

# Celebrate your senses as you design for the holidays

By Sharon Bottner

**T**ime and again clients tell me how stressful the holidays are for them. Everything seems to be rushed. Everyone is busy. Parties and social commitments abound.

There's shopping and wrapping and planning and cooking to do, and "to do" lists seem endless. Yet the peace and comfort of our homes can provide an oasis in the holiday whirlwind surrounding us. And celebrating our five human senses (sight, sound, smell, taste and touch) holds one key to more fully enjoying the holiday season as well

as to our overall sense of well-being.

Interior design traditionally appeals to our sense of sight. We certainly want our homes to be beautiful, not only during holiday time, but throughout the year. Small touches can make a big impact in achieving this desire. Soothing color choices on walls, accent throws and pillows, floral arrangements, candles, bedding, linens, and furniture can both evoke a sense of calm and provide a feeling of warmth and welcome. Soft or accent lighting during this dark time of year can be used to brighten not only our spaces but our moods. Flickering candles, crackling fires, framed photos of people and pets we love can enhance our



Cinnamon sticks wrapped in holiday ribbon THINKSTOCK.COM

comfort and sense of happiness. And though we annually pull out many decorations and holiday décor, making every effort to keep our homes free of excessive clutter and overcrowding can promote a sense of peace and joy.

The sounds in our home can also enhance holiday

time. Certain décor elements promote a feeling of tranquility. Consider a gently bubbling indoor water fountain. Listen to your choice of soothing music and banish repetitive holiday jingles that frazzle your nerves. Hang wind chimes outside your window or doorway for unexpected, gentle and

subtle sounds. And don't forget to step outside of your home to satisfy this sense. Listen to the crackle of drying leaves underfoot, or to the tranquility of a fresh blanket of snow.

Wonderful scents in our homes can quickly improve our moods and outlooks during the holidays. In addition to the nostalgic aromas of cooking and baking favorite holiday recipes, the use of scented candles, fragrant oils, and fresh flowers or bulbs will stimulate this powerful sense. Consider filling your home with subtle scents that you personally associate with a happy childhood memory or positive life experience, and watch it work wonders with your mood.

SEE BOTTNER, PAGE 3



*Holiday Open House*



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*Friday, November 7th, 6-8pm*  
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