

# COSY *and* FESTIVE

Fiona McBride, interiors expert and founder of Fushia Design, based in South Oxfordshire, shows us how to make your space sparkle this Christmas

**T**o say last Christmas was a wash out, would be an understatement. For many of us it was filled with disappointment and for some, even loneliness, which is why 2021 needs some extra comfort, warmth and, of course, sparkle. Let's all try to make up for the sadness that has surrounded us all in some way over the last 18 months and embrace the season.

My focus this year is around making our homes look cosy and inviting, to give our friends and relatives a feeling of comfort and love. So even the most self-confessed "bah humbug" won't be able to resist putting a smile on their face.

With that in mind, let's think about how we can add a little something more to our

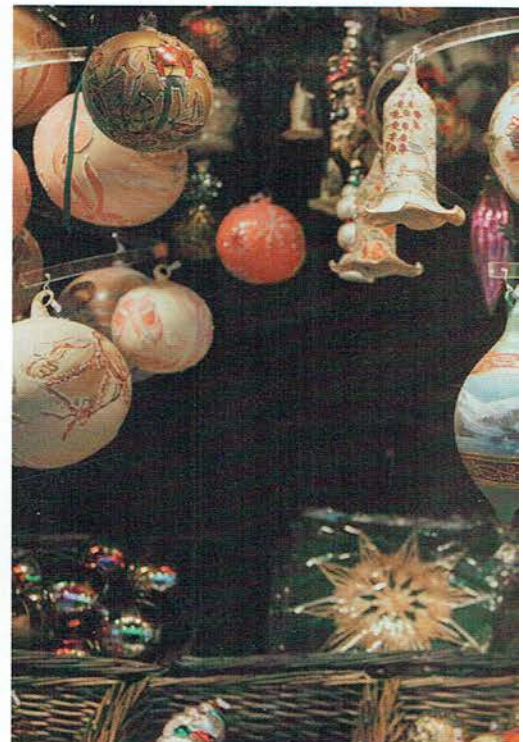
festive homes this year. Who knows, maybe we can bring out the interior designer within you.

Before you begin, think about what colours you want to use, there is some stunning Champagne gold this year and gorgeous silver bling. I recently attended a Christmas Fair to see what's on trend for 2021 and was delighted with what I saw.

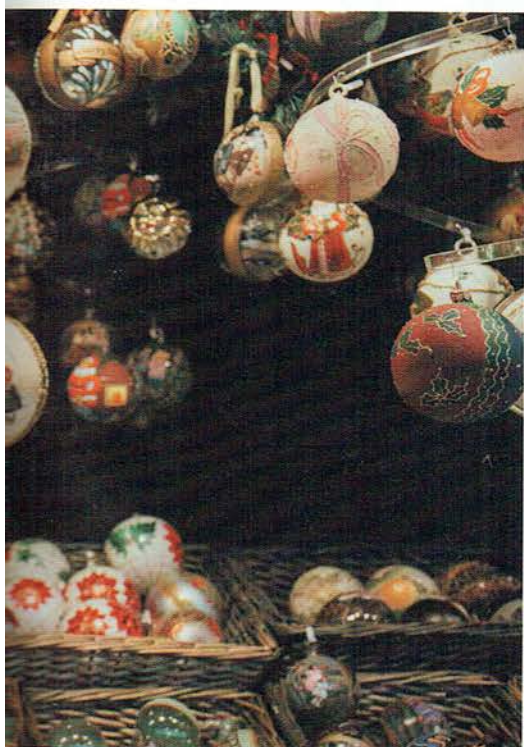
## WELCOME THEM IN

Next, dig out that Christmas box of decorations (probably sat in the loft) and sift through the pieces that will work with your chosen colour theme.

The welcome needs to begin at the front door, so for something a little different, what about a Christmas hanging basket? This can be done by spending little to no money and







done well, can look amazing. Just get your empty baskets back out of the shed, grab some greenery, cones, fir branches, berries and anything from your Christmas box that sparkles! This can either be done in addition to your traditional wreath or as an alternative.

Once your guests are through the door, you need to build on the warm Christmas scene you are portraying. This can be done in any number of ways, I love to use lanterns and candles, these always give a room such a cosy feel. You can also incorporate festive smells of cinnamon, cloves and vanilla. Aromas are such an important part of Christmas, they conjure up feelings and memories from days gone by.

For those that wish to create an almost grotto feel, which is wonderful if your guests include young children, there are some cute

decorations out there. Including gorgeous, knitted bears for hanging on your tree and long-legged Santa's with furry beards and bobbly noses. A sure way to put a grin on the little ones faces.

You could hang stars on the wall, have ornamental trees on the side table and windowsills, even use silver-coloured vases with sprayed festive leaves. There's no need to hold back, remember, this year we're making up for lost time!

#### GUEST ROOMS

Which brings me to the guest room. Many of us confine our Christmas décor to our halls and lounges, which effectively means Christmas doesn't start until we leave our bedrooms. Going back to our theme this year, which is making our homes warm and





welcoming, let's continue that throughout the house.

This year is all about different textures – fur and giant knitted throws, so what better way to make a guest room say, “come on in”, than something warm and cosy. Your guests will love to snuggle up under these luxurious accessories, feeling cosseted and wonderfully looked after.

### THE TWO T'S

Next come the two T's, table and tree. Probably the most thought through Christmas décor. In fact, sometimes the only Christmas décor! You want a tree that is a focal point and a table that invites you to sit down, relax and be spoilt and entertained.

For me, when it comes to the tree, less is definitely more. I love a tree that is kissed with snow tips and has a splattering of silver baubles, there are some wonderful giant-sized baubles out there, which look amazing.

For the table, I have chosen a centre piece of large white flowers with greenery and a bit of sparkle. Then Champagne gold plates

and glasses with a crisp white tablecloth, all oozing class and style with a welcoming glint!

Finally, I wouldn't be an interior designer if I didn't at least mention the word “lighting”. Lights are so important, as they can define the feel and mood of the room. They essentially create the atmosphere. Choose your lights carefully, as there is plenty to choose from. Including pompom string lights, star fairy lights and LED tree lamps. I always stick to the warm LED lights, they produce a warm glow inviting people into their embrace.

Which just leaves me to say – enjoy creating your festive home. Once it's complete ensure you sit back and relax with your favourite Christmas playlist and a tippie of your choice.

If you'd like more advice on dressing your home for Christmas this year, or on interior design ideas in general, please do not hesitate to contact Fushia Design:

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