

JOY to ALL

HOLIDAYS AT THE WHITE HOUSE 2012





Thank you for visiting the White House. Our family is so pleased you could join us as we take time to share in the many joys of the holiday season. This year at the White House, we celebrate the traditional holiday festivities that fill our hearts with warmth and cheer.

Each year, the holidays remind us of the many blessings we experience over the course of our lives, from the simple pleasures of laughing and sharing our meals with friends and family to the fulfillment that comes from giving back and serving others. May we all carry forth the spirit of the season and take time to lift up others in our homes and communities—not only during this special time, but also throughout the year.

We hope the decorations and time-honored traditions you see in the White House bring you the same joy they bring our family. We send our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones for peace and happiness in the New Year.

 Michelle Obama

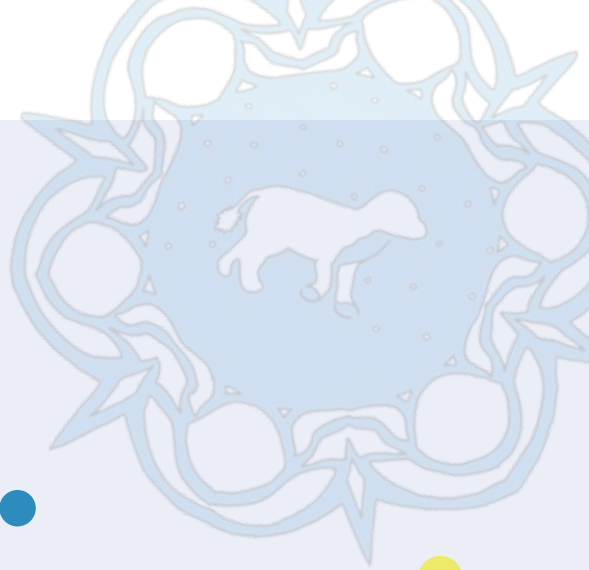


EAST VISITOR ENTRANCE AND LANDING

The White House, or as it is often known, the People's House, is a place where visitors from all across our country and around the world can come together to share in the storied history of the United States of America.

The entrance to the East Wing of the White House celebrates the joy of welcoming guests into the home. Wreaths covered with festive snowflakes line the walkway to the visitors' entrance, while old-fashioned lanterns and flickering candles light the way to the threshold of the Residence.

The East Landing pays tribute to our Armed Forces and their families. Wreaths crafted with red, white, and blue yarn adorn the walls, and a Christmas tree decorated with festive ornaments completes the space. Every day, we are grateful for the courageous service of our troops, veterans, and their families, and in the spirit of the season, we take time to honor their countless contributions to our Nation. Operation Honor Cards are displayed, and we invite you to take the time to fill out a card and pledge to serve your community in honor of our military families, service members, and veterans. You can also write a note of thanks to these brave men and women, and we welcome you to send the spirit and joy of the holidays to those who sacrifice so much for our country.



EAST GARDEN ROOM

The East Garden Room is a children's wonderland! The room is filled with vibrant colors and wreaths made of gingerbread. A life-size replica of Bo, the First Family's Portuguese water dog, is the centerpiece of the room, and handmade "Boflakes" hang from the trees.

THE LIBRARY

The Library is decorated in classic red and green tones. On display are replicas of holiday cards and notes from past Administrations. Sending warm tidings in the form of holiday cards is a long-standing American tradition—one our past Presidents and First Families have carried forward with their own distinct touches. Today, the Library is home to 2,700 books, but prior to a renovation in 1935, the room served as a laundry room and a gentlemen's waiting room.



