

# Countdown to Christmas



This week we had our annual neighborhood board holiday party. Nothing like having guests to motivate you to get things done! Unfortunately, I failed to take any great pictures, as I was



too busy setting everything up. Photos taken in natural light are the best and of course, these were done in the evening.

In addition to a sampling of hors d'oeuvres and desserts, I served a light supper of turkey chili (see recipe [here](#)) and homemade cranberry/cherry walnut sourdough bread. Even though it was a crisp evening, the back terrace and the full moon provided the perfect backdrop for the festivities.















The house is almost completely decorated. I keep adding things as I go, but I am happy with what we did this year.





View from master bedroom terrace overlooking the pool house at midnight with a full moon

Each year we send out Christmas cards and my deadline is to get them in the mail no later than December 15th. The cards arrived yesterday from [Minted](#) late in the day so guess what I am doing this weekend. This is the first year we had Minted put the addresses on the envelopes. I kept an updated address

spreadsheet this year and I am happy we went to the additional expense to have them do the addressing.



Making a gingerbread house last year for the first time was such fun! The goal is to make another this week. Hoping for successful results!





Here are some photos of the holiday decorations around the house. Every year I always hope to do a video tour but that never seems to happen!





Instead of wrapping light strands in the fresh garland on the bannister, I used remote controlled candles on each step.





The living room mantle, like the dining room, has a bit of a tree theme. The challenge with this mantle is the depth~~garland alone tends to look a bit wimpy. I added faux red berries and greens to beef it up.





The homemade stockings are typically stretched out along the mantle. This year I gathered them to one side, which I like better.





Pillows from Pottery Barn and Ikea dress up the living room sofa.









The front entrance is my husband's project as he puts up the numerous trees that line the entry.









Battery operated candles are in each window, something my mother would do every year at our home in Connecticut.





This next week will be last minute shopping, baking cookies, making my gingerbread house, and creating a Christmas dinner menu. It's a bit difficult not to get swept up into the anxiety of the holidays. The magic of Christmas happens every year and I keep assuring myself that it will all come together and just B-R-E-A-T-H-E.



Happy Saturday!

*Mary*