

# Better Homes and Gardens

**HOLIDAY  
OVERLOAD?**  
25 TRICKS  
TO STAY  
ENERGIZED

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# 73

IDEAS FOR  
CRAFTS,  
FOOD, AND  
DECOR

# Merry & Bright

**MAKE AHEAD**  
SWEET ROLLS  
FOR CHRISTMAS  
MORNING

**HANDMADE**  
CRAFTS  
WITH RIBBON  
& PAPER

**HAVE A BALL!**  
Ribbon  
Ornaments  
p. 82

# holiday

**1 EXPRESS YOURSELF**  
Stacey Blake goes bright and bold with the tree in her North Carolina home. "Everything I do is colorful," she says. "I like to take a few risks with my decorating."

## 10 THINGS TO LOVE

### *merry & bright*

From eye-popping decorations to everyday activities, this family stretches holiday fun all through the month of December.

BY JODY GARLOCK | PHOTOS DAVID LAND  
STYLING CHRISTINA WRESSLELL

**4 BOLD STATEMENT** The orange sofa in the living room goes against the usual decorating rule of keeping large pieces neutral. "Orange is my favorite color," Stacey says. "I say go for whatever works for you or your room."

**5 EASY FLOW** Christmas decorations play off the home's everyday decor, right down to trees on the mantel that pick up the pink, blue, and yellow of pillows on the sofa.

November Skies 2128-50  
Benjamin Moore



Orange Crush CI224  
Valspar



## 6 TRADING SPACES

Good-bye, seldom-used formal dining room; hello, playroom, *left*. Stacey redefined rooms to give the boys a place to play and create. The small tree is theirs to decorate however they want.

## 7 IT'S A DRAW

A chalkboard wall for the kids' doodles becomes Andre's art canvas, *below left*. Scenes of the three wise men riding into Bethlehem on camels or Santa flying in his sleigh delight guests and the boys.

## 8 NOTE WORTHY

Stacey challenges herself to a simple tree art project every year. When colorful sticky notes caught her eye, she knew she had this year's material, *below*.





**2 WELCOME HOME**  
At the front door, left, Stacey's playful style is on display in two boxwood wreaths joined with ribbon and embellished with bright ornaments. "It was an easy way to add a little wow," she says.

**3 SEIZING THE MOMENTS**  
Multitasking keeps the holidays humming for the Blakes. Below, Stacey wraps gifts while Andre (who is often gone during Christmas due to his military job) reads to the boys.

**THERE'S A LOT OF HAPPY** in Stacey and Andre Blake's Fayetteville, North Carolina, home. Bright colors, a steady stream of cookies and Jamaican rum cake, and an enjoy-the-moment attitude keep stress from creeping in. The Blakes are a two-kid family (Zion is 6; Ian, 3), but you can add Stacey and Andre to the mix during the holidays. "We all love Christmas," Stacey says. She has the decorations up by Thanksgiving to give the family more time to celebrate since Andre often misses the holidays due to his job in the U.S. Army Special Forces. Pink, green, and orange ornaments keep the mood upbeat and layer more fun into already colorful rooms. "That's just who I am," says Stacey, who blogs at Design Addict Mom. As soon as the star topper is on the tree, her mind races with ideas for the "alternative" tree she crafts from paper, yarn, or whatever speaks to her. Andre expresses his inner artist by drawing elaborate Christmas scenes on a chalkboard wall. For Stacey the drawings mean one thing: "It's a sign that Daddy is home. We embrace that, and enjoy every little moment the season brings."



**9 BRIGHT SPOTS**

"I always gravitate to simple," says Stacey, who adds holiday cheer with small splashes of color. The sunroom mantel, *right*, looks festive and fresh with cut amaryllis and ornaments in clear glass vessels.

**10 DAILY TREAT**

A download-and-assemble village ([mrprintables.com](http://mrprintables.com)) counts the days until Christmas, *below*. Each morning, the boys eagerly claim the little surprises Stacey hides inside. ■



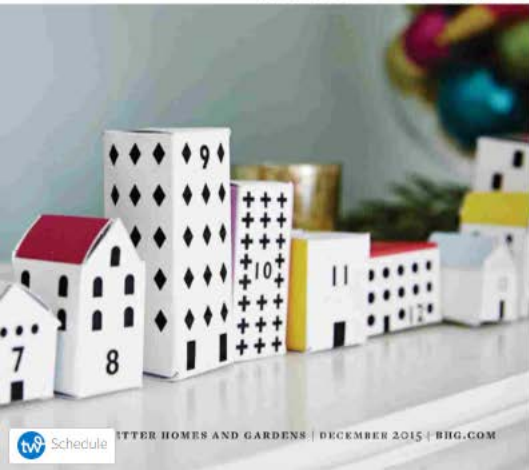
**CHRISTMAS THEMES TO TRY**

Tour four Christmas homes that cover the style spectrum, from cottage to traditional. [BHG.com/HomeTours](http://BHG.com/HomeTours)



**TRY THIS**

As cards arrive in the mail, clip them to a ribbon to make a garland of personalized messages.



**"I MIGHT BE A REBEL**  
when it comes to color. I can't remember the last time I did red and green at Christmas. I'm all for making new traditions."

Stacey Blake