

December 2016

FROM YOUR LOCAL REAL ESTATE EXPERT



TIPS FOR HANGING HOLIDAY LIGHTS

The prep work

1. Measure and map out a general plan to determine how many strings of lights your home requires.
2. Choose a size and wattage that fits your needs. Mini-lights are less expensive and use less energy. Larger C7 or C9 lights are more durable and remain lit even if one bulb dies.
3. Test for any dead bulbs to ensure your lights work properly.
4. Plug your extension cords into a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). Be sure the total wattage of your lights doesn't exceed the capacity of your outlet.
5. Install hooks and clips where you'll thread your lights.

Creating your display

1. Mix up your light display to highlight the architectural features of your home. Complement your focal points by hanging additional lights along paths, doors, windows and around trees, planters and bushes.
2. Space your lights a few inches apart so they don't blend into each other. This also saves you money as you'll use a smaller number of lights.
3. Hook your lights up to an automatic timer so they turn on when the sun dips and switch off at dawn.

Happy holidays!

DATES TO REMEMBER

Hanukkah – Dec. 24-Jan. 1

Christmas Eve – Dec. 24

Christmas – Dec. 25

Kwanzaa – Dec. 26-Jan. 1

New Year's Eve – Dec. 31

HOLIDAY EGGNOG

- 4 cups milk
 - 4 whole cloves
 - ½ tsp vanilla extract
 - 1 tsp ground cinnamon
 - 12 egg yolks
 - 1 ½ cups sugar
 - 2 ½ cups light rum
 - 4 cups light cream
 - 2 tsp vanilla extract
 - ½ tsp ground nutmeg
1. Combine milk, cloves, ½ tsp vanilla and cinnamon in a saucepan. Heat on the stove over the lowest setting for 5 minutes and slowly bring to a boil.
 2. In a large bowl, combine egg yolks and sugar. Whisk together until fluffy. Stir into the hot milk mixture slowly and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly for 3 minutes or until thick. Do not allow mixture to boil. Strain to remove cloves and let cool for an hour.
 3. Stir in rum, cream, 2 tsp vanilla and nutmeg. Refrigerate overnight.

MAINTENANCE TIP!

Use these tips to improve your curb appeal:

1. Use a power washer to clean the siding, clear out the cobwebs on the ceiling of your porch, wash fences and push the dirt off the driveway.
2. Remove leaves, debris and algae from ponds, water fountains or birdbaths. Clean any water filters.
3. Ensure your lawn sprinklers and any misters are in working order. If sprinklers and emitter heads are malfunctioning or you notice a dying patch of grass, have the system professionally repaired.
4. Bring color to your yard with flowerbeds and mulch. Use contrasting colors to make the flowerbeds pop: light mulch, dark plants or dark mulch, light plants.
5. When trees and shrubs get out of control, trim them into squares or spheres. Lay a sheet or tarp around the bush before you begin trimming so leaves can be easily picked up and thrown away.
6. A new welcome mat will personalize your front porch and make it more inviting.
7. Don't forget the backyard, especially if it can be viewed from the street.



YOUR HOLIDAY TRAVEL GUIDE

Whether you're visiting family or taking a holiday vacation, you'll need to travel smart to brave the holiday frenzy.

- ✓ Book flights and hotels in advance to snatch the best travel deals.
- ✓ Check the weather of your destination, and pack appropriately.
- ✓ Opt for flights that depart early in the morning or late at night to avoid the holiday crowds. An early morning departure also provides you with alternative flights during the day if yours is cancelled.
- ✓ Leave early to give yourself plenty of time to get to and through the airport traffic and security lines.
- ✓ Travel light and avoid checking luggage if you can. This expedites your airport time and ensures your luggage doesn't get lost.
- ✓ Don't carry wrapped gifts in your carry-on luggage as they may be inspected. Leave them unwrapped, or else you may have to check them in.
- ✓ Affix address tags on your luggage – just in case!
- ✓ Make sure all of your electronics, especially your phones, are fully charged before you leave. You may run into delays and want to fill in your family members.
- ✓ Bring snacks to ease waiting times.

Have a safe trip!