

White House Christmas – Shine, Give, Share

The theme for the White House Christmas 2011 is **Shine, Give, Share** - celebrating the countless ways we can lift up those around us, put our best self forward in the spirit of the season, spend time with friends and family, celebrate the joy of giving to others, and share our blessings with all.

Shine, Give, Share Décor – The theme translates to the holiday décor on several levels. There is the literal translation through the use of shiny elements – star motifs, quartz and metallics like copper, aluminum and mirrored paper. There is also a conceptual connection – we’re inviting visitors to give their thanks to members of our military, and have once again invited guest artists to share their talents working with the White House. This year’s décor also includes handmade decorations crafted from simple materials – paper, felt, and even recycled cans. These are projects that anyone can do at home using readily available materials that are inexpensive or free.

East Visitor Entrance – Decorated with silver garland and the Shine, Give, Share banner, the East Wing Lobby captures the warmth of the holidays and welcomes visitors from across our country.

East Landing – On the East Landing, the Gold Star Families Tree pays tribute to those who gave their lives in service to our Nation and to the families who continue to carry their proud legacy forward. Photos of these fallen heroes and messages from their loved ones honor their courageous service, and remind us of the great sacrifices made for our freedom. Visitors can write notes to servicemembers showing their thanks and visiting Gold Star Families will have the opportunity to inscribe a ceramic gold star with a personalized note to decorate the tree. Honoring Gold Star Families in this fashion was the First Lady’s idea, and the tree was decorated by Gold Star families who volunteered their time this holiday season.

East Garden Room – Bright jewel tones, playful paper trees, and colorful felt garland help set the scene for the charming topiary of the First Family’s dog in the East Garden Room. Bo can be found in almost every room, from large topiaries to small ornaments.

Vermeil Room – In the Vermeil Room, seasonal greenery trims the mantel and the gilded silver, for which the room is named, shines in the light from the trees in each window. The glowing warmth of this room reminds us of the hospitality and remarkable contributions of all our First Ladies, seven of whom are portrayed in the artwork adorning the walls.

Library – In the Library, a room filled with over 2,700 books, there is a display of replicated holiday cards, letters, and seasonal memorabilia dating back to the Eisenhower Administration.

China Room – The George W. Bush State China is displayed in the China Room, set for a wonderful holiday gathering in celebration of the time-honored tradition of sharing meals with our families and friends.

East Room – The East Room, the largest in the White House, has transformed into a wintery scene set with shimmering quartz ornaments and paper leaves decorate four Christmas trees. Since 1835, when President Andrew Jackson created an indoor winter wonderland for children—complete with a cotton ball snowball fight—the East Room has been part of the White House holiday tradition.

Green Room – Handcrafted, glittering trees made of recycled aluminum decorate the Green Room, drawing attention to the timeless elegance of this storied space. Throughout much of its existence, the Green Room has served as a parlor for teas and receptions. President Thomas Jefferson used it as a dining room, and President John Quincy Adams named it the Green Drawing Room in 1825 for the color of the draperies and upholsteries.

Blue Room – The centerpiece of the Blue Room is the official White House Christmas tree—a breathtaking 18-foot-6-inch balsam fir from Neshkoro, Wisconsin—which features holiday cards created by military children. Collected from United States military installations around the world, these thoughtful and poignant cards honor their parents serving in uniform. Medals, badges, and patches from all of the military branches are displayed on ornaments, historic military images are displayed with volunteer made pinecone frames and ribbons inspired by the Armed Forces colors represent the brave women and men who protect our Nation and defend our freedom.

Red Room – A lush arrangement of seasonal flowers, fruit, and foliage, set in a handmade cranberry-covered vase, continues the holiday tradition of including cranberries in the Red Room.

State Dining Room – In the State Dining Room, coral and tangerine beaded fruit, along with shimmering ruby ornaments on each of the trees, offer a feast for the eyes. Displayed on the eagle-pedestal side table, the White House gingerbread house has been a favorite holiday tradition since the 1960s. Weighing approximately 400 pounds, this accurate replica of the White House took about 2 months to make.

Entrance Hall and Cross Hall – The season's splendor surrounds the glittering Entrance Hall. Translucent crystal snowflakes drift from the ceiling and silver pinecone clusters dangle from the trees, bringing to mind the beauty of a winter landscape and encouraging us to give thanks for nature's simple inspirations.

