

'FOUND ARTICLES'

Peggy and Jon Duvall, owners of Jon C. Duvall Design and Construction Management, take the green approach whenever possible. That extends to holiday decor. Peggy looks for decorating materials in friends' gardens or on the bucolic property she and her husband share in White Post, VA. "We're into found articles for the holidays," Peggy says. The shallow, slate-tiled fireplace is inherently green – the roaring fire almost instantly warms the open kitchen and living room. The oak beams are reclaimed storm-damaged wood, and the stone surrounding the fireplace is from an old barn foundation that was torn down.

A heavier hand would have undermined the natural beauty, so the Duvalls kept it simple: three lush magnolia clusters and natural moss balls strung up with grapevine over the mantel, and a bowl full of berries, blooms, and more moss balls, circled with a gnarled length of grapevine and placed on their handcrafted walnut dining table.

"I have all this grapevine ... maybe I'll make a wreath this year," Peggy says with a smile.

GESTURES IN GREEN

For the Carrara marble dining room fireplace at Elway Hall, "I was thinking to keep it in the family of greens," says Designer Barry Dixon of Barry Dixon Inc. Juniper, balsam, limes, cedar, and celery-colored satin play together beautifully. He suggests that decorating with the truest, plainest reds and greens is a mistake – choose instead an orangey red or gold-tinged green, and flesh out the palette with a few closely related hues.

On the mantel, along with swaths of greenery, Dixon filled decanters with pale green water. It's an inexpensive, elegant trick. Bring drama at night by placing votives behind the water – they'll make "starlight refractions on the ceiling," he says. To ensure your hearthside gathering goes smoothly, he offers some strategic, teasing advice: "Put the cold-natured guests by the fire."



Photograph by Darren Higgins

"THERE IS A WONDERFUL
PURIFICATION OF THE AIR WHEN
YOU HAVE A FIRE GOING IN THE
ROOM," BARRY DIXON SAYS.

OPPOSITE: The decorations and most of the building materials originated nearby – the magnolias are from a friend's garden, the stone surrounding the slate fireplace is from a Virginia barn, and the oak beams are reclaimed storm-damaged wood. Polished concrete radiant-heat floors add to the warmth.

OPPOSITE INSET: Peggy and Jon Duvall with Bentley, their Jack Russell terrier

ABOVE: "We've been here almost 10 years," Barry Dixon says of the fin-de-siècle Warrenton, VA, estate he shares with partner Michael Schmidt. They often burn cured oak from fallen trees found on the property. The chairs are by Barry Dixon Inc.