

Charleston LIVING

November / December 2021

Feasts of
the Season
Recipes for
the Table

Holiday Fashion
Turn Heads this Season
with Sparkle and Shine

Tablescapes
Inspired
Holiday Table
Settings

Holiday
Dining

Lebanon
Christmas Tree
Farm

Toys
for Tots

The Table is Set

The more the merrier around these holiday-inspired place settings

By SHELBY SIMON » Photos by ALEECE SOPHIA PHOTOGRAPHY

TO ACHIEVE A FESTIVE HOLIDAY TABLE, REMEMBER THAT IT'S ALL UP TO YOU! IT DOESN'T TAKE much to transform a table into a welcoming gathering place for the holidays. A few showstopping pieces can go a long way, like guinea fowl placemats or a two-tiered serving tray that instead of holding pastries, is filled with bright citrus and topped with a stunning pineapple. Below are some creative tips from local experts in home décor on the art of tablescaping for the holidays.

Bluebird Vintage

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Seizing the opportunity to amplify bright, standout items that are already in and around your home can create a festive and hospitable holiday table that is anything but understated.

Glenda Bradley, with Bluebird Vintage, says her team's jumping off point for the design of this holiday table was the tomato red glass and metal table. They opted to go bold by voting on which set of fine china "popped" the most in contrast with the table's strong background and landed upon Royal Doulton's "Vanborough" as the winner.

With those two decisions alone, the table already exuded glitz and glamour, so Bradley says going organic with the decorations felt like a natural choice for the aromas, ambiance and a nod to local symbols.

The team only had to open the door to find one natural accent — the tea olive shrub, in bloom with little orange star-shaped flowers — from which they clipped a few branches to combine with fresh eucalyptus stems.

"They made a lovely clean jasmine scent that naturally drew you in," says Bradley. They were able to camouflage the floral water tubes with magnolia branches to keep everything fresh and aromatic.

The pineapple, a symbol of hospitality and internationally associated with Charleston, was a perfect choice for the centerpiece.

"We elevated it by tiering two pedestals, all the while keeping the

height at a scale that still allows the guests to see each other," says Bradley. Surrounding orange clementines echoed the color of the tea olive blossoms, while bright yellow lemons circled the base of the pineapple, bringing all the colors together.

Large white satin bows came to life inspired by the etching on the vintage wine glasses, a motif that Bradley says is meant to remind us that it is a gift to be with family and friends.

Pro Design Tips:

- » Don't worry if you don't have the end vision in your mind. Let your imagination guide you and build it as you go.
- » Feel free to mix styles and periods; it takes the stuffiness out of the event.
- » Use what you have to encourage conversation. (The antique samovar and original oil painting in the armoire are great conversation starters.)



