



## All the Trimmings

A STYLE-SAVVY VANCOUVER DESIGNER-RETAILER DECKS HER BRIGHT BEACHFRONT HOME WITH AN ETHEREAL HOLIDAY SCHEME.

*By Ellen Haneljart Photography by Janis Nicolay*

It's said a clean slate can do you good. In decorating, as in life, starting completely from scratch can net the most amazing results. You don't have to spend much time in Darci Ilich's breezy white-on-white beachfront home in Vancouver to realize that she takes this bit of wisdom seriously — and with great success.

Two years ago, after overseeing the construction of this duplex on the beach in Kitsilano, the newly single Darci moved into the lower, 2,400-square-foot unit with her son, Tanner, now 18, and started the enjoyable, if intensive, task of personalizing the space from scratch.

Furniture from her old home was out, and Darci, a designer and co-owner of beloved Yaletown shop The Cross, quickly went to work on a quietly glamorous new look. Today, her cottagey, European-flavoured home features an airy white backdrop layered with pretty white furniture, rustic stone and wood finishes, a few dark-toned pieces for contrast, and bright hits of Tiffany blue and silver — luxe, eye-catching accents she plays up even more at Christmas, when she fills the home with vintagey ornaments and embellishments to create an inviting winter wonderland. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 184](#)



Set up high on a table to make it a focal point, the flocked Christmas tree has the feel of a much larger version. Birch logs in the corner are an organic hit that echoes driftwood on the beach outside. **Bellder, Tomlin;** tree, David Hunter. **OPPOSITE:** The main floor is open-concept, but the living room feels cozy and cottagey, with a European look influenced by visits across the pond. The artwork over the custom fireplace is by local artist Andre Petterson. **Artwork, Bau-Xi Gallery; sofa, chairs, table, sconces, lamp, The Cross.**





TOP LEFT: A painted brick wall and arched wood breakfast bar give the kitchen a hacienda feel, which was influenced by time Darci spent in the U.S. southwest. Shelves at the bottom of the arches act as built-in footrests. **Cabinetry, concrete counters, Townline; fridge, Sub-Zero; stove, Viking; faucet, Cante; wall colour, Cloud White (CC-40), Benjamin Moore.**

TOP RIGHT: Designer Darci Ilich (pictured) is a co-owner of Yaletown decor shop The Cross. Frosty, snow-like flocking gives her Christmas tree more presence, which also means the tree doesn't require too many decorations.


LEFT: Darci incorporated feminine flourishes throughout the house, like these napkin rings. Embellishing touches like this are perfect for Christmas. The blue-patterned linens echo the decor's Tiffany-blue motif — and she plays up this colour in her holiday decorating. **Napkin ring, The Cross.**

OPPOSITE: Despite her penchant for white, Darci chose an intimate round dining table in dark hardwood; it ties in with the dark window frames and kitchen cabinets. Marble flooring was chosen for its easy upkeep; Darci uses the beach year-round, so sand is ever-present. **STL Athens marble tile, Tivoli Tile; table, chairs, chandelier, The Cross.**



ABOVE AND LEFT: Darci left her bedroom walls bare to let the pretty accessories shine. Raffia upholstery gives the antique headboard an updated look. **Bed, linens, lights, garland, The Cross.** TOP RIGHT: A pretty little tablescape approximates a winter scene. **RIGHT:** Holiday touches are an intriguing mix of natural and glamorous. **BOTTOM LEFT:** This faux "tree stump" is really a white-painted planter flipped upside down. A squirrel is a fitting accent. **BELOW:** Rather than use layers of whites in her bedroom, Darci played with various tones of turquoise blue here. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A bathroom nook holds a reproduction picture frame filled with antique European documents. **Documents, frame, The Cross.**





Darci keeps her seasonal floral accents understated. A stone urn filled with a potted plant is a bold, stately alternative to a bouquet. Ornaments hung from the chandelier add holiday cheer. The large windows fill the open-concept space with natural light. Their dark frames, which have an old-world industrial look, articulate them nicely. Table, chandelier, urn, *The Grass*.





TOP LEFT: The all-natural look of the outside of the stuccoed, contemporary Mediterranean-style duplex is a nice contrast to the glittery blue and white inside. (Darci rents out its second unit.) **Builder, Townline.**

TOP RIGHT: This well-worn vintage armoire tucked into a corner of the living room is a key character piece in the space — and offers an interesting display alternative to a mantel. It houses favourite antique picture frames, books and knickknacks — and at Christmas, decorations and stockings — creating an intriguing foil to the clean-lined furnishings. Even the sparkly sconces over the mantel are trimmed for the holidays.

**Armoire, pouf, stockings, The Cross.** LEFT: Tiny ornaments on the tree reiterate Darci's signature Tiffany blue-on-white palette. **Tree, David Hunter.** OPPOSITE: Outfitted with luxe pillows and throws, the tufted sofa is an inviting perch. Darci is a fan of the "taxidermy" look: at Christmas, she frames this carved stag's head with a mercury-glass wreath. **Sideboard, wreath, stag, The Cross.**

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