

Country Home

HOLIDAY

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WITH
CHERISHED
COLLECTIBLES

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MEREDITH SPECIALS

winter in wonderland

A FAMILY SETTLES INTO AN EASY RHYTHM IN THEIR NEW WEEKEND DREAM HOME IN VERMONT. THAT UNFUSSY-IS-BEST ATTITUDE EXTENDS TO THE HOLIDAYS, WHEN SIMPLICITY IS AN IMPORTANT TRADITION.

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PRODUCED BY KARIN LIDBECK-BRENT

OPPOSITE The Buchanan family doesn't arrive at their Vermont home until the day before Christmas Eve, so decorating is limited by time and trunk space. In the foyer, a plaid throw, fresh greens, and a few wrapped presents supply plenty of cheer. Here, friend and designer Brittney Lombardo of Pinney Designs Inc. joins in the fun. THIS PHOTO The iron-and-wood bench was trimmed to fit this niche. The framed photo is by local artist Jim Westphalen.





LEFT The living room's Wittus steel woodstove stays ablaze during the family's winter visits. Its modern silhouette pairs well with the clean profiles of the surrounding furniture pieces. **ABOVE** Interior designer Emily Pinney worked closely with local Bethel Mills Kitchen & Bath Services to design the simple, Shaker-style cabinetry. Black hardware echoes the honed black granite countertops.

t HE TOWN OF WOODSTOCK, VERMONT, HAS BEEN SPECIAL TO this family for a good long time. As young adults, Patrick and Tanya Buchanan became regulars on weekend dates, and they became engaged and were married at a storied inn there. Later, they frequently brought their three sons along to the town starting when the first one was born.

Now the Buchanans can say they have a weekend home in Woodstock as well. As they prepare to spend their second Christmas in the eco-conscious farmhouse, the family is having fun testing new traditions, from all-day feasting in pajamas to pinning festive bow ties on French bulldog Monty.

Although the house was built in 2012—just five years before they took ownership—Patrick and Tanya felt a few adjustments were needed to adapt the space to their family's lifestyle, which encourages being outdoors as much as possible. Oliver, 10, and Murphy, 8, compete on the local "Suicide Six" ski squad, often spending entire Saturdays in gear, and 3-year-old Quinn gets tucked in the stroller for hikes. "We wanted it to be a kid-friendly place," Tanya says. "We didn't want anything to feel off-limits or uninviting."

Fond of the house's craftsmanship, they summoned back its builder, Chris Ambrose, for the renovations. Emily Pinney, the interior designer for the family's main residence in Massachusetts, would handle the surfaces and furnishings. Ambrose enlarged the kitchen for Tanya's cooking and entertaining needs. Pinney followed suit with hardy rugs, cozy-but-clean furnishings, and a Christmas-appropriate mossy-green color on the new





THIS PHOTO A fresh choice for cabinetry, Benjamin Moore Brookside Moss complements rustic woods used in the architecture and furnishings.





Pinney kept furnishings minimal and comfortable according to her clients' wishes. "They like their home to be finished but not overly done, polished but cozy," she says. During the holidays, things get cozier thanks to a wool blanket and furry throw. A simple garland and right-size faux tree with red and white ornaments keep the look crisp and clean.



THIS PHOTO Inspired by—and in some cases gathered from—the Vermont countryside, pinecones, holly, moss, and forced paperwhites create a woodland scene on the tabletop. The paperwhites are tucked right into the moss that lines the dough bowl for a natural look. **OPPOSITE** The long farm table becomes smorgasbord central on Christmas Day. Contemporary Windsor chairs add visual snap to the room's spare design.



style in a twinkling

KEEP IT SIMPLE

This house proves that, at their best, vacation homes are simple and fuss-free—at the holidays or anytime. Against a clean backdrop, you need only a light holiday layer.

GO NATIVE

For the freshest (and most affordable) greenery, stick to what's on-site. In Vermont, that would be pine branches and pinecones, holly and cedar, and their berries.

PICK A PALETTE

Get more visual impact with less stuff by sticking to a palette of two or three colors. The Buchanans' tree features retro red and white ornaments, mainly from eBay, such as plastic Santa boots and glass globes from the 1950s.

GET PERSONAL

Take cues from your family's vacation lifestyle. Here, that means vintage skis, snowshoes, and ski poles mounted on the walls as fine art.



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—HOMEOWNER TANYA BUCHANAN



LEFT Tucked into a terra-cotta pot, this cedar clipping was harvested from the backyard. Ceramic houses become merrier when graced with faux berries. **ABOVE** In the master bedroom, vintage ski poles from the local Woodstock Inn are a nod to the boys' favorite pastime and their parents' courting days, when they frequently lodged at the inn during weekend stays. In fact, they got engaged and were married there. On the bed, layers of wool blankets and chunky knits create a cozy nest.



kitchen cabinetry. “That color is the showstopper of the house,” Pinney says. “It’s inspired by a similar green I spotted on the serving stations at Henrietta’s Table restaurant in Cambridge.”

The Buchanans took Pinney’s practical recommendation for countertops, selecting a honed, black granite, which “looks like soapstone but wears like iron,” she says; the granite makes them easier to clean and maintain. The new colors and surfaces turned out to be an ideal complement to the yellow tone of the original oak floors.

The residence now officially established, the family can get down to the business of living in it, Woodstock style. “It’s always relaxed and there are never any to-do lists,” Tanya says. Well, other than convincing Patrick to stay in his pj’s all day—and Monty to keep on his tie. □

RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 110.