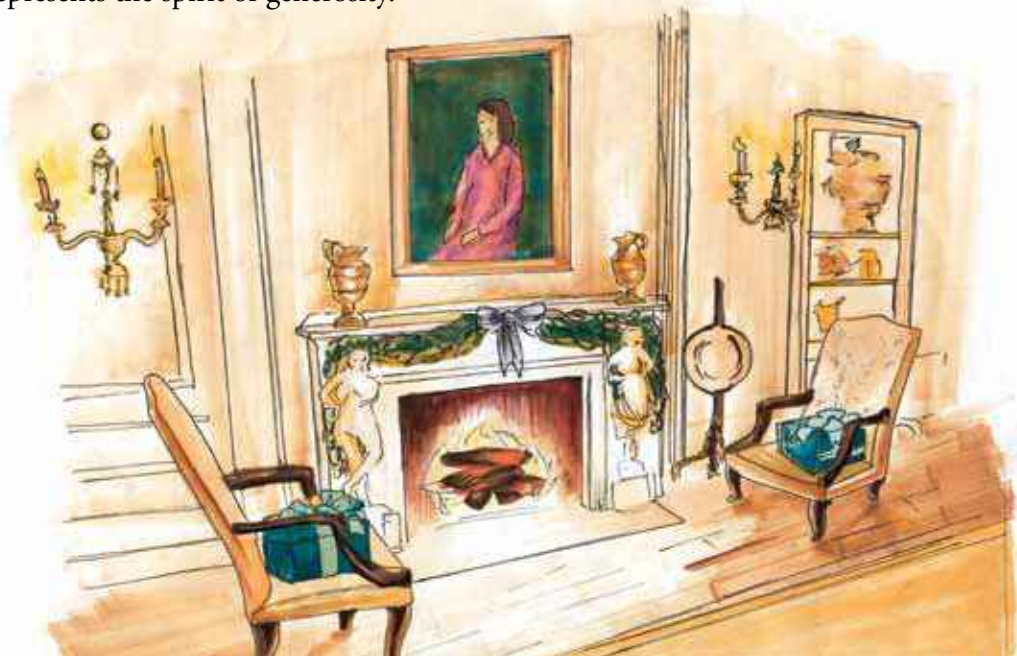
CHINA ROOM

In the China Room, the Truman China is set to illustrate the joy of families sitting down to enjoy a holiday dinner. This set was selected by First Lady Bess Truman in 1951 and is the first state china service to feature the Presidential Coat of Arms as redesigned by President Harry Truman in 1945. Following the end of World War II, President Truman issued an Executive Order to standardize the Presidential Seal. The Coat of Arms was modified so that the eagle faces to its right, the direction of honor, and also toward the olive branch, a symbol of peace, rather than toward the arrows which represent war.



VERMEIL ROOM

The timeless elegance and grace of our Nation's past First Ladies can be felt in the Vermeil Room, where we pause to celebrate the joy of giving. Lovely presents large and small, wrapped with care, remind us of the fulfillment we experience when we give of ourselves to others around us. Given to the White House by philanthropist Margaret Thompson Biddle in 1958, the 1,575-piece vermeil silver collection represents the spirit of generosity.





EAST ROOM

Decorations evoking our country's proud artistic heritage festoon the East Room, where we take time to marvel at the joy of American folk art. Over the course of our history, folk artisans have delighted Americans young and old with the scenes and stories depicted in their work. This year, creative traditions central to our cultural identity are represented in every corner of this historic space—from the handcrafted wooden ornaments on each of the trees to antique paintings and needlework on display.

GREEN ROOM

In the Green Room, wintertime's serene splendor surrounds us as we reflect on the joy of the winter garden. Miniature terrariums dangle from the trees and remind us of the beauty of the outdoors. President Theodore Roosevelt—one of our Nation's most ardent and effective conservationists—would not allow trees to be cut down for use in the White House during the holidays. Not to be deterred, his vivacious children snuck a small tree into the house, which they secretly decorated with twinkling white lights with the help of a staff electrician. Imagine President Roosevelt's surprise on Christmas morning when the tree was finally revealed!



BLUE ROOM

The history of our Nation has been shaped by the brave men and women who have devoted themselves to protecting our country. The troops, veterans, and military families who serve our country with pride represent what is best about America, and this holiday season, the Blue Room pays tribute to their courageous service.

By contributing ornaments they decorated themselves, military children living on U.S. Military Bases all over the world helped trim the official White House Christmas tree—an enchanting 18-foot-6-inch Fraser Fir from Jefferson, North Carolina. These one-of-a-kind ornaments honor their parents' commitment to service.

As a Nation, we must serve these brave members of our American family, as well as they have served this country. To join in the spirit of service and connect with members of our armed forces, veterans, and their families in your community, please visit:

WWW.JOININGFORCES.GOV







RED ROOM

In the early 19th century, First Lady Dolley Madison used this room to receive visitors during her famous Wednesday-evening receptions. At that time, the fabrics throughout the room were a bright sunflower yellow; in fact, the famous red color scheme was not adopted until 1845.

