

## Holidays During COVID-19 “In the Spirit of Togetherness”

I know what you’re thinking from the title of this article: **“It’s only September”**

But to event designers and professional decorators, it’s *already* September and that means holiday parties *should be* right around the corner. Festive amber string lights *should be* packed up neatly from last season and ready to be unraveled by the time the first week of November rolls around. Ornaments, trees, garlands *should be* ordered soon. Any other year we would already have a packed schedule of decor installs and tentative holiday soirees. But during a pandemic? We’re all in limbo as the winter holidays will most likely be a lot different — commercially — than we’ve experienced before in modern history.

Today, I think about Mall Santas everywhere. With their velvety thrones and bleached beards, and their close contact with our children who still shyly whisper their most-wished-for gifts in hopes that their request makes it to the North Pole. Will Santa wear a face mask this year? Will we, as parents, feel the reward is worth the risk or will we just Google “North Pole Hotline”, shop on Amazon and call it a day?

We all know life has changed dramatically during the pandemic. In early March, the events industry and its 12 million event professionals were hit by a devastating wave of cancellations that wiped out business spanning the course of a year or more. We’ve adapted, sure. By the grace of digital technology, many of us were able to pivot to virtual meetings and events to keep our organizations and our livelihoods in tact. But the question remains: when will our lives and jobs go back to “normal?” As someone who has dedicated their career to special events, I wish I had an answer.

In mid March, another phenomenon happened: Folks across the country decked their homes in holiday decor and shared photos online with the hashtag #LightsForLife. Entire neighborhoods participated to spread cheer in the spirit of drive-by togetherness and social distancing. From a historical standpoint, it was certainly appropriate. **Did you know that Christmas decorating originated with ancient people decorating their homes with evergreen branches during the dark days of winter, reminding them that life would return in the springtime?** It’s true (I Googled it)

As a professional decorator, I am writing this to remind you that the magic of the holidays is NOT cancelled because of the coronavirus. As small as it might seem, you can have an impact on the spirits of your neighbors, colleagues, tenants and clients just by making your environment a little brighter during these difficult times. Let’s do our part in lighting up DC in December and to looking forward to merrier days ahead. While many of life’s frivolities have been abandoned thanks to COVID-19, it can’t take our joy, our craving for connection or our holiday spirit.

“There may be dark times ahead, but I can still put love & light out into the world.”

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If you need holiday decorating services or help with a virtual or intimate live holiday party, we are offering more flexibility than ever before in 2020. Contact [sara@edecordc.com](mailto:sara@edecordc.com) to schedule a site visit. Also visit the Business Partner Resources page for a brochure outlining our services.