



Creating a Cozy Space

A LOCAL FORT WORTH DESIGNER SHARES HER TIPS AND TRICKS FOR THE PERFECT HOLIDAY HOME THIS SEASON.

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A Fort Worth native who spent her childhood in Berlin, the modern architecture and materials from both cities have always inspired Shelby Whitfield, owner and principal designer at Modern Menagerie. She carried that love to Virginia, where she developed an equal appreciation for classical design during college.

After earning her interior design degree, Whitfield returned to the Metroplex to train under nationally recognized design professionals from Dallas-Fort Worth. Her experience includes family home renovations in Preston Hollow and the Park Cities, estate homes in Westover Hills, and vacation homes throughout the country.

Whitfield describes her design philosophy as a client-centered distillation of inspiration from her lived and professional experience.

The holiday season is a special time. Nostalgia runs as deep as the stomachs, and in Fort Worth, it's a time to finally enjoy the cooler weather, go shopping, and engage in family and local traditions.

While celebrating, gift-giving, and entertaining, our homes become a busy place, hosting family and friends, parties, and events. But when the guests leave, the holiday home has double duty, becoming a comfy space for Hallmark movie marathons, listening to carols, or finishing the year's reading list.

Whitfield shares her top 4 tips to transition smoothly from a functional, hosting home to a fluffy sanctuary during this year's Season of Joy.

Tip 1: Layered Lighting

"Around the winter holidays, the glow of accent lighting is critical for creating a cozy refuge from the grey outdoors," explains Whitfield. "Layer your lighting at different heights with table lamps, floor lamps, art lights, and seasonal string lights and candles to offer functional task lighting for snuggling up with a good book and ambient warmth."

"I like to use large indoor lights near natural light sources to mimic light entering the home during the day. I often use floor lamps near windows. Decorative lighting can be equally functional. Mini lamps are beautiful on a stack of books in a built-in, and adding the soft light near a TV can reduce eye fatigue during football's late games or that movie marathon."

Tip 2: Cozy Textiles

"Nothing beats a large blanket on a cold day, but go a step further and think about the fabric on your furniture," says Whitfield. "It can add extra comfort over the holidays. Natural fibers, like wool, are breathable and insulating and feel warm when your family settles in on the sofa. Mixing up textures- using velvets and chunky knits adds visual interest and physical warmth."

Tip 3: Rich Scents

"Scents are closely tied to memories," explains Whitfield. "For many of us, certain winter smells remind us of the childhood magic of the holidays. Pine and berry or winter citrus are rich scents that bring the atmosphere of the outdoors in, cueing seasonal joy. The flicker of a candle creates an additional layer of ambiance, but diffusers (either plug-in or wicking) are just as comforting and a little more kid-friendly."

Tip 4: Seating Groups

"Since our homes offer so much double duty during the holidays, change up your furniture layout," Whitfield encourages. "Maybe tuck a small round table into a corner for card games or pull a pair of slipper chairs aside for intimate conversations during parties. Small side tables are a perfect holiday accessory because they are flexible, movable for different events, and can hold a favorite cocktail or hot drink."

No matter what the holiday season looks like for the residents of Fort Worth, ensure it includes some coziness with designer Whitfield's out-of-the-box suggestions to create a manageable and comfortable holiday look.



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