

The White Issue

# Gatherings

Magazine

*Celebrate  
Scandinavia*

Collections for Kindred Spirits



*Welcome* to Grandiflora Home, where life is simple and charming!

Shop the site. [www.GrandifloraHome.com](http://www.GrandifloraHome.com) or see what we're up to at [www.grandiflorahomeandgarden.blogspot.com](http://www.grandiflorahomeandgarden.blogspot.com)

## *The Gatherings Team*

**Founder/Editor In Chief**  
Heather Spriggs Thompson

**Copy Editor**  
Andrea Bailey Willits

**Graphic Designer**  
Tracy Locke Castro

**Vintage Editor/  
Media Relations**  
Elizabeth Hanley

**Market Editor**  
Trisha Brink

**Food Editor**  
Clarice Fox-Hughes

**Crafts Editor**  
Maaïke van Koert

**Photographer/Stylist**  
Annetta Bosakova

**Writer/Columnist**  
Lindsay George

**Floral Stylist**  
Ingrid Henningsson

**Lifestyle Contributor**  
Ginny Donovan



Our beloved White Issue which normally kicks off the New Year, comes early this year as a gift of the holidays. So to honor the season we selected traditional Scandinavian style as our muse. With its nod to naturalism, folk art and a clean fresh palette, it is a look that is on trend and festive.

-Heather

# Featured Contributors



*Left:*  
**Audur Skula**  
Artist  
Kalklitir /When  
Decorating



*Right:*  
**Abbie Melle**  
Photographer



*Left:*  
**Annetta Bosakova**  
Photographer  
Inspired by  
Annetta



*Right:*  
**Trisha Brink**  
Designer  
Trisha Brink  
Designs



*Left:*  
**Tracy Castro**  
Designer  
Fair Morning Blue



*Right:*  
**Cristina Colli**  
Stylist



*Left:*  
**Ginny Donovan**  
Food Blogger  
Cooking With  
Chopin, Living with  
Elmo



*Right:*  
**Clarice Fox-Hughes**  
Cook/Writer  
Storybook Woods



*Left:*  
**Lindsay George**  
Writer/Musician



*Right:*  
**Elizabeth Hanley**  
Stylist/Collector  
Liz Loves Vintage



*Left:*  
**Ingrid Henningsson**  
Floral Stylist  
Of Spring  
& Summer



*Right:*  
**Maaik van Koert**  
Craft Blogger  
CreJtJion



**Beth Stanion**  
Fashion Stylist/  
Model



**Louise de Miranda**  
Writer, Editor,  
Stylist  
30s Magazine



*Left:*  
**Debra Norton**  
Crafter/Stylist



*Right:*  
**Sylvia Ivanov**  
Sylvia's Simple Life  
Photographer/  
Blogger



# Table *of Contents*

Deck the Halls with Winter Whites

by Trisha Brink

Scandinavian Cross-Stitch

by Annetta Bosakova

Collecting Ironstone

by Elizabeth Hanley

All Wrapped Up

by Tracy Castro

Subtle Sparkle

by Debra Norton

A Winter Vignette

by Cristina Colli

Handmade Holiday

by Maaïke van Koert

Black + White Florals

by Ingrid Henningsson

Celebrating Simplicity- Handmade Christmas

by Sylvia Ivanov

When Decorating with Scandinavian Folk Charm

Interview with Audur Skula

The New Nordic Cuisine

by Clarice Fox-Hughes

Serenity in Whites

by Abbie Melle

Creating the Perfect Setting

by Louise de Miranda

Sweet Endings: A Winter Gathering with Friends

by Ginny Donovan

Capturing Winter Light

by Lindsay George

6

8

10

12

18

20

24

30

36

42

48

54

60

66



Photo by Maaïke van Koert



Photo by Cristina Colli

Follow us online  
[@gatheringsmag](#)



Read the blog  
[gatheringsmag.com/blog](#)



above photo by Trisha Brink



product photography  
courtesy of  
Creative Co-op  
[www.creativecoop.com](http://www.creativecoop.com)



### *inspired by winter whites:*

Winter. It's the time of year we often cozy up indoors and nest. Because we can become overwhelmed by all that goes on around us at the busy Holiday Season, simplifying becomes even more important to us. Warm whites, fresh home baked cookies, hot tea & a tidy home are bliss on cold days. How do you carve out this niche? Believe it or not, winter is the best time of year to organize your crafting space. One of the ways you can do this is by updating your dark cabinets and sad assortment of old junk filled shoeboxes. All you need is some white paint, vintage containers and unique home accessories. Remember how beautiful your craft supplies can become by placing them in jars, tins or baskets. Light your space with a new white pendant or freshly painted table. Many are the ways you can find bliss with a few well thought out organizational helpers. Mixing old and new, utilitarian and pretty will in turn pay you back double fold with cozy weekend afternoons spent in a fresh new craft space.

# deck the halls with winter whites

by Trisha Brink





## scandinavian cross-stitch

by Annetta Bosakova

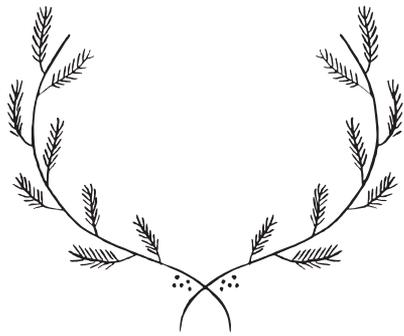
I'm a very busy, complicated and creative person. When looking at my desk you will find a few cups of tea or coffee, unfinished projects, notebooks scattered around and piles of books throughout my desk. That's just the big stuff. But when it comes to my cross stitching, watercolors, or another creative medium, I love to keep it simple and clean. Scandinavian style to me is simple and clean. Its filled with nature, whites, reds, patterns to name a few. I was inspired by some of the greatest scandinavian cross stitch designers like Jana Hauschild Lindberg & Gerda Bengtsson to make a pattern that would fit any style of home and make the

perfect present for the upcoming holidays. There are a few recurring elements you will find in a scandinavian pattern. There will be hearts, deer, stars & geometric patterns. I loved putting pieces of these elements into one big pattern as it creates a beautiful whole. It's really hard to choose a favorite square, but the one that I see first is the star on the right. In this design, on the bottom right square, I want to point out the initials of Gatherings Magazine and a date when the pattern was finished. This is a space where you can put your initials or that of someone else's which makes this piece both timeless and personal.



