SEASON OF GOODWILL

Christmas lasts all year round in Lucy Greaves’ elegant country home because it doubles up as the headquarters for an annual charity event she organises.

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Lucy’s granddaughter Cleofe and daughter-in-law Lauren enjoy the wintry scene in the garden.
Lucy Greaves loves Christmas; it’s her favourite time of year. Christmas shopping is her year-round pursuit.

“It’s not that she’s a crazy Christmas lady – far from it – but for the past 30 years Lucy has mastered the tradition of Christmas shopping. She has a keen eye for interior design and a particularly excellent eye for interior design and a particularly excellent eye for antique treasures.

Lucy started the event in her previous home, and soon it became an extension of her sourcing for unique products and makers for the fair. It was a huge success, with many visitors coming to see how they appealed to friends and family before booking them as a source of advice.

How does that impact on this very traditional country estate home? With accessories from so many different makers, and furniture and furnishings from salerooms and antiques markets, there’s a danger the overall look could be somewhat eclectic, even disparate. However, the impression is calm and harmonious – partly due to the neutral backdrop of warm white walls that Lucy favours, creating a blank canvas to which she can add new cushions and fabrics to refresh the look. She has an excellent eye for interior design and a particularly elegant style. She calls it ‘modern classic – quite traditional but with a contemporary angle,’ adding, ‘I try not to have too much. I’ve often bought things from the fair, or tried things out here to see how they appealed to friends and family before booking them as a source of advice. I try not to have too much. I’ve often bought things from the fair, or tried things out here to see how they appealed to friends and family before booking them as sources of advice.’

When the gates close on this year’s fair, Lucy will take a deep breath and start planning her own family’s Christmas. ‘We’ll have my daughter-in-law Lauren’s family here from Canada, with her three siblings and their families, her parents, our four boys and their partners, and our two grandchildren,’ she says. ‘But I love having the family around me, I adore entertaining and I love Christmas. This house is perfect for all those things.’ And, of course, it won’t be long before Lucy is back in Christmas mode and starting to make choices about the stalls for 2019’s fair.
The kitchen is exactly as it was when Richard and Lucy moved into the house, with its huge Aga set into the inglenook. The old table came from Stable Antiques, with chairs from Lucy’s parents, and the stool from Richard’s family. Seasonal treats supplied by Daylesford.

Simple cabinetry in teal provides a good contrast with the rustic floor; for similar units, try Thomas & Thomas. Fired Earth’s Turkish Blue paint is a similar shade and the company’s Lubelska brick flooring would give a similar look. For granite worktops and splashbacks, try Gerald Culliford. Many of the accessories here were bought at The Christmas Fair, including the tall jug, from Made by Hands.
As soon as the festive settings are cleared away, Lucy covers the long table with applications from would-be stallholders for the next Christmas Fair. She received 700 applications from would-be stallholders for 200 places last year, but always leaves a few empty slots to accommodate original products that crop up at the last minute. Lucy added two D-ends to the antique drop-leaf table to fill the generous dining room, both the table and sideboard are from Stable Antiques, and the two lamps are from India Jane. The painting on the right is of Richard’s great-grandfather, on the left is one of Lucy’s ancestors.

Above: Lucy and grandson Finley enjoy the fairy lights in the hall, the curtains were made by Josephine Rossi with a chenille heading from V V Rouleaux, and hung on a waxed banister pole. The rug came from Istanbul; Above right: A roaring fire transforms the hall into a cozy extra room. The faux-fur throw is from Cotswold Grey, and the wreath from Foscot Wreaths; Top: Winter colours with a throw from Cotswold Grey, and cushion (just seen) from Josephine Rossi, one of the original stallholders. The child’s prayer book is from Richard’s antique book collection.
Above: The bedside tables in the master bedroom are from India Jane, with two china lamp bases from Tingewick Pottery, topped with shades from John Lewis. On the bed is a striped throw with pompoms by Maud Interiors; the bedlinen is from The White Company. The armchair is a family piece, with a cushion from Oka and a throw from Bernice and Camilla Cashmere. The chaise longue was an auction buy and the Sumak rug came from Istanbul. Josephine Rossi made the silk dupion curtains with fan edging from V V Rouleaux.

Right: The tallboy was an auction buy – on top are two vintage leather suitcases. The dressing table is from Stable Antiques, its seat an antique piano stool covered with ticking stripe fabric from Ian Mankin.

Below: The bath side is painted to match the marble tiles. The one-sided stool was an auction find, the toile cushion is from Josephine Rossi, and for similar floor tiles try Gerald Culliford.