

from the editor



When we started planning this festive, idea-packed issue it was still warm and summery. But now that there's the first nip of winter in the air, I can say for sure that it's one of our best. This time of year is, of course, all about food, family and fun—and that's exactly what you'll find on our pages. If you're searching for a few perfect presents, look no further than "50 Gifts Under \$50," page 63. If you need some more ideas turn to "Top Tech Picks for 2011," page 103. For great-looking party clothes on a budget, check out "Pure Glam" on page 118. And whether your seasonal style is simple and minimal or all-out Christmas cheer, you'll find inspiring ideas for trees, trims and DIY decorations in our home section. But the real heart of the holidays is the celebratory food we create for family and friends. You'll be proud to serve up any

and all of our top 10 holiday recipes ("In Good Company," page 169) and will be grateful for no-fuss weeknight dinners ("Easy Does It," page 154). Partial to your slow cooker during these hectic weeks (after all, who can resist having dinner cook itself!)? Check out the five delicious pork recipes on page 186, and go to familycircle.com/slowcooker for more meal ideas you'll love. May your days be merry and bright!

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▶ INTRODUCING LYNYA FLOYD

We're excited to welcome a member to our family: wellness expert, fitness enthusiast and award-winning journalist Lynya Floyd, our new health director. When she's not test-driving the latest exercise trends, experimenting with healthy recipes or combing through research studies, you can find her walking miles (and miles) all over Manhattan (and beyond) with her Basenji-mix dog. Keep an eye on the health section for some exciting changes to come!

A FEW OF MY FAVES



IN MY FAMILY ROOM L.L.Bean Wicked Warm Throw

We all love snuggling under cozy blankets while watching TV or just hanging out, but because we are five plus the dog there never seem to be enough to go around. So I'm going to buy a couple of these L.L.Bean throws. They are big (50" x 60"), really warm and machine washable. LLbean.com, \$24.50



IN MY MAKEUP BAG L'Oréal Paris Infallible Le Rouge in Refined Ruby

I tend to wear either red or a neutral pinkish brown lipstick all year round. But since this season crimson lips are such a big trend, I find myself wearing red so often that my favorite tube is worn down to a nub. So I went shopping for a new one and fell in love with this—a long-lasting formula in a pretty blue-red that flatters pale skin. Drugstores, \$10



IN MY PANTRY Ghirardelli Premium Hot Cocoa

When it's cold out my kids want hot chocolate every day, sometimes more than once. So I keep a tin of instant cocoa mix and a bag of mini marshmallows on hand. They don't care what kind I buy, but I do: Ghirardelli's Double Chocolate flavor tastes just like homemade. Grocery stores, \$7



Dream it. Design it. Wear it.

If you're the mom of a budding fashionista, you'll want to check out our new site that allows girls to create and wear their own clothing designs. We've teamed with FashionPlaytes to offer an online studio where girls can design clothes, and then buy their unique creations.

How it works:

- 1 Pick your favorite among dresses, jackets, skirts and more.
 - 2 Choose from among hundreds of items to customize your choice, with rhinestones, ribbon, appliques and more. You can even design your own label.
 - 3 Clothes will be shipped directly to you within weeks.
- Visit familycircle.com/fp to get started.



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