to download the pattern, visit:





# collecting ironstone

by Elizabeth Hanley



Years ago, when I purchased my very first Homer Laughlin c1930's pottery for my kitchen one instantly became two.. and so on a new collection was born. Now, with a full collection on display these thoughts came to mind during the process of collecting. Find more pieces on the cheap, no crazing or cracks, white and in perfect condition. Those were my guidelines as a new collector. That was then.. and now, years later I'm still a bargain hunter with a collector's eye for different patinas. Adding pieces with subtle unique flaws adds character and makes a collection stand out without being sterile. You decide what sets your collection apart from other collections. Whether it be perfect or imperfect it's all up to you and what you like. I'll settle for some not so perfects this time around. It's not for everyone but, makes collecting fun!



One of my dearest memories from my childhood Christmases is wrapping gifts with my mother at the kitchen table. We had giant rolls of wrapping paper - my favorite was a cheery red with white polka dots. I would watch with admiration as my mother skillfully measured a package against the unrolled paper, and then cut a quick straight with our big black-handled scissors. She deftly folded the gift wrap around the package with even, crisp creases, securing the paper with tiny pieces of scotch tape as she went. It was my job to top each present with a shiny satin peel-and-stick bow. I took my responsibility seriously, choosing just the right bow for each gift, and positioning it in just the right spot. Then, there were gift tags to be filled in - in my careful, blue paper-mate scrawl.

As the wrapping was completed, I ferried gifts to the corner of the living room where our tree stood. There I would happily deliberate about where each gift should be placed. Sometime I would organize them by recipient, those intended for me placed

prominently in front. Other times, I grouped according to size, with the largest gifts propped against the walls on either side of the tree, the smaller ones in front. Before stepping back to admire my work, I would often rearrange a few ornaments on the tree, making certain that two similar ornaments had not been hung too close to one another.

Gift wrapping and holiday decorating are still some of my favorite things about the holiday season. I love bringing out my stash of gift wrap and ribbon. As a graphic designer, I adore illustrating gift tags. I still think carefully about which paper goes best with which ribbon, and where each present looks best under the tree. But, as my mother demonstrated when I was little, I make it a point to put aside my perfectionist tendencies, and give my daughters a chance to do some of the wrapping, ribbon tying, and labeling. And it always makes me smile to discover that the presents have been rearranged under our tree!

# all wrapped up

by Tracy Castro



# SUBTLE SPARKLE

by Debra Norton









# *A WINTER VIGNETTE*

by Cristina Colli





**BEING A FAN** of white interiors, it's no surprise that I love snow too. Everything looks beautiful covered in snow, especially natural landscapes. Frost and icicles turn every tree into sparkling wonders, and after a snowfall the world feels different – peaceful, pristine, enchanted. I'd love to live in a house close to a forest, with a small garden, a few fruit trees and, of course, a fireplace or logburning stove. If I close my eyes I can pretend I'm there, sitting by the fire, with lots of

candles and a hot cup of tea. Outside all is white and silent, and when I peer out of the window I catch a glimpse of some deer wandering among the trees... I can almost breathe in the pungent resinous odour of pinecones mixed with wood smoke and orange peels...a perfect winter day! Back to reality, with no fireplace and, so far, no snow... time to play with my shadow boxes and create a white winter scene to keep the dream alive.





# HANDMADE HOLIDAY

by Maaïke VanKoert

---

*Creating a light, pure & traditional Scandi Winter look:*

1. Use lots of white, combined with neutral tones. For that traditional holiday feeling, add a slight touch of red and/or silver
2. Pure and natural are key - Decorate with items made of natural materials like wood, iron or concrete
3. If you like prints in your decor, go for stripes, dots or gingham in white, together with red or grey
4. In your tree, add silhouettes of deer and moose, pine trees and stars, made from wood, paper or metal and hang them with matching white ribbon
5. For the green touch, get some hyacinths and go for evergreens like pine branches and eucalyptus. They dry well, too



# scandinavian ornaments



*To get started with some Scandinavian decorations for your tree, here's a little DIY made with star foam balls.*



## *materials for yarn balls:*

- star foam balls in different sizes
- little pieces of yarn in white and grey
- wooden barbecue pins
- craft glue
- ribbon for embellishing, if desired



*1. pin the foam ball on a barbecue pin and glue the top with craft glue*

*2. start rolling the yarn in circles around it*

*3. when you're about two-third done, take the pin out and turn the ball upside down to continue*

*4. when the glue is dry, you can add ribbon and pin it tight with a little metal pin at the top*

## materials for paper balls:

- star foam balls in different sizes
- old book pages
- wooden barbecue pins
- mod podge or similar with shiny finish
- old paint brush
- stamps & ink pad



1. Stamp designs on old book pages; allow to dry
2. tear the stamped pages into small pieces
3. pin the foam ball on a barbecue pin and glue the top with your brush and mod podge
4. start layering the paper scraps, adding glue both under and on top of the pieces
5. when you're about two-third done, let glue dry a bit before continuing
6. remove the pin and turn the ball over, continue adding paper pieces
7. allow to dry at least 24 hours



*Rustique.*



ESTY/RustiqueInteriorsKy  
Facebook/Rustique Interiors Ky

Email:  
rustiqueinteriors.ky@gmail.com

Contacts:  
Traci 270/528-4289 or Kay  
270/438-8330

*Interior furnishing  
and design services*

commercial &  
residential interiors,  
weddings, etc.



bittersweet soap

pure | clean | simple



Since 1997 ~ a hand-made shop...

bittersweetsoap.com

111 North Water Street, Historic Liberty Missouri



# *black + white florals*

by Ingrid Henningson



The *Viburnum tinus* has small round almost black berries and the *Symphoricarpos* Snowberries has bigger plump round white berries or fruits. With the stems cut very short I have used little white vases with black drawings called Caramba, designed by the Swedish glass artist Ulrica Hydman Vallien for the glass factory Kosta Boda in the 1980's



Snowberries are very versatile and can be used with their stems cut short and used in small vases or left long and used in large arrangements. I have also seen them used stripped of all their leaves giving them a dramatic look with pure white berries on dark stems. Combine them as here with a votive candle and a little wrapped present.



