

FESTIVAL *of* LIGHT

Sweet, feminine details, seasonal greenery and subtle glitter are all the adornment that designer Myriam Freedman's bright, modern home needs to shine all through the holidays.

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Designer Myriam Freedman wanted to add something unusual and "drape-y" as a counterpoint to the strong, clean lines of the living room.

The fluffy dried-fern wall hanging stands out against the slatted charcoal wall, and its soft, touchable texture makes a statement all on its own.

FERN HANGING, The Flower Factory. **SOFA, OTTOMAN**, The Other Room. **PILLOWS, BLANKETS**, Olive & Wild. **RUG**, East India Carpets. **WHITE SIDE TABLE**, CB2. **CAKE STAND**, Crate and Barrel.



THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT A wood-and-marble cake stand adds a sculptural element; mixing natural touches with a touch of glamour, like the sheepskin that underlies gifts wrapped in shimmery dotted Kraft paper, sets up a compelling contrast in the holiday display; brown paper packages tied up with string - plus a little silvery glimmer - captures Myriam's holiday decorating theme; pale pink roses with creamy dried silver-dollar sprigs and ferns form a muted but festive arrangement.

FLORAL ARRANGEMENT, The Flower Factory. **WRAPPING PAPER**, Indigo. **SHEEPSKIN, CANDLES**, IKEA.



When your entree to the design world comes via 15 years as co-owner of a wholesale bakery – with a side foray as a fashion stylist – it makes absolute sense that your holiday decorating centres around food. That’s the case with Vancouver designer Myriam Freedman, whose bright, contemporary home fills with the delicious scents of baking all through the holidays.

Myriam’s switch to a career as a designer really accelerated about 10 years ago, when she and husband Mason began to renovate his childhood home, which they’d bought from his parents. “The house worked for us,” says Myriam. “We didn’t even need to add on or change the rooms. The main idea was just to open it up and let in the light.” In the process, they ended up completely transforming the house into an open, contemporary family home, warmed by natural textures and sun-filled, leafy views.

The home’s abundant charm springs from a wealth of unobtrusive but highly personal details – from the main staircase, whose treads were milled from an ancient cedar tree that once grew in the backyard, to the black-velvet-covered dining room chandelier. Rather than fight



its elegant, monochromatic look, which would run counter to Myriam’s preference for minimalism anyway, her holiday decorating leans towards small but inviting “moments.” The goal is to create both a visual treat – incorporating subtle delights that evoke the season and the happy mood – and often, a gustatory one as well.

“I love to cook. It’s my second favourite passion after design,” Myriam laughs. She loves to put out trays of edible delights throughout the main floor, so that family can help themselves and Myriam can relax and not have to fuss with serving. The fact that the food also forms part of the holiday decor, she says, just adds to the convivial mood.

“We love entertaining family this time of year. We celebrate Hanukkah, which is a happy time – it’s to celebrate a miracle, especially around food. Our motto really is eat, drink and be merry!”

ABOVE AND LEFT The Freedmans’ pale-blue-and-white kitchen gets maximum use this time of year, so homemade waffles at the breakfast table and a self-serve tray laden with all the fixings for hot chocolate, make it easy for everyone to help themselves.

FLORALS, DRIED FERNS (on light fixture), The Flower Factory. **PYRAMID DONUT STAND**, Crate and Barrel. **BLACK SLATE TRAY, BRANCH MENORAH**, Olive & Wild.

“Adding feminine touches in a modern home is so beautiful.”



“My kitchen is fairly open and minimal in design, so I wanted white with pale colours for the decorations,” says Myriam. Along with another highly textural dried-fern garland suspended over the island, Myriam brought in floral arrangements featuring white, cream and pink blooms with a splash of green for a holiday touch; white milk-glass vases pull disparate floral displays together visually. There’s also a bit of fun in the style of the white cake, which is topped with gingerbread reindeer and rosemary sprigs, and a tower of holiday-themed cookies on a gingerbread “tree.”

