

FESTIVE FÊTES





Comfy Cozy Christmas

**Transform your hectic
hustle and busling holiday
household into a beautiful
christmas sanctuary for all
to enjoy. Ride along with Way
Way Allen as she brings the
real meaning back to the
holiday season:family**

By Jody Garlock
Photos Brie Williams

December is a flurry of pom-poms, paints and glue in Way Way Allen's home. She and her two boys, ages 6 and 3, go to town on paper plates and cardboard, turning them into tree toppers and ornaments. Way Way (a longtime family nickname), is an artist and savors the together time from their crafting marathon as much as the art that comes from it. "A memory is made with each decoration," she says "It's so fun for the kids to make things however they see it. The less perfect the better."

Her Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, home has a similar do-what-comes-naturally look. Much of the furniture has been handed down from her or husband Robertson's parents and grandparents. A few splurge items polish off Way Way's thrifty finds, such as the chair she painted bright green and topped with a faux fur cushion cover. Come Christmas Eve, the Allens and their extended family sprawl out on the sofa and chairs in the living room and kitchen—one open space after a recent renovation—enjoying pizza from a neighborhood joint. The no-fuss gathering is by design.

"Keeping things low-key allows us to enjoy more time with one another," Way Way says. "Christmas is all about seeing the joy on the kids' faces and being with family." The converted garage, opposite, is the guys' domain—a playroom for the kids and a place for dad Robertson to watch football. Way Way gained a laundry area, hidden behind barn-style doors.

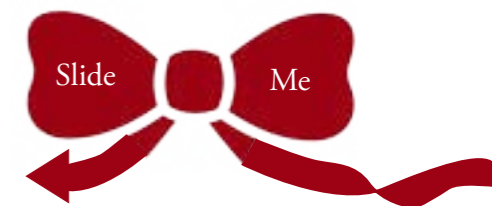


INSIDEOUT The screen porch, opposite, is a hub for entertaining and Way Way's floral arranging. "I'll spread cuttings from the yard on the table to figure out arrangements," she says. She also stocks up on paperwhite bulbs that she puts in shallow bowls with water and pebbles like her mom and grandmother did. "I don't have a green thumb, but these are foolproof," she says. "If you've ever smelled a paperwhite,

you'll never forget it." The boys' drawings and paintings end up as custom wrapping paper, above. "I try to keep it simple with the wrapping," Way Way says. Reindeer gift tags—simple marker lines for antlers and red pom-poms for noses—were another mother-son project.

CREATIVE CORNER The sunny breakfast nook, welcomes holiday festivities—crafting, entertaining, and the family's Christmas Day brunch. **KID-FRIENDLY WOODLANDS**

"Breakable things would not last a minute in our house," Way Way says. Hence the corrugated cardboard trees, that line the storage cabinet in the playroom. Red and green ribbon along the edged add a silky finish.



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A photograph of a decorated Christmas tree in a room. The tree is green and decorated with warm white lights, red stars, and heart-shaped ornaments. It stands in front of a window with white shutters. In the foreground, there are red velvet pillows and a red blanket draped over a chair. The room has light-colored wood paneling and a wooden floor.

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