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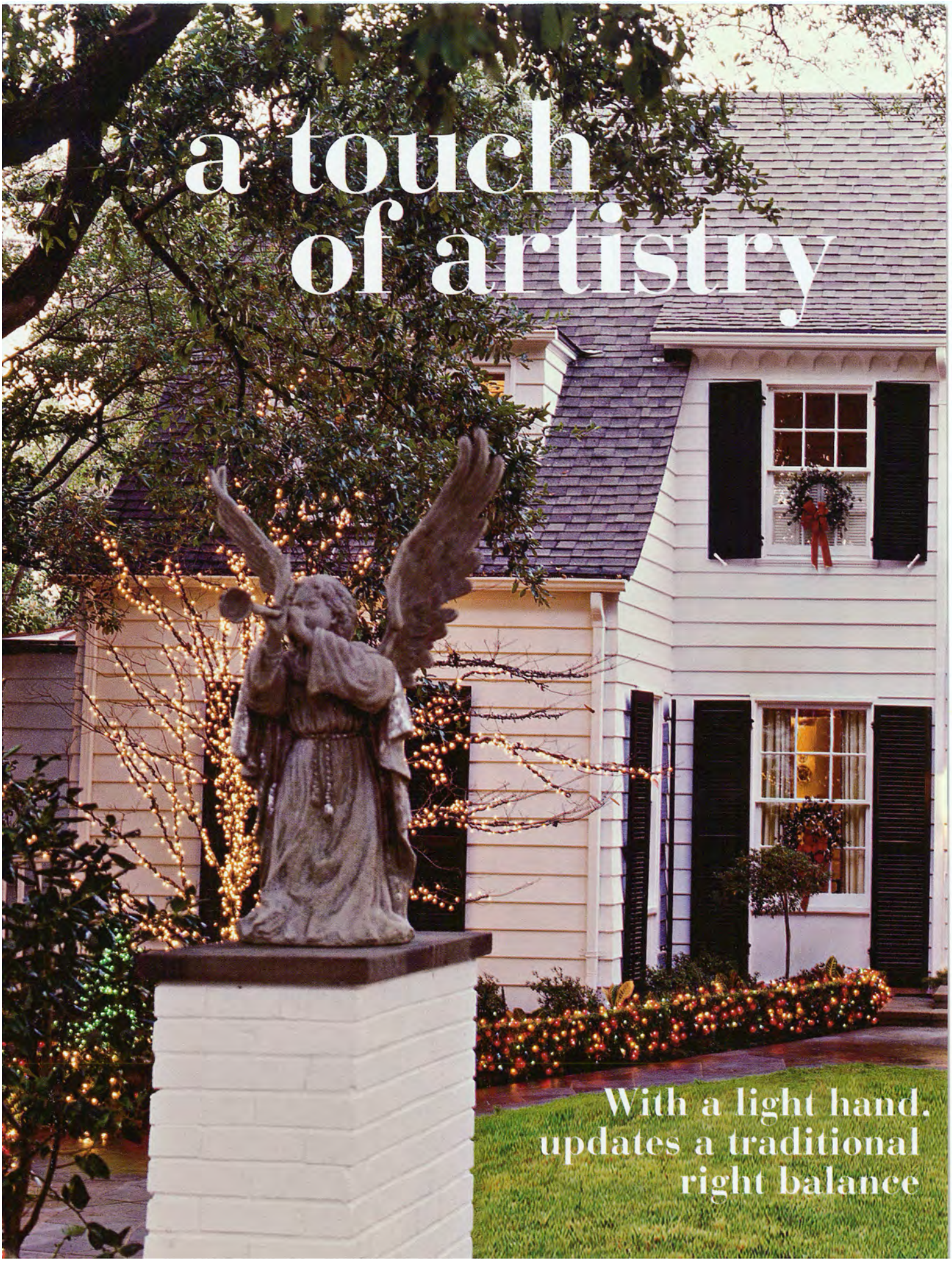
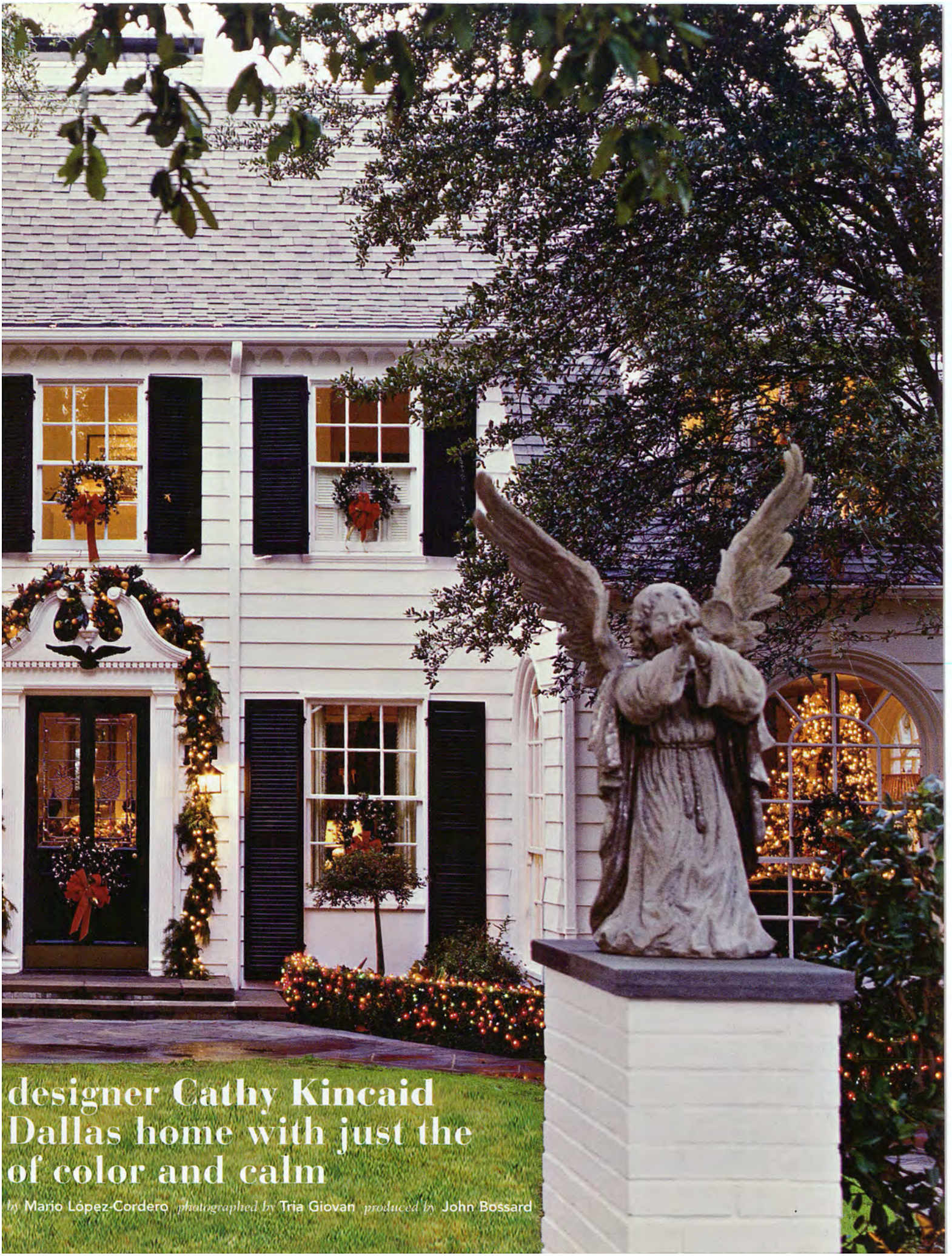


