



No 'ho ho ho'

A new company is transforming Cheshire homes with stylish Christmas decorations, rejecting 'ho ho' humbug



If the thought of decking the halls with boughs of holly makes you more restive than festive, then the Christmas Decorators could be a gift.

The company, run by Nick and Sarah Bolton, began in Aspen, Colorado, turning the homes of stars such as Charles Bronson and Darryl Hannah into winter wonderlands with twinkling lights and traditional Christmas trees. They have worked on the homes of many more celebrities, but discretion is part of the service.

Now the couple have returned to the UK, bringing their bespoke design and installation service for Christmas decorations with them.

Nick says: 'What we do is not a "ho ho" house, blitzing a house here, there and everywhere with flashing lights. There is very little on

offer to home owners wanting to re-create that special tasteful look, but our lights are of the absolute highest quality bought from an Austrian company, and each home is measured and the lights are tailored for that particular home.'

They also decorate interiors, with spectacular Christmas trees, handmade garlands and wreaths. Their Victorian themed tree, for example, includes wooden hand painted toys, dried red roses, golden hand blown glass baubles from Germany, and large red bows (for the stars of tinseltown in the US, these were made from Ralph Lauren fabric). The trees are completed by hundreds of lights.

Nick says: 'Our service appeals to a discerning customer with a hectic lifestyle, perhaps the owner of a company. The last thing they want to

do in their precious free time at Christmas is to be climbing up a ladder, stringing up lights from the local DIY store, and then in January, taking them all down again.'

The company, based in Liverpool, dismantles all the decorations and offers a storage service, ready for the following year. They have already won orders to transform homes in Alderley Edge, Prestbury, Tatton and the Chester area.

'The market in America was almost non-existent in 2000, and it's still considered to be in its infancy, but almost every town in the US has at least one company doing this. We couldn't find any in the UK.'

An initial installation can cost anything from £500 for just an indoor tree, right through to a complete installation including tree, fireplace garlands, banister garlands, roof lights, window lights, wreaths, shrub and tree lights and driveway lights costing up to £20,000.

Money is no object to many past clients, says Nick, who flew back to the US in November to decorate the home of Kurt Russell and Goldie Hawn. After doing out one Aspen mansion, the customer asked if Nick could return on Christmas Eve in a sleigh with six reindeer, to deliver presents for his wife. Nick tracked down a local company offering reindeer rides, and went back to the client with the seemingly excessive price of \$10,000. The immediate reply was: do you want cash or cheque?

• The Christmas Decorators, tel: 0870 8903633, www.thechristmasdecorators.com