In honor of its current red hue, the room is customarily decorated with cranberries—and the tradition continues this year with a cranberry, pepperberry, and billy ball flower-covered vase holding a festive floral arrangement. As a tribute to Mrs. Dolley Madison and its former golden shade, lemon topiaries are on display to provide cheerful pops of yellow throughout the room. Christmas trees frame the space and a colorful garland of crimson cranberries and sunny lemons adorns the mantel.



STATE DINING ROOM

The State Dining Room—a site for official dinners and diplomatic receptions—is filled with vibrant holiday tones. The 300-pound gingerbread house on display is a favorite for children and parents alike and has been a popular holiday ritual at the White House since the 1960s. Brightly colored stained glass covers the bay windows, and seasonal garland frames George P. A. Healy's famous portrait of President Abraham Lincoln.



GINGER CRINKLES

A recipe from the White House Pastry Kitchen

8 oz. (2 sticks) butter, room temperature

1 ½ cups packed brown sugar

2 whole eggs

⅓ cup molasses

2 tsp fresh ginger, grated

3 cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp baking soda

pinch of salt

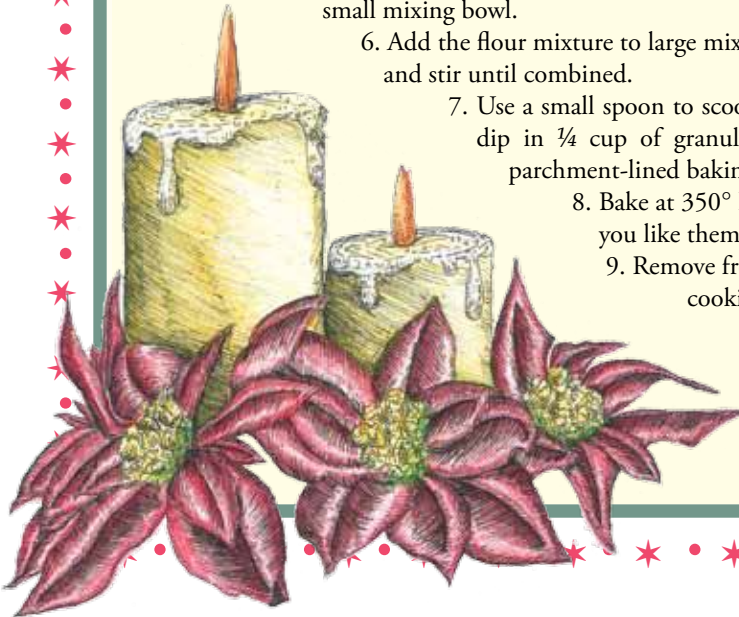
1 tsp dried ginger

1 tsp cinnamon

¼ cup granulated sugar (for dipping)

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Beat butter and brown sugar in large mixing bowl until creamy.
3. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
4. Add molasses and fresh ginger.
5. Combine flour, baking soda, ground ginger, cinnamon, and salt in a small mixing bowl.
6. Add the flour mixture to large mixing bowl, and stir until combined.
7. Use a small spoon to scoop cookies into small balls, dip in ¼ cup of granulated sugar, and place on parchment-lined baking sheet sugar side up.
8. Bake at 350° F for 12 minutes, or less if you like them chewy.
9. Remove from oven and allow cookies to rest for 2 minutes before removing from cookie sheet.

Yields 30-36 cookies.



ENTRANCE HALL AND CROSS HALL

The North Entrance and Cross Hall create a warm atmosphere for White House visitors. Garland cascades down the Grand Staircase, greenery wraps the columns, and festive wreaths cover the windows overlooking Pennsylvania Avenue. Four trees are decorated with a collection of iconic ornaments that best represent the holiday legacies of former First Ladies.

This space is designed to celebrate and pay tribute to past White House holidays and the rich heritage of celebrations, traditions, and styles that have evolved over the years. The custom of selecting an official holiday theme began in the 1960s, when First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy created a Nutcracker-themed Christmas for her daughter, Caroline. The tradition has been honored for over 50 years with such themes as Mrs. Lady Bird Johnson's "Early Americana," Mrs. Patricia Nixon's "Season of Gold," Mrs. Betty Ford's "Homespun Christmas," Mrs. Rosalynn Carter's "Classic American Christmas," Mrs. Nancy Reagan's "Old Fashioned Christmas," Mrs. Barbara Bush's "Christmas in Storyland," Mrs. Hillary Clinton's "Winter Wonderland," and Mrs. Laura Bush's "Red, White, and Blue Christmas."