a touch of artistry

With a light hand, updates a traditional right balance



designer Cathy Kincaid Dallas home with just the of color and calm

by Mario López-Cordero *photographed by* Tria Giovan *produced by* John Bossard

It's the kind of house you'd expect to find in Mayfield, the fictional hometown of Beaver Cleaver: The pretty little Colonial-style house sits at the end of a cul-de-sac in Dallas, its graceful proportions and humble Beaux Arts details beckoning with a distinctly American allure. But mere set design could never be so welcoming, and the scene, however idyllic, is completely real. Not surprisingly, the circa 1920 house has a prominent pedigree: It is the work of Hal Thomson, one of the city's most beloved and revered architects.

THESE PAGES: With two sofas, one upholstered in an olive linen and the other in a Bennison floral, the living room is the perfect place to gather on Christmas morning. The décor typically doesn't vary from year to year. "When it comes to Christmas, there's something to be said for keeping things the same," says the homeowner. Holiday decoration and floral design are by Harold F. Hand of HaroldMark Créateur. PREVIOUS PAGES: "Our house is a great Christmas house," says the homeowner. "We wanted the decorations to accent the house's traditional feel. Outside, we used fruit, which is consistent with that Colonial Williamsburg look."

“Houses are meant to be lived in, and you want to have nice things, but everyone should still feel comfortable and cozy.”

—designer Cathy Kincaid

ABOVE: In the sitting area, the fireplace is decorated for the holidays with evergreen branches, dried hydrangeas, and gold-and-crimson ribbon. “We used earth tones, harvest tones, to continue the traditional, Colonial theme,” says the homeowner. OPPOSITE PAGE: The dining room features a Raj-inspired mural, hand-painted by New York artisan Pierre Finkelstein. The custom balloon-back dining chairs are covered in linen that has been gauffraged with a botanical pattern resembling damask. An antique tole-and-crystal chandelier lights the room.

That heritage was forefront on the minds of the homeowners (a couple with three children) when they embarked on a light update—a kitchen remodel—with local architect Wilson Fuqua. When they called in Cathy Kincaid to consult, the designer didn't expect to tackle anything other than paint. "Originally, they called me because they wanted help with the color in the kitchen," says Kincaid. "But one thing led to another, and we ended up decorating the dining room and master bedroom and adding new paint throughout the house."

The project was the perfect arena for the simple, yet stylish and sophisticated palette Kincaid prefers. "It's like a little New England cottage. The spaces are intimate, and the details are pretty," she says.

Kincaid devised a subdued scheme for the kitchen, which has a dreamy, ethereal quality, with pale-colored cabinetry and walls. The tone is variegated elegantly,

The kitchen, redesigned by architect Wilson Fuqua, includes a custom beaded-board island and Danby marble countertops. Designer Cathy Kincaid selected the antique delft tiles that are variegated in color for the backsplash. The French tole light fixtures are antique.

ABOVE: A panel above the pinecone-and-evergreen-studded fireplace in the master bedroom showcases an antique canvas remnant with a chinoiserie motif that Kincaid found at an antiques store. OPPOSITE PAGE: The designer topped the four-poster bed with a crown canopy made from checked and floral fabrics by Chelsea Textiles.

thanks to the white antique delft tiles on the backsplash. "The tiles are all a slightly different shade, ranging from periwinkle and lavender to khaki and beige," says the designer. "It's the prettiest thing to look at because there is sort of a pattern, and the subtle changes in color make it interesting."

But not all of Kincaid's tricks are so subtle. The dining room is anchored by a dramatic, hand-painted mural with a Raj-inspired motif. "It was inspired by one I saw in a magazine, made by a friend of Sister Parish's," says Kincaid. "I thought it was fun—a parade of camels and elephants." The move was also practical. The pattern obscures an unusual indentation in the wall that made the room look awkward. "The scene gives it depth and space, and you don't notice that funny little bay," she says.

In the living room, where the tree is trimmed in family heirloom ornaments and yards of gold mesh ribbon, Kincaid set off the furniture and antiques with a high-gloss shade of verdigris. "It's Ball Green with an overglaze of Green Stone," she says, referring to the Farrow & Ball shades that were painstakingly applied by hand. Kincaid swears by her choice of a shiny finish because of its refined effect: "You end up with something very clean and dressy," she explains.

Upstairs, paint figures prominently as well. The walls in the master bedroom are finished to look like scrubbed and bleached white pine, creating a sophisticated Swedish country look.

The end result is a close-up-ready home that could easily seem an idealized set piece—if it weren't so inviting. "Houses are meant to be lived in, and you want to have nice things," says Kincaid, "but everyone should still feel comfortable and cozy." ♦

For details, see Sourcebook, page 194