

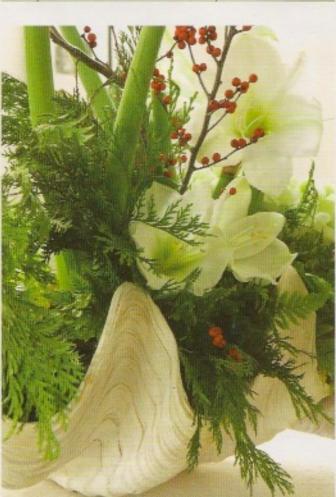


weathered stone are year round accessories that also fit nicely with a holiday look at the Barfield house. The mass wreath over the Imestone fireplace can be reused year after year. All is Calm A Decatur family celebrates the holidays with understated elegance.









NIRIE BARFIELD HAS NOTHING AGAINST big red bows or holiday ornaments in psychedelic colors, but they're just not her style. Ever since college, she's preferred neutrals. For her, furnishings, accessories, and art in soft tones of cream, white, and taupe are a perfect backdrop for holiday decorating that's more about nature than lots of bling.

"I'm always looking for contrast," says Barfield, who loves the look of crisp green against her white furnishings.

This immigration lawyer and mother of two leads a busy life, making a tranquil house all the more necessary. She and her husband Scott were attracted to the 1920s Tudor-style cottage in Decatur



Nike talked Boowoods Gardens & Gifts into selling the marble-topped table, above, which was not for sale. "Some pieces just speak to me," she says. "I joke that I'm like the "furniture whisperer." Above left, Nike displays a mismatched collection of paper buildings and trees on a platter.



Deck the Halls "I'm always looking for contrast," says Nikie, who accents her home with more than a hundred paperwhites.

"Some pieces just speak to me," Nikie says. "I joke that I'm like the 'furniture whisperer."

because of its architectural charms, the diamond-pane windows, arched doorways, and a limestone fireplace. Once sons Everest and Rainier came along, the Barfields built a two-story addition off the back and filled it with more of Nikie's favorite things: slip-covered furniture, classic antiques, and her trademark plants. ("I'm obsessed with planters and plants," Nikie confesses.)

Her white slip-covered furniture often leads to questions, since she has two boys. Nikie insists that, if anything, she's more on top of smudges and stains because she can see them against the white, then wash them immediately.

Juniper garlands and more than a hundred paper white plants placed in antique containers provide the backdrop for Christmas decorating at the Barfield house. For the tree in the family room, Nikie selected ornaments in silvery tones. "I try to pick things that are timeless," she says, going for stars and snowflakes, as well as vintage-looking balls. Birds made of silver or weathered stone are year-round accessories that also fit nicely with a holiday look that is as peaceful as it is charming. H



