

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Have yourself a very merry Christmas!



**This must be where
Santa and Mrs. Claus
live with their elves.**

Photos Cynthia Brian

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The male cones look like hanging cucumbers and the female cones resemble round bulbs. The seeds in the cones are edible like pine nuts and consumed by the indigenous population. This national tree of Chile can live to over 1,000 years (Is Santa Claus that old?) and is now on the endangered list. Why is it called a Monkey Puzzle Tree? Evidently, a monkey is unable to climb this tree, thereby puzzling the monkey.

At this time of year, so many delicious smells emanate from the kitchen. Making

persimmon pudding from our hachiyas with lots of cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and other spices is one of our family traditions. I've also been drying sage, bay, oregano and rosemary to use in recipes and give as gifts. The scents of the holidays are gifts to the senses. Make sure to try some new recipes.

Deck your halls, jingle your bells, and rock around your tree. It's the season to be jolly.

Savor the blessings of being with family and friends and have yourself a very merry Christmas.

**Fragrant narcissi in full bloom
backed by the fading roses.**

