



Create A Table They'll Talk About!

Success through layering...



All great table settings are a process of layering. Start with a fabulous tablecloth or table runner then add a selection of linens, china and stemware to create a layering look that will "WOW" your guests. A unique charger under your dinner plate can really make a difference in getting the full effect of your layering. Napkin placement provides endless opportunities for layering creativity. Whether it's by placing your napkins in a glass, under a plate or in a unique napkin ring don't let yourself be limited.

Mix and match...



Do you have several china patterns or perhaps you are lacking enough to make up a full set? Use this to your advantage and your guests' delight by mixing more than one china pattern together in one place setting. Or perhaps you can mix the old with the new by coordinating some vintage china with some more contemporary pieces to add color and freshen up your look. Try mixing your stemware or giving each guest a different piece of stemware. Doing this not only creates fun conversation pieces but it also provides a use for the odds and ends in your collection.

Height adds interest...



Too often table settings look very flat. When choosing serving pieces and stemware pick ones that are different in height. This variety will create a more dramatic look that will give your table setting that extra flair. This additional height will also serve as a great buildup for your centerpiece or if you have tall candlesticks on the table. If you are lacking serving pieces that range in height add a few short stacks of books under your tablecloth to put your serving plates on to create that more dimensional look.

Texturize...



While you are layering, mixing and matching don't forget to keep in mind the textures you are using. You don't want to overuse one texture or use too little texture. Table settings often look hard when the focus is solely on china and stemware. By adding in some texture you can really soften the look and feel of the table. Florals and patterns serve this purpose well in addition to adding a bit of color. Try adding a small arrangement to each place setting rather than one big center arrangement.

Know the rules and then break them...



It is rare to host an event that is so formal that you can't use a little "artistic license". You don't want to confuse your guests but there are many ways to bend the rules to make your table setting more creative. Arrange a napkin differently, put a coffee cup in the middle of the dinner plate, use a Christmas ornament as a party favor and put it in the middle of the soup bowl. Don't be afraid to try something different. The goal is to create interest and to make dining beautiful and fun!