THIS PAGE: “Five Gold Rings” just like the words in the Christmas song 12 Days of Christmas– the five gold rings in this case are two kinds of Swedish brass curtain rings; I have added some extra seasonal sparkle with gold glitter twine and a vintage Christmas tree bauble



OPPOSITE: Candles and candle holders are very much part of Swedish interiors adding a sense of warmth during the long, dark, cold winters. Here are four black wrought iron candle holders with tall, slim white candles. For the holiday season I have mixed them with vases of seasonal berries, vintage Christmas tree baubles and a little Christmas present wrapped with white tissue paper and baker’s twine







Scandinavians often combine the modern with antiques in unusual and clever ways and they take pride in their heritage and traditions. Here are some antique cups with gold decorations and some vintage Christmas tree baubles on a pile of antique psalm books. Both the cups and the psalm books are heirlooms passed down through several generations.



A white on white theme - white Baby's Breath in a white vase with ridges, five silver coloured baubles on a white on white fabric and a white painted wooden background – simple and effective



# *Celebrating Simplicity:*

## **A Handmade Christmas**

by Sylvia Ivanov



*There* is something utterly magical about handmade Christmas. It's this kind of Christmas that while filling your heart with lovingness, makes your hands ache for baking, decorating, writing holiday cards, knitting, and wrapping presents... Christmas time possesses this unexplained power to inspire our creative being and make us produce handmade beauty, something I have always loved. For not much money, very little time and simply using our hands, we can lend personality and a sense of history to our Christmases making them truly a meaningful time for family and friends. This is how we give the love inside of us wings to fly and reach others...

I have always tried to bring nature home for the holidays and decorate with natural elements. Drying oranges and apple slices has become a cherished activity during these festive times. The fruit slices not only make the room smell great, but they are simple and yet so cheerful and beautiful.

Every year the fragrance of oranges and apples drying in the oven takes me right back to my grandparents' old house. I can see myself, as a little girl, sitting on the floor in front of the freshly cut Christmas tree, surrounded by boxes of old glass ornaments collected over the years... Wood in the stove is cracking and filling the space with warmth. While I am making garlands from popcorn and snowflakes from tissue paper, my grandma is stirring rice in a big pot, preparing a classic rice pudding. Grandpa, sitting on the table in his signature pose, is adding to the pudding vanilla scent an aroma of cinnamon and nutmeg from his mulled wine... The holidays are what memories are made of...



## *Dried Orange and Apple Slices*

1. Slice the oranges and apples into approximately 1/4 (5mm) wide slices.
2. Lay the orange slices on a dishtowel and blot them with paper towels to remove any excess moisture.
3. Dip the apple slices into a solution of equal parts lemon juice and water.
4. Place the fruit slices on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Dry in a 200 F for 3-4 hours. It's a bit of a slow process since we only dehydrate and dry them out.
5. About half way through, turn each slice over to help the slices dry out evenly.
6. Remove the sheet from the oven and leave for half an hour to cool.

Once the fruit slices cool, I use mini jingle bells and hemp twine to make ornaments with them. These simple-to-assemble natural ornaments offer an affordable catalyst for creativity. They can be used to adorn the Christmas tree, the glasses on the table, or the wine bottles. They enhance wrapped presents by looking pretty on vintage burlap ribbon. I love arranging slices of dry oranges and apples together with pinecones, walnuts and chestnuts around candles to create a simple centerpiece. Last year, I decided to make a dried fruit holiday tree, simply by putting branches in an urn and hanging dried orange and apple slices on them. Of course, as multifunctional as they are, these home-made ornaments would make a wonderful dry fruit Christmas wreath or unique napkin rings. Why not add them to cinnamon sticks or mint and rosemary in order to make potpourri. Isn't it a perfect welcome gift for the guests? But the best part of drying fruits is that when the Christmas season is done, my son will hang the fruit ornaments outside from tree branches and make them gifts to our bird friends.





# Classic Rice Pudding

Makes 4 servings

1-1/3 cups Arborio rice (for silky, rich, creamy pudding)  
5 cups whole milk  
1-½ cups water  
1-cup sugar  
1 vanilla bean  
A pinch of salt  
Cinnamon

Directions:

Rinse the rice well. Bring water, salt and rice to a boil in a pan over medium heat. Stir constantly. Add 1/3 of the milk and the vanilla bean. Cook, stirring constantly. Add more milk as the rice absorbs each addition. Cook for about 30 minutes. In a separate small bowl, combine 1 cup of the allotted amount of milk and 1-cup sugar and add the sweetened milk to the rice. Still stirring. When the rice absorbs most of the milk and the mixture starts to get thick and silky, transfer pudding to a large bowl and cool to room temperature. Serve with a dash of cinnamon.

Rice pudding is a simple dessert made in nearly every part of the world. Despite the many different varieties of it, the main ingredients stay the same. In the Nordic countries, rice pudding is served exclusively on Christmas Eve. It also brings a little Christmas game to the table. A whole almond is hidden in the pudding. Everybody eats until someone finds the almond. The recipient will be able to make a wish and will be in luck the whole year round. Beverly Lewis' wonderful picture book "Annika's Secret Wish" takes you back in the early 1900's into the home of a Swedish girl, who longs for finding the almond in the rice pudding. She dreams of having a pony to ride with the wind... Isn't this a lovely tradition?





# When Decorating with Scandinavian Folk Charm

Icelandic decorative artist Audur Skula of When Decorating and Kalklitir on natural paint, personal style and her very favorite creation.





## GM: What inspired your business?

Audur:

I am trained as a decorative painter and received my education in Denmark when living there with my family from 1994-2000, and have been working ever since with paint. Lime paint has been used for centuries, and in my school in Denmark. I learned to make all kinds of recipes based on natural materials like egg, linoleum, pigments, rabbit glue, lime, etc., so it is quite natural for me to work with those materials.