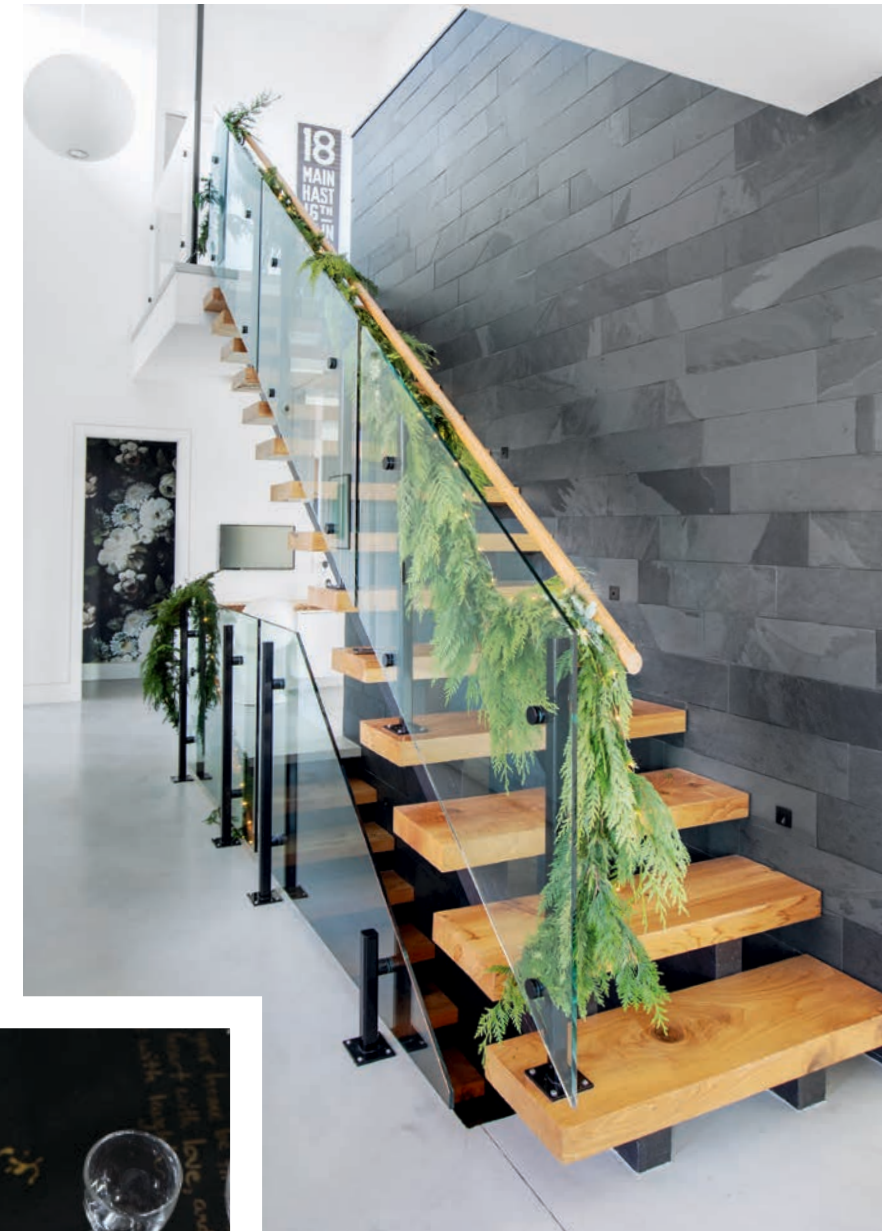
FLORALS, The Flower Factory. **GINGERBREAD TOWER**, The Tweet Shoppe. **COUNTER-TOPS, BACKSPASH**, Neolith. **CHAIRS**, Wayfair. **MIRROR**, Parliament Interiors.

“The tableware is my mother’s. To set the table with her china is very special to me, especially over the holidays.”



White-on-white and awash in sunlight, the dining room is punctuated by a smart black-velvet-covered chandelier. Instead of a formal tablecloth, Myriam opted for black Kraft paper embellished with holiday-themed messages handwritten in gold markers. She leaves the markers out and invites family to add their own holiday greetings.

