

FOOD + WINE

TABLE TALK

SIMPLY SETTING YOUR TABLE IN A CERTAIN WAY CAN SEND A COMMANDING MESSAGE TO YOUR GUESTS. ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES, THE SAME TABLE IN THE SAME ROOM, WITH THE SAME CHAIRS, WAS SET THREE DIFFERENT WAYS, AND THE TRANSFORMATION WAS EXTRAORDINARY

by RORI TROVATO *photographs by* LUCA TROVATO



Dining table (left): Libeco table linen (\$220) and matching napkins (\$20 each); and Match pewter chargers (\$160 each), dinner plates (\$75 each), bowls (\$70 each), flatware (\$175/five-piece setting) at Upstairs at Pierre Lafond, 516 San Ysidro Rd., Montecito, 805-565-1503. Table runner (\$125) at ABC Carpets, abccarpets.com. Champagne glasses (\$300/set of four) and wine glasses (\$300/set of four) at Aleda, 1253 Coast Village Rd., Montecito, 805-969-1676. **Side table** (right): Match gravy boat (\$132), serving dish with cover (\$535), serving spoon (\$80) and serving bowl (\$210) at Upstairs at Pierre Lafond, 516 San Ysidro Rd., Montecito, 805-565-1503. French 19th-century candelabras (\$25,000 for the pair) at Christine Schell, 1268 Coast Village Rd., Montecito, 805-565-4859. Assorted Italian pewter vases (\$65-\$125) and all flowers (prices vary seasonally) at Botanik, 2329 Lillie Ave., Summerland, 805-565-3831.



TRADITIONAL Using monochromatic colors creates the elegant mood that a traditional table demands. Subtle metallic elements such as silver, gold and pewter mixed with fine linens (here, the tablecloth and napkins match, and a runner was used) and candlelight set the room aglow. Hints of color can be brought in through flowers or other table accents—in this case, yellow garden roses mixed with cranberry viburnum in assorted handmade Italian pewter vases. Often, many of the items (like the crystal and china, say) have been passed down to us from our families. The perfect menu would include a prime rib roast with mashed sour cream and chive potatoes. The grand total for this traditional table setting for eight with side table items: **\$32,700** (or, if you skip the exquisite 19th-century French candelabras on the side table, a decidedly less-steep \$7,700).



Place setting (right): Java square plates (\$5 each) and bowls (\$4 each), orchid table runner (\$35) and orchid napkins (\$7 each) at Z Gallerie, 917 State St., 805-564-1974. Data flatware (\$30/20-piece set) at Ikea, ikea.com. Wine glasses (\$16 each) and champagne glasses (\$18 each) at Aleda, 1253 Coast Village Rd., Montecito, 805-969-1676. Orchids (prices vary seasonally) and glass Hamilton vases (\$12-\$68) at Botanik, 2329 Lillie Ave., Summerland, 805-565-3831. **Side table** (above): Shell balls (\$15/small, \$20/medium, \$60/large) and glass votive candleholder (\$50) at Aleda.



MODERN Less can be more when you keep it simple. Streamlined flatware, without any or much ornamentation, works best with a modern setting, while square-shaped dishes add interest. The deep chocolate brown and cool-toned blue color palette casts a warm, soothing effect on the room. The orchid napkins and runner give an Asian feel without demanding a Far Eastern meal. White phalaenopsis orchids in small rectangle glass vases filled with white beans add a minimal yet dramatic presentation, which is what you want an arrangement to do. It doesn't steal the show, it just adds flair and style. Dropping a single orchid at each place setting serves as a party favor and usually ends up going home with the guests. It's subtle detailing like this that your guests will remember. The grand total for this modern setting for eight and side table: **\$870.**



BOHEMIAN An eclectic mix of cultures, patterns and textures (i.e., cushioned chairs, printed linens) makes this tabletop an adventure for the senses. Vivid colors—even in the etched glassware—like aqua, green and pink make this room come alive. Be creative. At left, the sunflower-yellow curtains draping the French doors are actually table linens. Place a Moroccan tin tray and an exotic pony skin on the side table, add some tassled napkins, and you're living la vie bohème. A low candleholder is ideal because it can be used on the table without obstructing the view of other guests or on the side table to create a backlit effect that can make the room feel larger. The grand total for this bohemian table setting for eight with side table items: **\$7,760.**

Dining table (above): Les Indiennes table linen (\$215) and back chair cushions (\$135/pillow) at William Laman, 1596 East Valley Rd., Montecito, 805-969-2840. Nana ki Haveli of Paris seat cushions (\$54 each) and Lisacorti table linens (\$100/each, used as curtains) at Upstairs at Pierre Lafond, 516 San Ysidro Rd., Montecito, 805-565-1503. Standing candlesticks (\$2,400/pair) at Aleda, 1253 Coast Village Rd., Montecito, 805-969-1676.

Place setting (right): Dotted dinner plates (\$14 each), salad plates (\$10 each), napkins (\$4 each), napkin rings (\$8 each), table votives (\$8 each), wine goblets (\$6 each) and water glasses (\$6 each) at Anthropologie, 901 State St., Santa Barbara, 805-962-5461. Nontron flatware (\$182/five-piece setting) at Upstairs at Pierre Lafond. Potted succulent gardens (\$175 each) at Botanik, 2329 Lillie Ave., Summerland, 805-565-3831.



TABLETOP TIPS

“A traditional table is usually subdued and monochromatic in tones, with hints of color coming in from perhaps the china print or the flower arrangements,” says **Shelley Koury, the buyer for Upstairs at Pierre Lafond**. “There are no shortcuts and that is what gives it grace and elegance.”

“I consider candlelight the single most transformative element to incorporate into one’s festivities,” says **Kimberly Phillips, owner of Aleda**. “I always light candles; for myself, a party of two, or more. From a simple glass votive cup to fabulous candleabra, any vehicle for this living light is magical.”

“Succulents are very versatile and make a dramatic impact on a table. They’re long lasting and can be planted in pots, used in arrangements like fresh flowers or cut and placed right on the table,” says **Kyle Irwin, co-owner of Botanik**. “They’re so durable they can even be planted back into the garden.”

1. Napkin, 2. Salad fork, 3. Dinner fork, 4. Dessert fork, 5. Dinner plate, 6. Dinner knife, 7. Teaspoon, 8. Teaspoon, 9. Soup spoon, 10. Cocktail fork, 11. Bread-and-butter plate with spreader, 12. Water glass, 13. Red-wine glass, 14. White-wine glass, 15. Cup and saucer

A FORMAL SETTING Are you often stumped about which fork goes where? Well then, sit up straight, elbows off the table, and take note.

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