



location CHATEAU COCOMAR

THE *gracious table*

SETTING A BEAUTIFUL WEDDING TABLE IS
A LABOR OF CREATIVITY...AND OF LOVE.

writer **BLAKE MILLER** ~ photo **HOLLY HOYT PHOTOGRAPHY**

There's a lot that goes into creating an inviting and accommodating wedding table—and that's as it should be. After all, the reception table is where guests will spend a majority of their time at your celebration—eating, drinking, talking, laughing, reminiscing and marveling at the visual impression of those linens,

THE PERFECT TOUCH

L I N E N S • A N D • D E C O R



Centerpieces | Chairs | Lounge
Lighting | Floral | Draping

713. 523. 4567

2506 South Blvd. Houston TX 77098

www.theperfecttouchlinens.com

those flowers, that crystal, that candlelight. And while there are no rules for designing the perfect table, decor experts agree that texture and variation are tops in tables for 2014.

HOME CHIC HOME

Rather than mere showcases for fancy stuff, today's wedding receptions are environments that express the couple's personalities and tastes. So it's no surprise that wedding planners suggest looking around the house for inspiration. "When it comes to dressing tabletops today, weddings are being accessorized by home furnishings," explains wedding planner Joyce Scardina Becker with Events of Distinction in San Francisco and Los Angeles. "Whatever is happening in the interior-design world is seen in wedding tablescapes."

If your own home decor feels somewhat less than special-occasion "special," take cues from leading interior designers like Oprah favorite Nate Berkus, whose sleek, transitional lines—mixing and matching antique crystal wine glasses with modern chargers—work well as wedding tabletop decor.

WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

The popularity of TV's "Downton Abbey" has only reinforced the vintage aesthetic that is still going strong for 2014. "Vintage-inspired weddings and Old-World traditional looks are growing in popularity, adding twists on luxurious elegance," says Jill Vidal of top Houston rental firm EB Inc (formerly Elegant Beginnings).

"One of our biggest trends right now is vintage rentals," adds Penne Hamblin with Houston's well-stocked Any Occasion Party Rental. "We are constantly looking for unique items that remind you of raiding your grandmother's attic,

to give a warm, vintage feel to an event.” Hamblin suggests scouring resale shops, antique stores and even eBay for mismatched china place settings and glassware. “Not only do a lot of brides love the look, it’s a whole lot of fun to go treasure hunting for these items!”

MIX IT UP

While harmony and cohesion are key to a reception room, there’s no guideline that says tabletops need to be precise duplicates of one another. Instead, opt for a different yet complementary aesthetic for each table’s decor.

Nothing is more alluring to the guest’s eye than imbuing each table with its own personality, versus the cookie-cutter effect of having each rose in the exact same place in every single centerpiece. Consider varying the table

shapes from circular to rectangular to square, and incorporating different linens and interchangeable place settings that could easily work well at each table.

And while Scardina Becker loves this eclectic look, she cautions: “The key here is to know how to accessorize and know when to edit.”

PALETTE PLEASERS

Choosing a tabletop color palette can be one of the most difficult—and, ultimately, enjoyable—tasks in a bride’s planning process.

“We are seeing a lot of big, bold pops of color mixed with simple floral statements,” says wedding-planner Kristin Banta of Kristin Banta Events in Los Angeles. “This trend is great for the couple on a budget, as the impact

from the pop of color balances the restrained florals. Bold color statements can come from the chargers, chairs, glasses and linens.”

Also, brides are learning that their wedding’s color palette can extend beyond one or two colors. “Color palettes have grown from two or three colors to four, five and even six!” says wedding- and event-planner Anne Markey of Favor Me Events in Charlotte, N.C. “Like I always say: It doesn’t need to match. It just needs to ‘go.’”

Meanwhile, at Houston event-decor firm The Perfect Touch, owner Vik Chadha says 2014 brides are tending toward ivory, cream and classic neutral tones, and getting their “wow” factor from bling: “Sequin linens are really in. They have a lot of sparkle, which brings that classic, Gatsby look.”

Confused about which hues to use? A good place to start is by having a look at color wheels or paint swatches for inspiration, and discovering what shades complement each other, and which are best for contrast.

GRACE IN PLACE

While centerpieces will always have a home on the wedding table, today’s brides are looking to their place settings—chargers, china, glassware, flatware and accessories—to make the biggest tabletop statement. “I am loving the use of statement glasses to accent the rest of your tabletop decor,” says Banta. “Bringing in a signature glass helps to make each place setting pop, and is a great way to add personality and dimension to your tabletop.”

Markey seconds the idea: “More and more brides are opting to get their ‘bang’ from the linens, chargers, place settings and candles, and not go overboard with gigantic floral arrangements.”



3701 W. Alabama, Suite 353 | 713.532.6100
somethingspecialinflowers.com



Looking for something beyond mere clear? Consider mercury glass or rose-colored wine glasses to punch up your pretty table.

GET STACKED

Layers of material and texture add interest and dimension to any tabletop aesthetic. “One of my favorite tabletop trends is the use of stacked chargers, and china of different patterns and textures, to create a decadent experience at each place setting,” says Banta. “There should be some consistency to the patterns and colors selected; however, feel free to get creative and adventurous as, except for the top plate, only the outer plate rims will be seen.”

Like with your home, mixing and matching patterns and textures is one of the easiest ways to bring dimension to the tabletop. “If your desire

is to have tabletop florals play only a small role, drama does not have to be sacrificed,” Banta notes. “A luxurious, textured linen can often offer greater impact than your florals. A beautiful tabletop is not just about what your guests are seeing, but it’s also about what your guests can feel.”

Adds Markey: “Brides are not afraid of textures in fabrics, as well as mixing patterns, linens and even furniture—such as pairing farm tables with ‘Ghost’ chairs.”

BARE IT ALL

For the bride who loves a minimal look, or who wants a more rustic aesthetic, Cheryl Rebsch of Any Occasion Party Rental suggests skipping the linens altogether. “Tables with no linens are so pretty, and a nice change from all of the fabric in one room,” she says. “We have dark-stained-wood rustic

tables with matching chairs, benches and even a bar. These work great in a rustic theme room. Some brides incorporate deer horns and burlap with this look to make it more Texas-rustic.”

KEEP THEMES SUBTLE

Sure, “Great Gatsby” fever has been high since the movie exploded last summer. And while it’s certainly fun to draw inspiration from the story’s 1920s aesthetic—or other visually notable eras such as Victorian era, 1940s or 1950s—steer away from explicitly “themed” weddings as a whole, says Markey. “I think it is important to remember that this is a wedding, not a birthday party,” she explains. “When a couple looks back at photos of their wedding in 10 years, they should not cringe because they got suckered into the hype surrounding a blockbuster that year.”