



**ALL THROUGH THE HOUSE**

Both pages: Designer Merien Daka decorates her home for the holidays pretty much all in one day, and usually before Thanksgiving.

# Glisten and Glow

Interior designer Merien Daka pulls out all the Christmastime stops when decorating (and entertaining) for the season

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**M**erien Daka adores elegance. Her penchant for all things bright and shiny, sumptuous bouquets, and crystal glassware is especially apparent come the holidays. “I start decorating before Thanksgiving and pretty much do it all in one day,” says Daka, who owns Merien Daka Design Group in Birmingham. With help from her husband, Kristjan, the interior designer assembles and then festoons her faux 10-foot Christmas tree with glittery, gleaming baubles; champagne-colored ribbon; and lots of lights. She also adds her beautiful faux garland (from Balsam Hill) to many areas of her home.



## DESIGNS ON

"I bubble-wrap each ornament after Christmas, so it's an all-day project decorating and then putting everything away when it's time," says Daka, who purchased most of her ornaments at the Home Interior Warehouse in Walled Lake and Balsam Hill. She and her husband celebrate Christmas Eve at their Macomb home with their large family. "I love to cook, so we'll have everything from lamb and branzino (fish) to potatoes, salads, a fruit tree, and Albanian desserts," she says. Those sweet treats include tulumba, a fried pastry, and trilece, a three-milk cake. After savoring the feast, Daka says, "We open all the gifts at midnight on Christmas Eve."

She and her family and their chill pitbull, Elsa, like to gather around the tree amidst a blazing fire, white candles, filled Christmas stockings, and holiday-themed florals in rich hues. "I love peonies — I usually get vases and arrangements from fleurdetroit," she says, adding that she replaces flowers on her family room coffee table about every other week. "I like the smell of fresh flowers during the holidays," she says.

Wintry pillows also adorn Daka's holiday spaces. "I bring in the plaids every year," she says. Under the tree, meanwhile, it's all about coordination — because, well, Daka is a designer, after all. "I usually grab three different wrapping papers and just use those three. They all complement each other."

As for getting into the spirit, a favorite spirit is champagne. Daka fills gorgeous champagne flutes with champagne and cranberries (to give the beverage a festive pink tone) and tops the drinks with rosemary sprigs — super Christmas-y!

Another tip the design maestro likes to share: "More is more," she says with a laugh. "I like to fill it up!"

**MORE INFORMATION:** [meriendakadesigngroup.com](http://meriendakadesigngroup.com) ♦

**BEJWELED**  
Merien Daka's Christmas tree brims with ornaments from Home Interior Warehouse and Balsam Hill.



**FIRESIDE FINERY**  
Merien Daka likes to hang stockings for visiting family, and always creates a gorgeous holiday ambience for friends and family.