

Stylish Solutions

The Holiday Dining Room

By Ann McDonald



Removing two portions of this dining room table makes it smaller and provides more room for several stations in adjacent areas. Varied height and stations accommodates diverse food and drink. A simple pop of green breaks the blue and white color palate. Don't forget whimsy for interest. Give your guests something to discover.

Photo Ashleigh Hodges

The weather has finally shifted a bit and we are enjoying some cooler temperatures. As the holiday season is close at hand, we have been sharing some stylish solutions for dining rooms with our clients. I have a love affair with the dining table and dining room, and delight to set buffets, formal sit down dinners and glorious breakfasts. Finding and executing different designs on a short time frame and reasonable budget can seem impossible, but it's really not. This week I want to share how my team and I consistently come up with unique settings and ideas, especially if you are hosting friends these next few months in varied formats.

It is really important to me as a designer that you use every part of your home consistently. There should be no abandoned space or portion that is off limits. You are more precious than even the most expensive item in your home, so I encourage you to consider using every inch of it this holiday season. Honor those among you with the beauty sitting in your china cabinet and silver chest.

Let's get started!

The first thing we do is consider the *type* of gathering. Even if you don't have a formal dining room, let's assume for argument's sake that your breakfast table or favored gathering area will serve as inspiration for this post. That said, what are we planning? Is it a buffet? A formal sit down? Don't sell your entertaining self short by always defaulting to chilled drinks in an ice bucket on the kitchen counter and buffet trays by others on the island.

It's quite easy to set a holiday table in the dining room. All you need are time honored tips and an infusion of confidence! My hope is to give you both. Consider these three things: type, transitions and topography. ... continued on page D8

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