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## 26 REASONS TO love the season {Utah's holiday best from A to Z }

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Holding her dog Winston, homeowner Susan Loveridge welcomes guests at the front door of her elegant home.



# Deck the halls

For Salt Lake resident Susan Loveridge, when it comes to hosting for the holidays, there's no place like home

TOP: The family room serves as party central for Loveridge's spur-of-the-moment holiday get-togethers. A painting of a bowl of cherries inspired her use of red as an accent color on the tree and throughout the room.

RIGHT: Winston and Bentley, Loveridge's Italian greyhounds, pose in front of the living room fireplace.

SUSAN LOVERIDGE ADORES HER home. At no time is this more evident than during the holidays. So when the chance to deck the halls of her chic 1920s Salt Lake City abode

comes around every year, she wastes no time getting started. No sooner has the last slice of Thanksgiving pie been served than she is already thinking about the tree she will begin decorating the very next day. "The season is short enough as it is," says Loveridge. "I don't want to lose any time enjoying it."

As a first vice president for Merrill Lynch, Loveridge is very busy managing wealth for deep-pocketed clients. Making and moving money for others comes with its fair share of stress, but Loveridge shows no signs of strain. She credits this, in large part, to her home. Throughout the year, and particularly the





**"I like my house most when I am sharing it with friends."**

holidays, her dwelling serves as a special sanctuary where she savors her time spent with her two Italian greyhounds, Winston and Bentley, as well as her cherished friends and family.

Readying her home for the season consists of a number of traditions. To begin, Loveridge plans a new look for her tree each Christmas. "I love doing a different tree every year," she says. "It's kind of my thing." This year, it boasts hundreds of sparkling white lights, shimmering gold and red ornaments and bright crimson bows. Loveridge also turns her mudroom into a wrapping room, in which she relishes dressing presents in special papers, elegant ribbons and festive tags with as much care as she gives to selecting the gifts they adorn. "It really means a lot to people when they see the time you put into the wrapping," she says. Loveridge spends the remainder of her time planning the parties she'll host during the season. Wreaths on the doors, candles on the mantels and specially prepared foods set the stage for celebrations that include traditional get-togethers, as well as spur-of-the-moment soirees.

"Every year, my dearest friend Elaine, along with her husband and three boys, stay with me over Christmas," says Loveridge. "For over a week, we watch movies, fix foods and giggle a lot." She also hosts a traditional Christmas Eve dinner at which friends and family, including her 85-year-old father, spend the evening in celebration. The more spontaneous affairs are no less special.

On this icy, mid-December night, Loveridge has invited her good friend, and interior designer, Gregg

TOP LEFT: Loveridge chose red, brown and gold gift wrap to match her décor this holiday season.

BOTTOM LEFT: Pine boughs, red ornaments and a group of pillar candles poised on stands adorn the family room's mantel. Loveridge lights the candles as she prepares for her guests' arrival.

TOP RIGHT: Every holiday season, Loveridge transforms her mudroom into a wrapping room in which she can dress each gift in the year's themed papers and ribbons.



A table staged with candy-filled glass containers creates a cheery focal point in the family room.



A festive buffet of hors d'oeuvres and libations includes a cranberry-covered cheese ball, a chocolate wreath and a chilled bottle of bubbly.



TOP LEFT: Guests Rebecca Moeai, and Steve and Jessica St. Thomas enjoy the warmth and beauty of Loveridge's home.

TOP RIGHT: Loveridge serves a tray of the party's festive cocktail, a pomegranate martini.

Hodson, his associate Jessica St. Thomas and her husband, Steve, along with other friends, to her home for a casual evening in front of the fire. Hodson directed the redo of Loveridge's Federal Heights haven from the moment she purchased it in 2005. Now he relishes the times they enjoy its sophisticated, swanky styling together. From the moment Loveridge opens the door donning a stole and cradling a greyhound in her arms, her easygoing elegance is apparent. "Come on in," she says, giving each of her guests a generous hug.

Inside her home, candles flicker while the fragrance of festive fare and jazzy holiday tunes fill the air. "I like the upbeat standards. I'm more of a 'Let it Snow' than an 'O Come All Ye Faithful' kind of gal," Loveridge says with a laugh. The evening's deliciously displayed spread includes Loveridge's homemade chocolate wreath, cranberry-covered cheese balls and the makings for the evening's cocktail—pomegranate martinis. "Every year I try something new," she says as she theatrically shakes a drink for Hodson. "Susan likes a little bit of drama," remarks the designer. "You'd better believe it. There's nothing wrong with a little va-va-voom," Loveridge sasses back as she finishes the cocktail with a swirl of lime.

As the evening progresses, the guests gather around the fire, enjoying each other's company in the warmth of Loveridge's much-loved abode. "This is perfect," says the hostess. "I like my house most when I am sharing it with friends. The more at home they feel, the more I enjoy it." As if on cue, the guests toast their hostess with a heartfelt "Cheers!" **SL**



## Holiday spirits

### Tasty ways to toast the season

#### COCKTAIL **Pomegranate Martini**

Combine 2 ounces of citrus-flavored vodka, ½ ounce of Cointreau, 1 ounce of pomegranate juice and 1 ounce of fresh-squeezed orange juice in a cocktail shaker. Shake together with ice. Strain into a chilled martini glass. Garnish with pomegranate seeds and a zest of lime.

#### MOCKTAIL **Pomegranate Fizz**

Combine 4 ounces of chilled ginger ale or ginger beer and 1 ounce of pomegranate syrup in a cocktail shaker. Shake over cracked ice. Strain into an ice-filled glass and garnish with pomegranate seeds and a slice of lime.