Lime paint (Kalklitir) is a beautiful natural paint with calming effects, and that is important for me in my home. During my work in Iceland, my customers started to appreciate lime paint more and more, and it began to play an even bigger role in my interior and paint projects. Suddenly one day all my family members were involved in the production of Kalklitir.

Today we are selling Kalklitir all over Scandinavia, mainly through live style boutiques. We are pleased to say that almost all of our customers are women. We pack our lime paint in white paper bags of 1 kg. already mixed in colors, so once at home, customers only have to add cold tap water to the powder. It is really easy to prepare and in perfect condition when used—just like a freshly baked cake!





**GM: How would you define your personal style?**

Audur:  
My roots and inspiration are connected to the period from 1700 to 1850. So French Marie Antoinette and Swedish Gustavian style are influential in my work. I sometimes say that I have a “genetic memory” and my style of hand-painted and decorated objects is sometimes similar to what you would find from that period.

**GM: What does Scandinavian design mean to you?**

Audur:  
I honestly do not spend much time thinking about styles or trends. I simply try to create something that I like and comes from my heart, but for sure, Swedish Gustavian style is inspiring. Perhaps I will be even more inspired as I am now living in Sweden.

**GM: What is on the horizon for Kalklitir?**

Audur:  
We (my husband Hjörtur and I) are moving our family life from Iceland to Sweden and establishing a family company here with our son Viktor, 26, who is a graphic designer, and daughter Fanný, 23, who is studying European business law in Lund, a beautiful city in Southern Sweden. Meanwhile, our youngest daughter Ágústa, 19, is currently finishing her last year in school in Iceland, so exciting times for all of us.

We have already started our production of lime paint in Sweden for the Scandinavian market, and we hope that our business will grow so we will be able to offer Kalklitir to other countries as well.

**GM: What is your favorite piece of your work?**

Audur:  
My favorite piece of work is a hand-painted mirror I made in Trumeau style about five or six years ago. It was always my intention to sell it but for some reason, it has stayed with me until this very day. I think I might be unconsciously holding on to it.





Connect with Audur:  
[www.kalklitir.com](http://www.kalklitir.com) / [whendecorating.blogspot.com](http://whendecorating.blogspot.com) / [instagram.com/whendecorating](http://instagram.com/whendecorating)

and her photographer sister...

Agnes Skula  
[www.flickr.com/photos/agnesskula](http://www.flickr.com/photos/agnesskula)  
[www.blipfoto.com/agnesskula](http://www.blipfoto.com/agnesskula)



# juNxtaposition

www.ezjuNx.com



GIFTAGE ~ GALORE



UNIQUE



HANDCRAFTED

*bel monili*  
vintage reborn

www.belmonili.com

belmonilipgh@gmail.com



belmonili45 | gattobelmonili.com





The  
*New*  
Nordic  
Cuisine



I love food trends because they open up new worlds of food for me, even if the trend falls back towards ancient techniques and tradition and that's just what New Nordic Cuisine does! This hot, new food trend is both earthy and elegant, old and new, intense and playful. This cuisine uses timeworn food preparations such as salting, pickling and smoking. The goal is to de-emphasize industrialized food and instead focus more on crafted and authentic food, which I think is where food culture is going anyway- back to made-from-scratch, preserving real food and creating simple, wholesome dishes.

Here are some tenets of New Nordic Cuisine:

1. To express the pure simplicity of regions.
2. To cook seasonally with local and Nordic ingredients.
3. To produce food that tastes good and is healthy for your body.
4. To ethically promote animal welfare and a sound production process in our seas, on our farmland and in the wild.
5. To combine the best in Nordic cookery with old

world applications and local self-sufficiency with the highest quality products.

I think looking for ways to enhance food with spices, herbs, etc. without covering it up the purity of you're what you are cooking is becoming popular, and for good reason. When you eat fresh food it should taste good in the first place. In keeping with these tents I have created a hearty lunch, perfect for a cold winter's day. A warming soup of potatoes with apple giving it a touch of sweetness, garnished with rye crumbs and a skewer of lox, makes for a visual and tasty treat. There is a quick pickled beet and fennel salad made with golden beets. To finish off the meal is smoked salt gingerbread cookies filled with strawberry jam.

Links to read about New Nordic Cuisine

<http://nordicfoodlab.org/>

<http://lbstadler.wordpress.com/tag/nordic-food-movement/>

There is nothing like a hot, hearty bowl of soup on a cold winter's day! This is actually a simple soup with simple flavors. This recipe is the kind I like to have because it is based on food one can keep on hand. It's easy to dig into your pantry and quickly pull this together.

## Potato Apple Soup with Rye Crumbs and Lox

Serves 2

1 TBL. oil

1 medium shallots, finely minced

4 cups golden potatoes, peeled and cubed into 1" squares

1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored and cut into 1" squares

1 bay leaf, if you have fresh it is best

1 tsp salt

1 tsp pepper

Bone or vegetable broth, enough to just cover the potatoes. About 4-6 cups.

1 slice of dark rye bread

1 TBL butter

1 TBL oil

Lox or smoked salmon

Fresh dill

In a soup pot heat 1 TBL oil on medium heat, then add shallots and sauté about 3 minutes. Do not let the shallots burn. Add potatoes, apple, bay leaf, salt, pepper and enough broth to cover veggies. Turn heat down to medium/low and simmer 20 minutes or so, until potatoes are tender when poked with a fork. Now if you want a thinner soup add more broth and simmer 5 more minutes. Also taste and add more seasonings if needed. With a blender stick or a blender, puree until smooth. Serve with rye crumbs and a garnish of lox and dill.

