

Antiques in Style

By Inessa Stewart
DESIGNER

TABLESCAPES REVISITED

When we think of tablescapes, we visualize a beautiful table adorned with artfully placed objects creating a lovely setting, but I think it is so much more. Inspired tablescapes create an instant emotional response that lingers with cherished memories of imaginative settings. Antiquing with my mother while growing up in Europe, I remember our bringing home special finds and using these cherished ancient items for centerpieces and accents, creating enticing displays. At my mother's side I learned how to set my first table, something my daughter and I enjoy even today - creating unique table designs for our family's special celebrations.

For more than 10 years Inessa Stewart's Antiques & Interiors has been fortunate to be involved in one of the most amazing and beautiful events in Dallas - the annual Kappa Kappa Gamma Tablescapes. What makes this charity event truly special is that the proceeds go to great local causes including schools, community centers and ministries. The annual affair encompasses two days, with the first devoted to an enchanting evening gala, and the second day surrounding a lovely luncheon with guest speakers specially chosen to address the gathering. Each year, artists and designers invited to the event work tirelessly to unveil dramatic and stunning tablescapes. Every vision of this exhibition is a delight to the senses, bursting with vibrant floral designs that are captivating with each and every theme.

It is always a pleasure to visit with featured guests who are inspiring design celebrities, creative chefs or gifted decorators. A few years ago the featured guest was one of our favorites - the famed guru of Country French design - Charles Faudree. This year's exciting focus is none other than critically acclaimed actor and designer Bryan Batt of the wildly popular hit television show *Mad Men*.

In years past our displays at Kappa Kappa Gamma's Tablescapes have revolved around antique themes such as Italian Renaissance, Country French, Arte Povera, Black Forest, French Gothic and many more. While developing a theme, we seek our inspirational focus from the past. Once it was an antique Black Forest hand-carved clock, another time we used a gothic shrine as the centerpiece, and last year

an almost life-size, hand-carved Italian saint statue commanded our attention. Naturally, we don't stop there; special attention is needed to select the china, linens, glass and silverware. I believe what makes our tables stand out is the careful choice of antiques and antique style furniture, which gives a classical foundation to the design.

We also group unique antique accessories to give the tablescene diversity and texture, bringing carved wood, bronze, pewter or silver accessories into the display to accompany and accentuate the overall style. Of course we cannot forget the color visual element of flowers - a stunning and essential detail that is made even more striking by using antique vases, urns and jardinières.

The time that Charles Faudree spoke at the event, we had the privilege to decorate both his book signing booth and also the stage from which he gave his presentation, naturally with timeless antiques and floral designs in his signature Country French style. One of our greatest joys is working with antiques to create distinctive and memorable settings. The photos selected here reveal our displays from past Tablescapes, conveying some of our signature antique styles.

At this time of year our thoughts turn to the holidays, and we begin to see visions of tables laden with seasonal splendor. Invariably, I begin to look to antiques as inspirations for groupings and centerpieces for my family's holiday tabletop designs. A classical pair of urns, a beautiful hand-carved statue, or perhaps a collection of majolica pitchers can all be the perfect muse to inspire your festive settings and create extraordinary one-of-a-kind tablescapes.



Inessa Stewart is the owner/designer of Inessa Stewart's Antiques & Interiors. For more antique inspirations visit: Blog www.inessa.com/blog, Facebook www.facebook.com/InessaAntiques, Pinterest pinterest.com/inessastewart All Photos Inessa Stewart's Antiques & Interiors.

