

Smart PARTY

Creating a stylish table setting needn't cost the earth. We asked Stefan Norval of Afresh Event and Design for simple and creative ideas on thrifty entertaining



1 TEXT TESS PATERSON
PHOTOGRAPHS KARL ROGERS

1 BLANC DE BLANC

Stefan created a simple, yet dramatic setting with splashes of accent colour. "Using a crisp white cloth and good linen napkins is the easiest way to create a cool, summery vibe," he says. Painted bamboo poles add interest, as does the feather hat. Stefan added reflective accents in the mirror, glass under plates and transparent chairs from Boardmans.



2 GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT

"I like to include desserts or gorgeous cakes as part of the visual decoration," says Stefan. "It creates a conversation piece and adds a sense of anticipation to the occasion." Red velvet cupcakes from Wolves Café are piled onto a white cake stand.

3 BOOKISH THINGS

"I love including books as part of table decor," says Stefan. "Grab a few books of a similar size from your shelves and cover in sturdy wrapping paper which you'll find at any art shop. It's an effective way to create different heights on the table; encyclopaedias with gilt edging look particularly good."



4 BRANCHING OUT

"Whenever you see people trimming their trees or carting away vegetation, stop and see what you could use," advises Stefan. "These cherry tree branches were spray-painted white; they're a great way to add a graphic, unexpected element while keeping to the pared-down look." Stefan placed the branches randomly between the tableware, leaving sufficient space around each setting. ▷



5 NATURE'S BOUNTY

"In terms of flowers, all we used for this setting were two queen proteas, three pincushion flowers, a small bunch of pompon chrysanthemums and three hydrangea flowers. The simple, graphic shapes add both colour and impact, and the containers are everyday items – teapots, clear gravel-filled vases and ceramic goblets." As an alternative, Stefan recommends using phalaenopsis orchids or any structural seasonal flowers.

6 TIN CUP

"Finding quirky uses for tin cans is a great way to recycle," explains Stefan. "Simply wrap a broad, coloured ribbon

around a can and secure with double-sided tape. Then add a second layer in a different colour or design. Lastly, fill it with cutlery that's grouped together with a slim, textured ribbon." Stefan suggests filling several tins with sufficient cutlery for each of the courses.

7 GATHER TOGETHER

Another recycling trick is to use pieces of copper wire, instead of plastic, to group long-stemmed plants together. "The arrangements look so much more finished when displayed in a tall, clear vase," explains Stefan. "It's also another way to add height to the setting." **GEH**

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SOURCES

Afresh Event and Design 082 940 8282, www.afreshevent.co.za
or stefan@afreshevent.co.za

Boardmans 0860 692 274 **Wolves Café** 011 447 2360