



A Very Merry Tablescape: How To Display Your Holiday Feast

Blogger and lifestyle influencer Summer Adams shares her top tips for bringing color and texture to the table—and of course, a sparkling centerpiece offset by candlelight.

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The temperature is dropping and the holidays are fast approaching. For the craft lover or design enthusiast, this means more than visions of just sugar plum fairies. Plans around thoughts of a glowing Christmas tree, twinkling menorah, fragrant fir wreaths—or this author’s personal favorite: a festive table setting—abound.

Blogger and lifestyle influencer [Summer Adams](#) would likely agree. In addition to her more “evergreen” content around themes such as DIY, entertaining and interior design, [Adams](#) loves sharing her process for crafting an inviting, beautifully set table that evokes all the whimsy and wonder of the season.

To start, Adams recommends that holiday lovers take care to be strategic and avoid overcrowding the table.

“I always, always create a table runner and run decor and candles through the middle,” explained Adams. “Depending on the home we've been in, if we have a formal dining room, I've always passed food around the table and set it back on the [dining room] buffet [to allow for space].”

And while Adams sadly does not enjoy a formal dining room in her current home, she thinks creatively when playing the host.

“Our table is just off the kitchen and so I serve more of a buffet style when entertaining,” Adams said. “I make a beautiful spread of dishes and sides (mixed with a centerpiece) on the island and then we all grab our plates and serve ourselves and go back to the table. I could serve the food at the table, but I prefer having decor and a beautifully set space. It makes the occasion feel that much more special.”

Cultivating an almost magical atmosphere is indeed at the heart of Adams' approach to tablescapes and entertaining. The design maven shared that she likes to sprinkle a touch of personality, color and texture throughout her dining space as a way to set the mood.

“Some of my favorite decor pieces during the holidays are candlesticks and florals of various kinds,” Adams said. “I especially love adding twinkle lights during Christmas. Fresh clippings, sparkly ornaments and mercury glass trees with lights inside also make for a stunning display. During the fall months, I'm known for bringing out my velvet pumpkins with real stems and those are just dreamy!”

Velvet pumpkins? Yes, indeed. For Adams, DIY projects offer decorating die-hards the chance to put a unique spin on their more classic holiday decor—and in so doing, capture all the personality that comes with a season defined by food, friends and family.

When it comes to her top DIY tips, Adams recommends staying focused but playful.

“First, I would say to keep the same theme as the rest of your room—you want everything to flow beautifully,” Adams shared. “Second, decide what place settings you'll be using. Maybe change the way you display your napkins or make your own beautiful napkin rings! That is always so fun.”

Finally, Adams advises punctuating your table spread with touches of texture, such as a “produce or pine clippings or twigs.”

“Get creative with your floral. Look on Pinterest or through magazines or favorite blogs to create a unique seasonal arrangement or several smaller arrangements down the center,” Adams said, referencing the above list as a great starting point. Larger statement pieces also made her list, however: “There are so many stunning ideas for creating a table runner or decor with items like beautiful glass ornaments, mercury glass or brass candlesticks at different

heights, fresh eucalyptus or Christmas tree clippings,” emphasized Adams. “I just love setting a table and love trying to use things I already have! I look at an empty table the way an artist looks at a bare canvas and I get excited.”

And as any good designer knows, atmosphere comes not only from texture and composition, but from color. Similar to our [Gratitude Issue](#) cover star, [Amanda S. Gluck](#), Adams prefers bright whites and clean metallic accents.

“I change my color scheme every year; I'm non-traditional that way,” said Adams, “But I mostly stick to the same two white dish sets (although I have a few more that I'll use on special occasions). They are a white glass, gold-rimmed set.”

Adams said that she enjoys the versatility of the crisp neutrals.

“[The dish sets] are perfect because I can serve them with their salad plates or I can use a salad or dessert plate with a color or a pattern that coordinates with my holiday theme and decor that year,” Adams explained. “So I can add a blush patterned salad plate or a gold scalloped dessert plate, a red and green salad plate, or a spa blue dessert plate, etcetera.”

Intentional holiday palettes are not only great ways to showcase one's own taste, but they also provide perhaps the greatest gift of all—maximized space.

“Even with my more extensive designs, I don't need 25 different sets of dishes. I just don't have the space,” Adams said.

Then again—

“If I had a dish pantry, I just might!” Adams laughed. “Then I would use the table decor to really set the tone.”

Here's to hoping the design darling made Santa's Nice List!