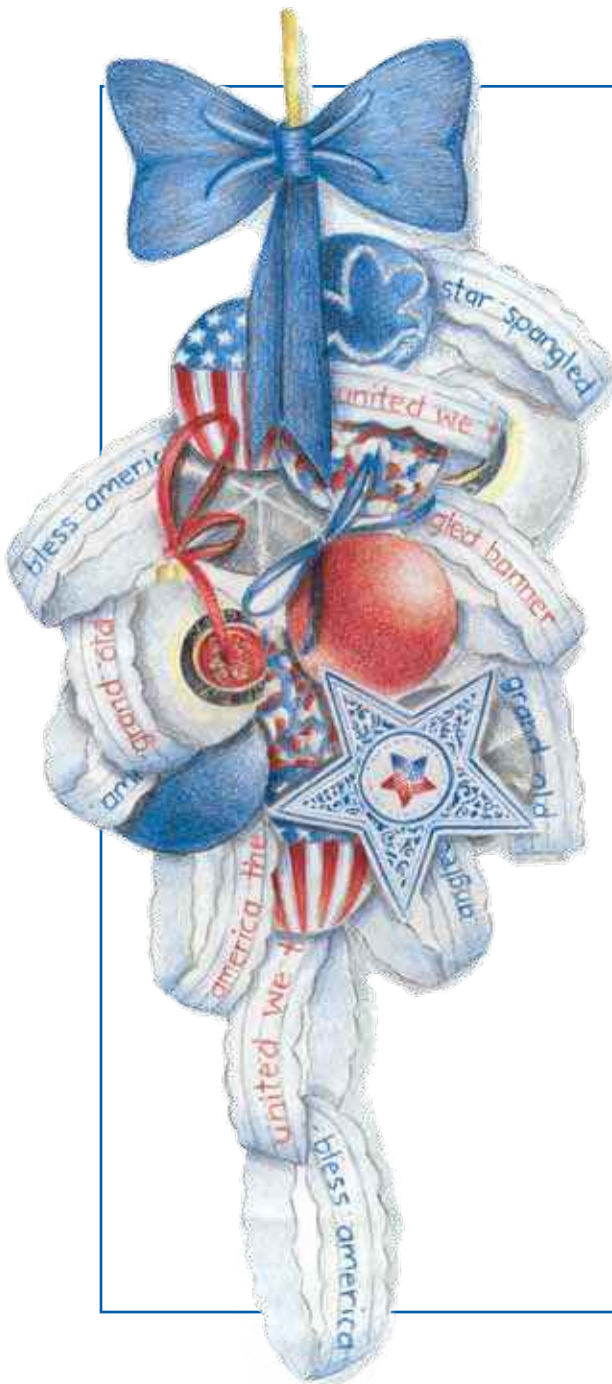
HOW TO MAKE A SNOW GLOBE

Materials:

Jar with Screw-top Lid Oil-based Enamel Paint
Distilled Water Paint Brush
Sandpaper Clear-drying Epoxy
Glycerin Holiday Figurines of your choice
Glitter

1. Paint the lid a seasonal color.
2. Sand the inside of the lid until the surface is rough.
3. With Clear-drying Epoxy, glue the figurine(s) inside the lid and let dry.
4. Fill the jar almost to the top with distilled water, add a pinch of glitter and a dash of glycerin to keep the glitter from falling too fast.
5. Screw on the lid tightly. Turn the jar over and back again.....ENJOY!





IN APPRECIATION

The White House is grateful to the Executive Residence staff, *agencyEA*, and the many volunteers from across our country for preparing and decorating the White House this holiday season. We greatly appreciate all of the hard work of the students from the Duke Ellington School for the Arts who created the artwork for this holiday booklet. The featured illustrations were drawn by Diona Boler, Rhythm Bowers, Evelyn Cahall, Darius Moreno Dozier, Zoe Gatti, Massiel Estefany Gonzalez, Adela Guterrez, Glenda Gutierrez, and Nathaniel Oliver.

