

Simplifying Christmas



My Christmas painting from 2017

I don't know about you, but I am STILL cleaning up after Thanksgiving. It was a wonderful day, especially with the weather being moody and overcast.

If you are looking for a cocktail (or can be made without

alcohol) for Christmas, this one is certainly the right color! I am not a fan of anything too sweet, and these Cranberry Bourbon Sours were tart and refreshing. Click [here](#) for the recipe from Half Baked Harvest. We made a pitcher of them this week which was perfect for drop-in guests.



One of our family holiday traditions is collectively selecting a cake from Tessa Huff's book [Layered](#) and then baking it. The Bittersweet Chocolate Orange Spice Cake was not as labor intensive as some of the other cakes we've made, but the flavors were rich and perfect for the season. Sprinkled with salt and decorated with kumquats from our tree, made this 3 layer cake even more attractive.



Now we are onto Christmas. Can you believe it is 25 days away? I woke up in the middle of the night a bit worried about getting everything accomplished-our Christmas card, my annual Christmas painting, decorating the house, entertaining~~the thought of it all swirling around in my head. I came to the conclusion at some early hour in the morning that maybe this

is the year to just simplify it all.



I know many bloggers have had Christmas up since Halloween, but I am a bit of a traditionalist and remember the days when the Christmas season officially began the day after Thanksgiving.

The downside to waiting is the rush to get it all done. However, I am now debating whether I truly need to build the glitter village and the unpack the numerous snow globes.



Perhaps this is the year to just decorate with fresh greens and a few traditional items like our Christmas art. I am spending this weekend getting the house back in order and then re-thinking a new way to decorate for Christmas. Maybe less is more?



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Bella Terra



However, it ALL does comes together somehow and that is the magic of the holidays. The goal is to welcome it with a jolly spirit and not sweat the small stuff. Remember to do things that “spark joy”

Wishing you a wonderful weekend. I hope your Thanksgiving was filled with family and love.

Mary