### Rye crumbs

Cube or crumble one slice of dark rye bread into tiny pieces. Heat on high in a sauce pan 1 TBL of butter and 1 TBL of oil. When butter started to bubble and foam, add bread crumbs. Let them toast for a 30-60 seconds in the butter. Stir now and then but not too much so the bread can brown. Then sprinkle toasted crumbs on soup





## Quick Pickled Beets and Fennel

Serves 2

3 medium beets, cooked, peeled and cut into wedges or cubes

½ bulb raw fennel, cut into wedges or cubes

1 cup unfiltered apple cider vinegar

1 cup water

3 TBL honey

1 TBL whole peppercorns

1 TBL whole cloves

4 whole cardamoms pods

2 cinnamon sticks

Add vinegar, water, honey and spice to a sauce pan. Simmer on low heat for 10 minutes. Place veggies in a bowl or a mason jar and cover with brine. Set in fridge. They can be eaten 2 hours later or left in the fridge for up to two weeks





These gluten free gingerbread cookies are not very sweet but they balance the sweetness of the jam. The cookies have a deeply spiced, smoky flavor. The flavors of the jam and cookies support each other well. If you already have a gingerbread bread recipe you love, then just swap out the salt with one teaspoon of the smoked salt and enjoy!

### Smoked Salt Gingerbread Cookies with Strawberry Jam, Gluten Free and Vegan

Makes 20 4" cookies with top and bottom

#### Dry ingredients

2 cups millet flour (you can also use sorghum flour)  
½ cup GF oat flour  
½ cup blanched almond flour  
½ cup arrowroot starch  
½ tsp xanthan gum  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp smoked salt, I like apple wood smoked salt  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1 tsp ground, dried ginger  
½ tsp ground cloves

#### Wet ingredients

1 egg  
⅛ cup olive oil, I use a mild tasting oil  
¼ cup blackstrap molasses  
⅓ cup coconut sugar (or brown sugar)  
¼ tsp vanilla paste or 1 tsp. vanilla extract  
½ tsp fresh ginger juice

water

#### Filling

Strawberry jam

Bronze edible powder, found in most craft stores



Sift all dry ingredients together and set aside. In a mixing bowl add wet ingredients and mix together. Add dry ingredients. Mix. If the dough does not come together like a stiff play dough, start drizzling in water, just enough to bring the dough together. Then on medium speed mix the dough for two minutes. It is important to mix for a few minutes so the xanthan gum can help bind the dough together. The dough should feel like stiff play dough.

Wrap up dough and refrigerate at least two hours but for best results, refrigerate for 24 hours.

Divide chilled dough in half. Set one half back in fridge to keep chilled.

Between two pieces of wax paper or plastic wrap roll out dough about ¼", not too thin, not too thick. Please read notes below on rolling and cutting out dough. Cut out heart shaped cookies. One full heart for the bottom and a second heart with a smaller heart cut out of the center for the top. After you roll and cut first half add trim piece to the second half and roll out. Then take all scraps and roll out one more time. Set them on cookie sheets lined with parchment paper. Set the cookie tray in the freezer or your refrigerator for 30 minutes.

When oven is hot set cold cookie sheet in oven and bake 10-12 minutes. You want them to brown very slightly on the edge. Let the cookies cool 5 minutes on the tray and then transfer them to a cooling rack. After cookies have cooled, spread bottom cookie with a layer of strawberry jam. Set top cookie on jam and then carefully brush edible bronze powder on the top, being careful not to get bronze powder in jam. Then enjoy!

#### Rolling notes:

This dough is a bit sticky and soft without the gluten to hold it together, so some tips on rolling and cutting the dough.

1. Always work with cold dough. If the dough gets too soft, throw it in the refrigerator for 15 minutes.
2. As I am rolling out the dough, I flip the whole thing a couple of times. I lift up the wax paper (or plastic wrap) and set it back on the dough and roll again. Then just before I cut the cookies, I flip the dough again and lift the paper off the bottom side of the dough and set it back on. Then cut with the cookies cutters. This helps cookies release from the paper.
3. Have a butter knife and a metal spatula on hand. These will help you lift the cut cookie.
4. Be sure to cut the center heart out first before transferring top cookies to baking sheet.
5. The good news is this dough is like stiff play dough so when you set the cookie on the parchment paper, you can gently push it back into shape.
6. I made big hearts but smaller hearts are easier to work with.
7. You can keep frozen, unbaked cut cookies on hand in the freezer. Just bake them off frozen



Ole & Inga

*fine vintage furnishings and Chalk Paint® decorative paint by Annie Sloan*

19910 Viking Ave NW  
 Poulsbo, WA 98370  
 (360) 930-0125  
 www.oleandinga.com

DOWNLOAD ISSUE



[www.blossomzine.eu](http://www.blossomzine.eu)

53 | [gatheringsmag.com](http://gatheringsmag.com)

# *serenity in white*

by Abbie Melle









---

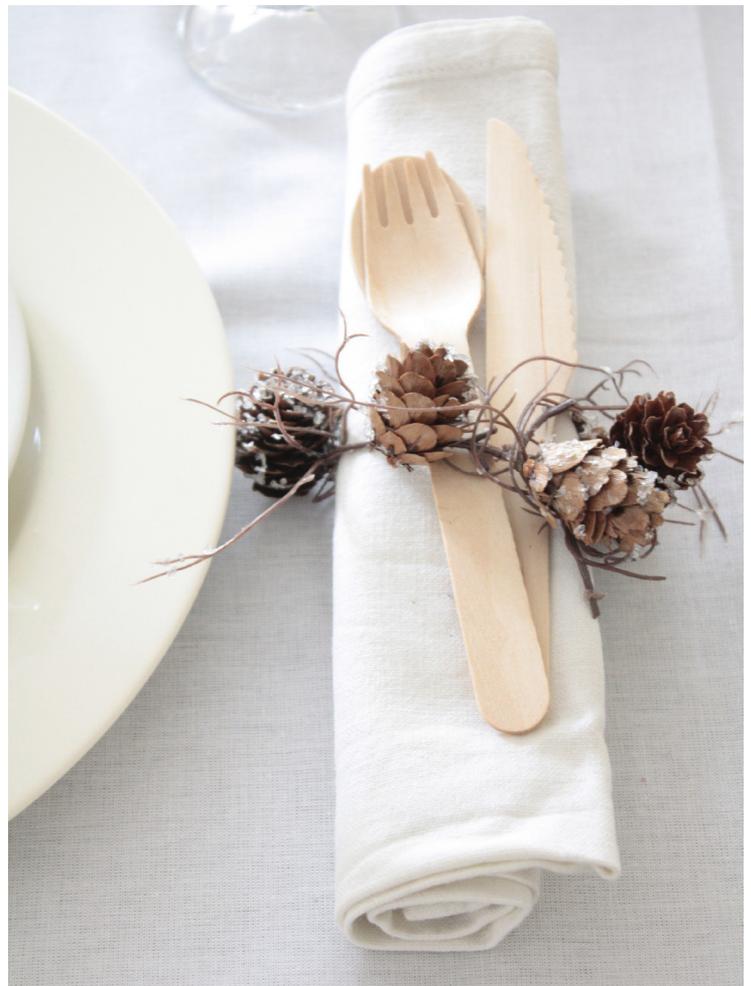
Australian based photographer Abbie Melle describes herself as a lover of the little things in life. seeker of joy in the everyday. delighting in faith, family and friends. and aspiring photographer. Join her beautiful journey on instagram :@abbie\_melle <http://abbiemelle.com>



