

Kally Ellis



Where will you be spending Christmas this year?

This year at home in North London as it's my turn to play host! I have a brand new kitchen that I am absolutely in love with and it's large enough to seat us all comfortably. We'll have a big and noisy Christmas with my

husband, children, parents and three sisters. I'm especially excited as my sister who lives over in Cyprus will be joining us.

What do you love about Christmas?

I love Christmas because for me it's a real break, even though I will be doing the cooking and entertaining this year! We're always frantically busy from October until the Christmas holidays as we do the flowers for some of London's most iconic hotels, including Claridge's, where we also recently opened a second retail outlet, so it's non-stop. By the time Christmas comes my team and I are completely drained – mentally, emotionally and physically!

For me Christmas is about spending time with the people I love and having time to catch up and unwind together.

What are the key floral trends for Christmas 2012?

I'm going traditional this year: a Scandinavian meets Hansel and Gretel look. It will be rustic with one or two gingerbread

men and gingerbread houses to create an enchanting, fairy tale feel. I also adore red gingham and have been desperate to use it!

What will you be hanging on your own front door?

A small but stylish wreath with a touch of red gingham .

How will you be decorating your tree?

My tree will be very much styled using traditional decorations and also lots of natural materials. I'm a great believer in using things from my garden from branches to sprigs of fresh holly.

And what about the rest of your home?

I'll make my own pot pourri using star anise, cinnamon sticks, orange slices, nuts and ferns in big bowls. Seasonal blooms and winter bulbs will also feature – the latter look fantastic in pots to decorate side tables and lined-up on ledges to create a beautiful floral landscape. There will be more of the same for my mantelpiece, dining table and staircases with lots of church candles – and I'll also be using candles from our range of McQueens scented candles to make the house smell heavenly.

Your top three tips for decorating your home at Christmas?

1. Use seasonal flowers and bulbs as much as possible. Forage for natural materials – use things from your garden or local woods.
2. Don't go overboard with colour and glitz – using a simple colour scheme but repeating it throughout the house will create a stunning end result.
3. Finally, remember that anything can be a vase as long as it can contain water so be creative and use old china cups, jugs, milk bottles, tumblers and wine glasses to display flowers. ♦

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