Shine, Give, Share by the Numbers

Number of Holiday Volunteers from each State:

-Alabama: 4	-Missouri: 4
-Arizona: 1	-Nebraska: 2
-California: 12	-New Jersey: 3
-Colorado: 1	-New York: 5
-Connecticut: 2	-North Carolina: 3
-Delaware: 1	-Ohio: 2
-Florida: 5	-Oklahoma: 2
-Georgia: 2	-Oregon: 2
-Hawaii: 2	-Pennsylvania: 7
-Illinois: 14	-Rhode Island: 2
-Indiana: 2	-South Carolina: 1
-Iowa: 1	-Tennessee: 3
-Kansas: 2	-Texas: 7
-Kentucky: 5	-Vermont: 2
-Maine: 3	-Virginia: 12
-Maryland: 5	-Washington, D.C.: 2
-Massachusetts: 3	-West Virginia: 1
-Michigan: 5	-Wisconsin: 1
-Minnesota: 5	

TOTAL: 136

- ❖ The official White House Christmas Tree in the Blue Room is a breathtaking **18-foot-6-inch** balsam fir from Schroeder's Evergreens near Neshkoro, Wisconsin.
- ❖ **37 Christmas Trees** are inside the visitor tour route. This includes 30 natural trees and 7 made from paper, felt or aluminum.
- ❖ **5 Bo Topiaries** are featured throughout the tour route. The Bos are made from various materials like felt (**35 yards of wool felt** used), buttons (**318 buttons** in total), pom poms (**750 pom poms** used), candy (**12 marshmallows, 1911 pieces of licorice**), and even trash bags (**6,850 feet** worth)! Including Bo ornaments and other small Bos, you can find Bo in almost every room!
- ❖ **400 pounds** of gingerbread, white chocolate and marzipan make up the White House Gingerbread House.
- ❖ **Approximately 85,000 visitors** are expected to tour the White House in December 2011.

Holiday How To's

Create your own "East Garden Room" Mini-Tree

Materials:

8 1/2" x 11" text weight paper:
2 sheets of bright green
1 sheet of dark green
1 sheet of a bright, contrasting color
scissors
glue stick
pencil
1 toothpick (optional)

Assembly:

1. Download the half-circle template from: <http://WhiteHouse.gov/2011HolidayTour>, and cut it out from the bright green paper.
2. Apply glue to one edge and roll into a cone shape.
3. Using the leaf template, trace and cut 15 leaves in dark green, 10 in bright green and 4-6 in a bright color. Using the tree top template, trace and cut 5 tree tops in bright green and 1-2 in the bright color.
4. Starting from the bottom of the cone, glue the leaves around the cone layering the leaves as you go up. Our sample shows bright colors under a few leaves with edges rolled up a little for the color to peek through. Continue layering until you reach the top of the cone. On the top layer, use the tree top pieces to complete the tree.
5. Optional tree topper: Cut 2 small stars out of the colored paper of your choice. Glue stars on either side of a toothpick and poke through top of the tree.

Pumpkin Cake with Orange Cream Cheese Frosting

A recipe from the White House Pastry Kitchen

Cake

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon nutmeg
3/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1 1/4 cups dark brown sugar
4 eggs
3/4 cup vegetable oil
7 ounces of pumpkin puree (either homemade or from a can)
3/4 cup whole milk, warmed

Pre-heat the oven to 340° Fahrenheit.

Sift the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, ground ginger, baking soda, nutmeg, and ground cloves into a large bowl. Put this aside. Whisk together brown sugar and eggs with a mixer. Beat in the vegetable oil and then the pumpkin puree. Add the dry ingredients mixture alternating with the whole milk in three parts. Mix well and scrape the sides and bottom of bowl between each part. Grease and flour bundt pan. Bake for about one hour. Let the cake cool in the pan and then turn out onto a cooling rack. For the finishing touch, pour the orange cream cheese icing over the top of the cooled bundt cake. Makes one cake from a 2 quart bundt pan

Frosting

1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon orange zest
1 vanilla bean or 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
6 ounces butter, softened
2 tablespoons heavy cream
1 pound cream cheese, room temperature
Pinch of salt
½ cup fresh squeezed orange juice, strained

Place cream cheese and confectioners' sugar in bowl and use a mixer until it becomes a smooth cream. If you are using a standing mixer, use the paddle attachment for the best results. Add the softened butter to the bowl. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a plastic spatula and then add the orange zest, vanilla bean or extract, heavy cream, pinch of salt and orange juice. Set the frosting aside until you are ready to pour over cake.