# Creating the Perfect Setting



by Louise de Miranda



**Cold** winter nights are best spent with friends, family and food. In my family especially, the dining table is where we gather and at holiday times warm up with a furry throw and hot bowl of soup. I love to cook, something I inherited from my mother. Nothing pretentious though, just relaxed, wholesome, and comforting meals. One of my favourites is roasted turkey covered with honey, rum and soy sauce, served with garlic mashed potatoes, a piece of chicken pie, and greens. The dining table is where we enjoy good food and conversation.

I also love to entertain. As Christmas approaches I indulge in the anticipation of setting the table and executing my envisioned scape. Some of the ornaments are hand-made, while others are part of a huge stock of accessories and tableware I collected over the years. When I set the table, I want it to be inviting, warm and cozy, and different. I always use natural objects and materials like fruit, flowers, wood or feathers. The style reflects my love for diversity as I fuse rustic with luxurious and handmade pieces.

With a rustic, Scandinavian, white winter night in mind I created a table scape, a side table with welcoming beverages, and small gifts to take home.





Merry Xmas

WAREHOUSE

IBC

# 7 tips to becoming a star host

1.

Start by jotting down the 4 C's: Devise a concept, decide the color scheme, and make a list of what you are going to cater. Then, get creative! When devising the concept also think of the look and feel, the style, and kinds of materials you would like to use.

2.

Pre-set your table a few days before the big occasion as a rehearsal. It'll give you a better and stress-free view of what works best and what is missing. Forethought and planning makes your life a lot easier.



3

4.

Step out of your comfort zone and deviate from the traditional symmetrical scape, single-set china, and cutlery etiquettes. Mix and match expensive tableware with simple natural treasures or vice versa to create a distinctive setting with your own signature. Instead of lining things up, scatter your ornaments across the table to create a more casual look.

3

3.

Welcome your guests with drinks and snacks to set the tone. Create a bar or small banquet so they can help themselves. This gives them time to mingle and get comfortable while you are adding the finishing touches to the menu in the kitchen.

5.

Include at least one DIY element to your table styling to make it look effortlessly perfect and unconventionally chic. It can be as easy as making your own napkin rings, crafting name place cards, or spray painting pine cones. Small personal touches make a lasting impression and often help to pull a table together.

3

6.

Large central floral arrangements look chic, but they also prevent you from seeing the one across the table. Instead, break up the central flower arrangement into smaller vases and jars scattered around the table, or place your flowers on an unused corner as a pretty focal point.



7.

Don't let your guests leave empty-handed. Give them a small gift or homemade treat for a tad of afterglow the day after. Small details and personal gestures of hospitality are what make a party memorable.

---

Louise de Miranda is a Netherlands based lifestyle blogger, interior design journalist for Houzz.com, editor at Entrez Magazine, and event & party stylist. 30s Magazine (link to <http://30smagazine.wordpress.com>)

*sweet endings:*



*a winter gathering for friends*





photos and text by Ginny Donovan  
styling by Beth Stanion

*Winter* pulls the lacy white slip over her head. The familiar snow-hush falls over the land, one of sleepy silence and soul-rest. And I bake, gathering friends around my old pine table for dessert and mulled wine. Mixing fragrant spices with flour and sugar and wine with cloves and citrus brings a warmth to my home, to my spirit.

My sons studied the Scandinavian Peninsula this semester. We learned of its geography, its seas, and its glaciers. We saw words that contain an “o” accessorized with a slash. We studied fjords as delicate as a vine’s tendrils, frozen lakes on the tundra, and velvet on reindeer antlers. Scandinavian cuisine is based on a simple (yet flavorful) style. Long arctic winters shape the face of the region’s foods; hearty dishes of fish and roasted game are firmly entrenched in the native menu selection. When baking, spices are relied upon to lend warmth to both the palette and the home environment.

My friends arrive, stamping the snow from their boots on the coco mat outside the front door. The low gray clouds promise more snow, and the crabapple tree wears her layer of ice as well as any earring in the Anthropologie catalog. The Yule log has been frosted with cream cheese and decorated with hollies and berries. And as the bottle of wine glugs into the copper pot on the stove, I feel a deep surge

of satisfaction well up from my bones: offering my home as a warm respite and joyful gathering place brings me such deep happiness. To celebrate the simplistic beauty of Scandinavian style, my table is decorated with light-colored dishes and mismatched utensils. A slipcovered armchair waits at the head of the table to softly welcome a guest. Allowing the beauty of the wooden table to take center stage, placemats and tablecloths are forsaken. A rosemary wreath lends a touch of greenery while an old white-washed crate reminds us of the frozen Scandinavian landscape.

Swedish folk music pours out of my newly-created (and much-loved) Pandora station. We enjoy every fragrant bite of the Yule log, and each sip of the mulled wine blooms with a rich spiciness. Our conversation is easy and warm.

As the evening begins to fall, the neighbor takes advantage of the break in snowfall to walk his portly beagle. We wave from the cozy glow of the dining room; the warmth of our tableside juxtaposed to the frigid outside air, separated only by a thin pane of glass. Keeping decorations and menus simple often challenges me; I constantly fight the urge to make it better, bigger, MORE. But tonight’s success reminds me that the true essence of a wonderful gathering isn’t proportionate to the number of hours toiled or entrees prepared. The triumph lies in the depth of connection with each other’s hearts.



