle.”

An easy way to transform a living area for the holidays is to add accessories like throws and cushions, but, Blackband advises, make sure it looks natural instead of staged. Also, consider using baskets and trays to display seasonal items. And have fun in the kitchen by filling vases with limes or whole nuts, which creates a connection between the food and the decor.

When it comes to the seasonal centerpiece of the home, Blackband fills her family’s tree with ornaments gathered during their travels, including one purchased south of the border with little ceramic bowls in a Mexican floral motif. She also adds decorations her kids have made over the years—since holidays are about spending time with family. The same can be done with decor for Hanukkah, Kwanzaa or any other holidays. Yet, Blackband cautions: “There is a thin line to tread with [family heirlooms]. Pay homage, but don’t go overboard.”

Meanwhile, lights should be kept simple, but don’t limit them to being hung from the ceiling, wrapped around the banister or tree. Mix it up by placing classic white lights inside vases displayed around your home, or consider lanterns as an alternative. “Lighting is very important,” Blackband says. “I especially like hurricanes and lanterns. Depending on your style of house, they can be modern glass hurricanes with candles inside to give a simple feel.” For coastal homes like so many in Newport, she suggests charming wooden lanterns that exude a Cape Cod style.

Yet, lights aren’t the only way to add shine. “Gold and metallic have been popular for a couple of years and these have moved more into decorative items, which can then be used as holiday accents,” Blackband says. Consider using charcoal flatware with metallics and partner these pieces with greens as well as driftwoods and chestnut-colored accessories like ropes and baskets, she says. Whether traditional or contemporary, keep the tone consistent throughout for some calm during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season.

MOST WANTED

WINTRY WARES

Add a bit of glamour to your holiday decor with these sophisticated seasonal pieces.



Enjoy the opulence of the 1920s as you sip from this **ART DECO CHAMPAGNE COUPE** with gold rim detailing that's perfect for a lavish party or everyday holiday cheer, \$15 each, at Heritage Mercantile Co., Costa Mesa. (949-646-2417; shop-heritagemercantile.com)



BOXWOOD HOLIDAY WREATHS can be hung—singularly or in groups—in windows, on the door or on the stairway. These must-have pieces of holiday decor are available in various sizes to decorate at home, or not, based on personal preference, from \$11 for a miniature wreath to \$230 for a large, 30-inch one, at Molly Wood Garden Designs, Costa Mesa. (949-548-1611; mollywoodgardendesign.com)



Stems of solid sand-cast brass twist and turn to create these artful **TWIG VASE HOLDERS**—display a single vase or all three together to showcase beautiful buds for the holidays, \$419 for a set of three vase holders, at Blackband Home & Design, Costa Mesa. (949-872-2234; blackbanddesign.com)



These delicate, blown-glass **HEARTS WITH WORDS** ornaments are available in red, gold and champagne, each with a different message such as “believe,” “have faith” and “love,” which make for the perfect hostess gift or decor for your own tree, \$12.99 each, at Roger's Gardens, Corona del Mar. (949-640-5800; rogersgardens.com)



Featuring hand-embellished silver and gold leaf edges, this **WHITE MARBLE CHEESE PLATTER** is designed as an entertaining centerpiece with a matching cheese knife for elevated beauty and function. It even comes in an elegant black velvet pouch for presentation as a hostess gift, \$47, at Bliss Home & Design, Corona del Mar. (949-566-0380; blisshomeanddesign.com) **NBM**