FLORAL ARRANGEMENT, WREATH, The Flower Factory. **CANDLES,** Olive & Wild. **PROSECCO ORNAMENTS,** The Cross. Kraft paper **TABLECLOTH,** CB2. **CHANDELIER,** Peridot Decorative Homewares. **TABLE, CHAIRS,** Calligaris. **ARTWORK,** Karen Lorena Parker.



ABOVE The double-height foyer – with its sleek honed-slate wall and steel-and-wood staircase – was dramatic enough on its own, so little more was needed in the way of holiday dressing than a swagged cedar garland entwined with tiny lights.

CEDAR GARLAND, The Flower Factory. **TEXTURED SLATE TILE,** Olympia Tile. Nelson Bubble **PENDANT LIGHT,** Gabriel Ross. **PRINT** (18 Main at the top of stairs), CF Interiors.

LEFT The gold heart ornament came in a package of six, each in a slightly different tone; they make a perfect take-away gift for visitors, and are a lovely surprise in each dinner guest’s soup bowl. A black linen napkin adds drama.

HEART ORNAMENT, IKEA. **LINEN NAPKINS,** Olive & Wild.



“Especially with all the trees visible through the windows, I love to bring the outdoors in, with simple greenery, pine cones or even an actual tree.”

OPPOSITE Myriam wanted son Izzy’s bedroom to feel like being in the woods, but with lots of red, too, seeing as it’s one of his favourite colours. “The red makes a statement all on its own, so I just wanted to add some whimsy,” says the designer. That’s accomplished handily with a reindeer rocking chair, tree-printed bed linens, and a tree hung with a few offbeat ornaments.

BRILLE WALLPAPER TILES, Wayfair. **Kartell Light LIGHT FIXTURE**, Wayfair. **BED LINENS, PLAID THROW**, Q.E. Home. **REINDEER ROCKING HORSE, SHEEPSKIN**, IKEA. **LADDER SHELF, TREE, ORNAMENTS**, Olive & Wild.



LEFT In son Asher’s room, the black accent wall inspired a black, gold and white decor. For the holidays, she added black-and gold-wrapped presents (Myriam likes to spread them throughout the house rather than relegating them to just one room). Hanukkah decorations are hard to find, so Myriam fashioned this Star of David using woolen balls, a craft-store wooden star and a glue gun.

BED LINENS, THROW, Q.E. Home. **WRAPPING PAPER**, Michaels and Indigo. **ORNAMENTS** (at foot of bed and on shelves), Olive & Wild. **SHEEPSKIN**, IKEA.

ABOVE For Myriam, it’s about creating moments, small vignettes to catch the eye and set the mood rather than anything too elaborate, especially in such an understated setting. Here, a twig ladder with extra blankets, dressed up with a simple wreath and pine cones from a nearby park, doubles as decor and storage. An old-school letter board sums up the holidays in a few evocative words.

LADDER, TEXTILES, WOODEN REINDEER, Olive & Wild. **WREATH**, IKEA.



"I love balancing natural elements with glamour. I like things to be pretty, but never overdone."



"I'm all about layering on the cozy," says Myriam of her bedroom, with its hushed cream-and-blue-grey linens and nubby carpet. Little is needed in the way of seasonal embellishments when treasures, such as the "LOVE" ornament, capture the holiday spirit so succinctly.

LOVE ORNAMENT, West Elm.
WRAPPING PAPER, Indigo.
ROUND TRAY, The Bay.
BED LINENS, Q.E. Home.
UPHOLSTERED BED FRAME, EQ3.
RUG, Design House.
PAINTING, RH.



Away from the busy family home in the master ensuite, there's one little gesture - an arrangement of dried roses and sprigs in a milk-glass stemmed vase - that's just for Myriam and Mason. "Everyone decorates all the important rooms, of course, but no one else sees this," says Myriam. "I love that it's just for us."

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