## Yule Log

(Pumpkin Roll with Cream Cheese and Mascarpone Filling)

Serves 8

### For the Cake

- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom\*, optional
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 extra-large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup canned pumpkin (not pie filling)
- 1/4 cup confectioners' sugar, plus extra for dusting

### For the Filling

- 24 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 4 ounces Mascarpone cheese, at room temperature
- 1 cup sifted confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch of kosher salt
- Additional 1/4 cup sifted confectioners' sugar for garnish, if desired

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Grease a 13 x 18 x 1-inch rimmed baking sheet.\*\* Line the pan with parchment paper (using parchment is pivotal to the success of this cake); grease and flour the paper.

In a small bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cardamom, and salt; whisk to combine. Place the eggs and granulated sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat on medium-high speed for 3 minutes, until the mixture is light yellow and thickened. With the mixer on low, add the pumpkin. Slowly add the flour mixture, mixing just until incorporated. Finish mixing the batter by hand gently with a spatula. Pour into the prepared pan and spread evenly. Bake the cake for 10 to 12 minutes, until the top springs back when gently touched.

While the cake is baking, lay out a clean, thin cotton tea towel on a flat surface. Sift the entire 1/4 cup of confectioners' sugar evenly over it. (This will prevent the cake from sticking to the towel.) As soon as you remove the cake from the oven, loosen it around the edges and invert it squarely onto the prepared towel. Peel away the parchment paper. With a light touch, roll the warm cake and the towel together (don't press hard!) starting at the short end of the cake. Allow cake to cool completely on a wire rack.

Meanwhile, make the filling/icing. In a bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the cream cheese, mascarpone, confectioners' sugar, cream, and vanilla together for about a minute, until light and fluffy. Stir in the salt. Scrape down the sides of the mixing bowl and beat again for about 30 seconds.

To assemble, carefully unroll the cooled cake onto a work surface. Spread the cake evenly with the filling. Gently reroll the cake in a spiral. Transfer the cake to a serving platter, placing the free end of the spiral against the platter. Trim the ends of the roll to make a neat edge, if desired. Spread remaining filling/icing over the top of the roll. Dust with remaining confectioners' sugar and serve sliced.

Cake recipe and method from Ina Garten's *Back to Basics: Fabulous Flavor from Simple Ingredients*.

Filling recipe slightly adapted from Ina's original recipe.

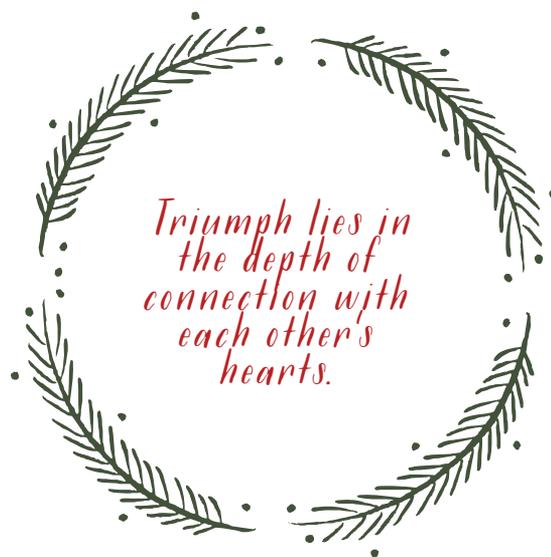
\*I added cardamom...it's not part of Ina's original recipe.

\*\*Measure the pan if necessary. Use the right size pan if at all possible, otherwise adjust the baking time: less time with a larger pan, more time with a smaller pan. If using a smaller pan, be aware of the possibility of spill-over while baking.

# Mulled Wine

One bottle (750 mL) of red wine  
(suggestions: Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, Merlot)  
One orange, peeled and sliced (reserve peel and slice into thin strips to add to cooking pot)  
¼ cup apple juice  
10 cloves  
1/3 cup honey or sugar, if desired for sweeter taste  
3 cinnamon sticks  
1 teaspoon fresh or 2 teaspoons ground ginger (or substitute allspice)

Combine all ingredients (including strips of orange peel) in a large stock pot or a slow cooker. Gently heat the ingredients on medium heat (do not boil) for 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until mixture is steaming. Ladle the beverage into mugs (allow seasonings to settle at bottom of pot to avoid transferring them to the mugs). Serve hot. Serves 4-6



# Capturing Winter Light

A Nashville Kitchen gets a Scandinavian inspired update



Homeowner and  
Gatherings  
Contributor,  
Lindsay George  
shares her kitchen  
renovation



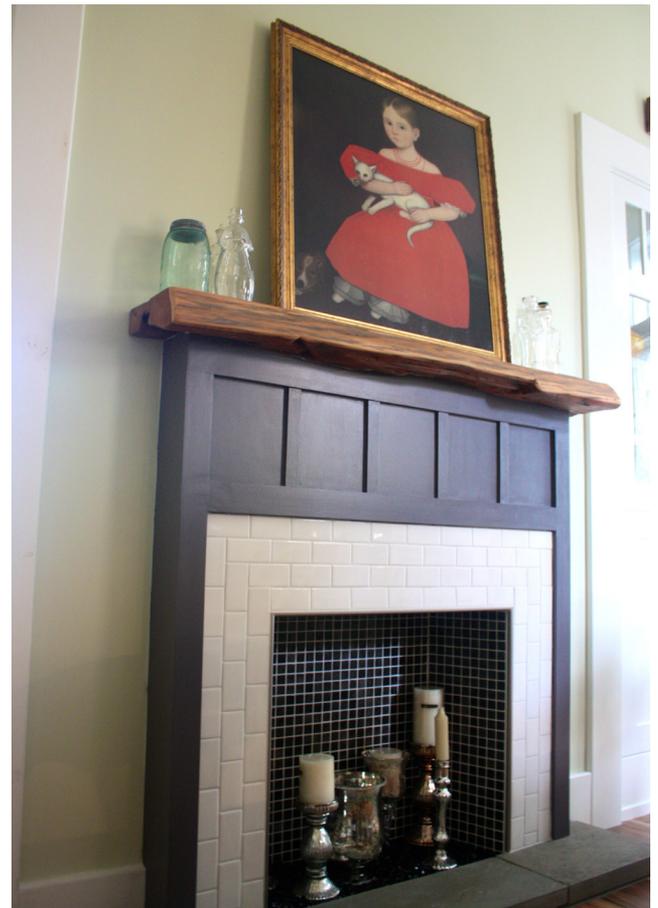
*Lindsay used shaker style cabinets in keeping with the home's character and chose two colors for the cabinetry for a modern approach.*

