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inspiration ideas resources

Southwest Homes

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in the
Spring Parade

beautiful baths
swoon-worthy
private spaces

a corrales
mountain mod home
captures picture-perfect views

terrific tablescapes

beautiful backdrops
for your spring holiday meals

Courtesy Pottery Barn

In the era of intimate family gatherings as opposed to large parties, you can still make the spring holidays—and pizza night—special with a carefully curated tablescape. With a little creativity and a lot of layering, your dining table can rival even the best couture kitchen catalogs. Take these tips from the experts to design your next culinary celebration.

Bring on the Texture

A tablescape needs texture—it adds dimension, elevating a table setting from flat to fabulous. Layering materials is a great way to mix and match textures and colors. Put a table runner on top of a tablecloth. Because a runner won't interfere with place setting stability, there are more possibilities for textural materials. Try muslin, bamboo or hemp. These raw materials not only add subtle pattern but also create an organic look. "You can't go wrong, taking design cues from nature," says Annie O'Carroll of Annie O'Carroll Interior Designs in Santa Fe. "Nature is classic and balanced."

Planning a more formal table design? Use a velvet table runner or scarves for a dramatic textural effect.

O'Carroll recommends steering clear of items you'll have to remove. "A table shouldn't be so crowded that it's unusable. You need to be able to serve and guests need space to maneuver." Consider using chargers for more than the desired layering effect. Choose a charger material—woven rattan, stone, lace—that incorporates textural elements.



Courtesy Pottery Barn



Give your tablescape a Southwestern feel with a collection of cacti.

Denira/Shutterstock.com

With a little creativity and a lot of layering, your dining table can rival even the best couture kitchen catalogs.

Glass candle holders in varying heights add a beautiful lightness and warmth to a centerpiece.

Crystal Clear

"Using glass gives another opportunity for dimension in your design detail," says interior designer Patty Hoech, owner of Patrician Design in Albuquerque. The presence of fresh, clear water evokes a sense of revitalization, plus the translucence of glass allows the color or pattern of a table runner to read through, she adds.

Glassware can also become a design element O'Carroll says. If you have them, mix and match colored glassware. Different shaped glassware also adds dimension. Square vases or glasses flanking a centerpiece creates a nice visual balance.

Get Fresh

A spring tablescape calls for fresh flowers or live plants. You can approach flower selection from different angles. "Flowers offer a tremendous array of color choice," says Hoech. Use your favorite flower or what's readily available for inspiration when choosing your table-top color palette.

On the other hand, the dishes you use may dictate a floral direction. "If you're using white dishes, you can really choose any color palette," says O'Carroll. If your vision includes bright, vibrant colors, spring bouquets with a rainbow of colors—those pair perfectly with white dinnerware.

For a natural contrast, add fresh splashes of spring green, interspersing small potted plants, herbs or succulents.

Pro-tip: Purchase flowers that aren't fully open. On the eve of your event, if they haven't bloomed to your



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liking, hydrating them in slightly warm water forces bloom, says Hoech.

Conversation is Key

The golden rule of tablescapes is to make sure centerpieces and flower arrangements don't impede conversation. No one wants to lean around a large centerpiece to chat with someone across the table. If you're set on long stem flowers, opt for a horizontal orientation rather than vertical. Run them across the top of the table, says O'Carroll. There's no hard-and-fast rule that flowers must be arranged in vases.

Don't shy away from asymmetrical designs, she adds. "It can be fun to do something that's out of proportion." Rather than one gigantic flower arrangement as a centerpiece, strategically group vases of varying sizes together, using fewer flowers.

Because a flower vase doesn't have to be a vase at all, O'Carroll suggests using items you already have: Glassware, carafes, buckets and pitchers make unexpected display pieces.

Use what you love—colors, textures, florals—to design your tablescape. And remember: It's not just for holidays. You can treat every dinner as a cause for celebration! 

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resources

Annie O'Carroll Interior Design

Patrician Design



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