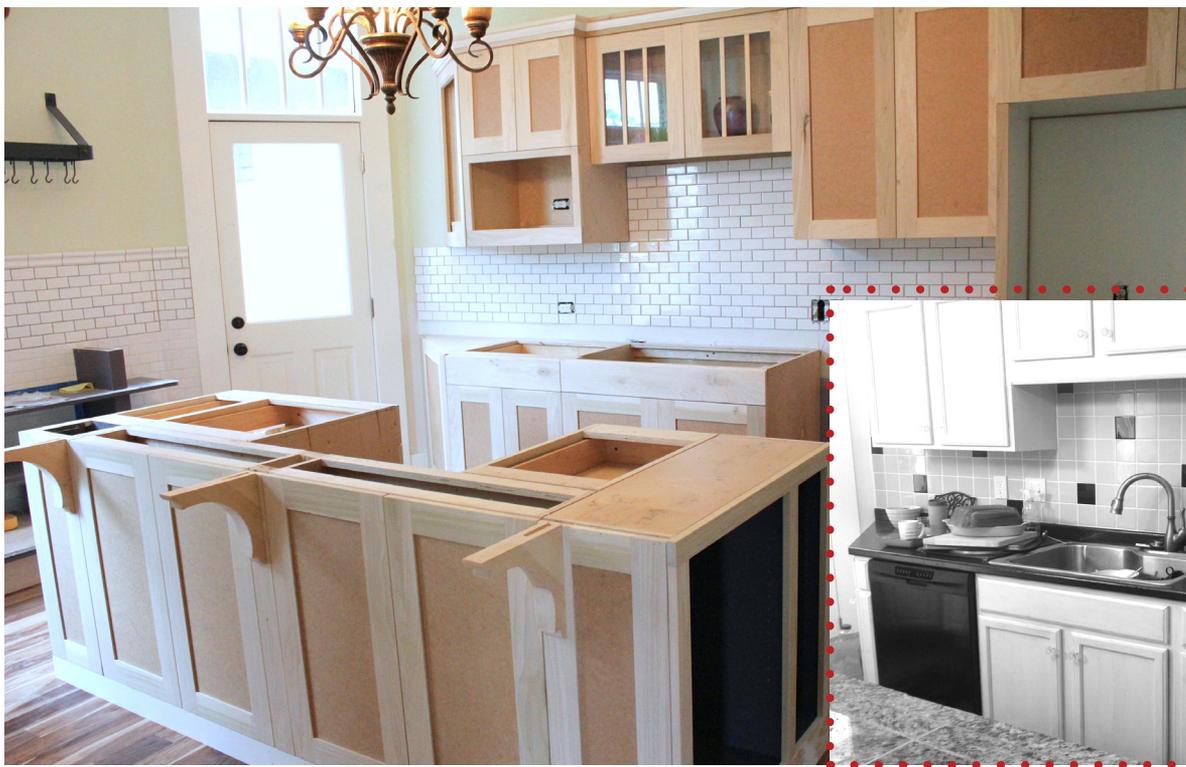
Being able to design and build your own kitchen is every homeowner's dream, and I was lucky enough to make that dream come true this fall in my 1910 Victorian house. When I moved in, the kitchen was workable, but it never suited my style or the style of the home. Also, it was filled with somewhat less-than-desirable workmanship: the countertop was uneven, the cabinets weren't hung straight, etc. So, this past August, after living in the home for over two years, it was time to start again.

I was very inspired by both traditional southern kitchens and the sleek Scandinavian aesthetic. I wanted a look that was simple and modern, but that also felt like a natural fit in the very traditional home.

Overall, I could not be happier with the new look. It has a modern, sleek aesthetic, but does not feel out of place in my very traditional house. This kitchen is now my favorite place to be, and I now enjoy people gather in the kitchen during a party!

*Lindsay chose a 150-year-old piece of Tennessee red cedar as a mantle for the re-built fireplace*





*During Renovation*

*"I was very inspired by both traditional southern kitchens and the sleek Scandinavian aesthetic."  
- Lindsay George, Homeowner*



*Before*

*New granite and tile installed*



*Prestige Marble and Granite  
Columbia, Tennessee  
<http://www.prestigemg.com/>  
2644 Pulaski Hwy  
Columbia, TN 38401  
(931) 381-2484*

*Photos by : Grace Thompson  
and Lindsay George*



## Lindsay's Kitchen Checklist

1.

### Checklist

**Two-Toned cabinets:** I fell in love with the idea of having dark lower cabinets and white upper cabinets. This color approach can look particularly modern, so I used traditional shaker style cabinets to keep somewhat in the tradition of the house.

2.

**Open shelving.** But not too much. I absolutely love the open-shelf look, but I also know myself well enough to know that I would not be able to keep ALL my cabinets looking Pinterest-worthy all the time. So, I compromised and built some open shelving, an open pantry, and then put doors on the cabinets that would hold the more unsightly items.

3.

**Keep existing fireplace.** There is a non-functional fireplace in the kitchen that I wanted to keep. Unfortunately, the mantle was just too large for the redesigned space. I compromised and moved the original mantle to the covered front porch as a decorative piece, and rebuilt the fireplace using a piece of 150-year-old Tennessee red cedar as a mantle.

4.

**Build a kitchen island to replace the peninsula.** The one major change in the kitchen layout was the removal of the giant counter peninsula. By simply replacing the peninsula with an island, the room felt twice as big and became so much more functional!