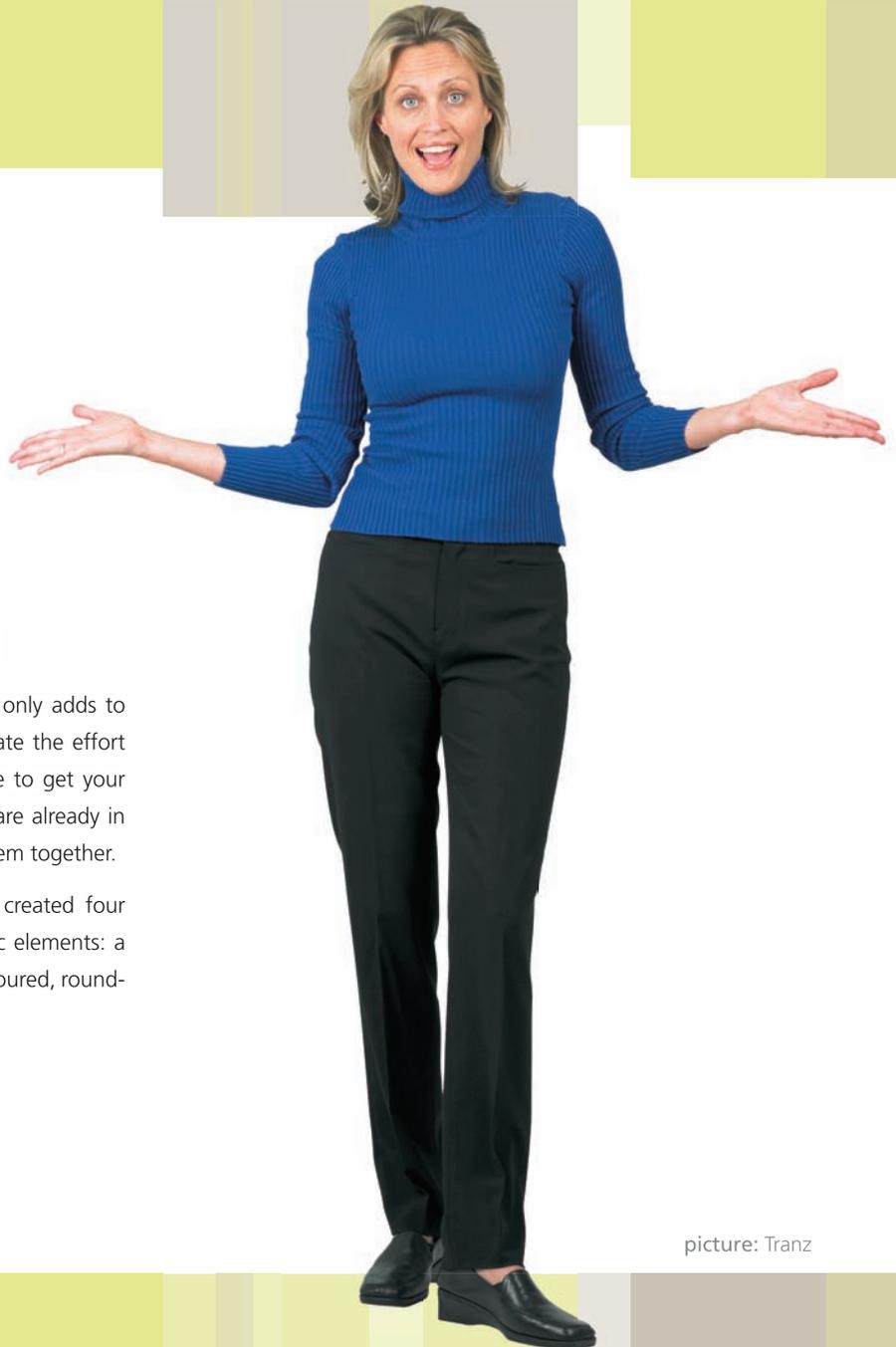


one table, four looks

It's one thing to eat dinner on your lap in front of the TV most nights, but when guests come over, it's a great opportunity to do something a little special.

Creating a dining setting that's attractive and inviting only adds to the pleasure of the meal and your guests will appreciate the effort you've made. And you don't need to spend a fortune to get your table looking great – most of the elements you need are already in your home. It just takes a bit of imagination to bring them together.

To give you some ideas and get you started, we've created four very different table settings, each using the same basic elements: a rectangular wooden dining table and some charcoal-coloured, round-backed chairs.



picture: Tranz



colourful character

White dinner plates are de rigueur in any good restaurant because they showcase a dish in the best possible light, putting the focus on the colours and presentation of the food. White crockery is also a great basic element for the home, as it goes with virtually anything and works well for both formal and casual dining.

This contemporary, fun table is easy to achieve and is a great example of how to inject a little life into your plain, all-white dinnerware. The first element is a bright, cyan-coloured tablecloth incorporating stripes of white, yellow, indigo, mauve, pale blue and orange, running the length of the table. This forms a vibrant backdrop for the white crockery, which is layered to create depth and interest. A white charger plate – a large plate that frames the dinner plate – defines each setting. On top of each charger is a boldly striped, glazed dinner plate, which in turn is topped with a large white bowl. Rather than looking garish, this rainbow effect is kept crisp and playful thanks to the clean look of the white crockery.

The floral centrepiece comprises three simple carnation posies in squat glass vases. Other items include an unusually shaped white water jug to provide an element of height; plus two glass bowls with a subtle pink tinge – their translucence contrasting nicely with the opaque dinnerware.



White crockery, cutlery:
Maxwell Williams
09 520 1224
Striped plates: Madder
& Rouge 09 379 8202

Resene
Hero 



Tablecloth: Icon Textiles
09 302 1652

Resene
Caffeine 

Flowers: Vida Flores
09 523 5454
Art: Virginia Leonard

Resene
Alo Alo 



Glass bowls, water jug:
Pacifico 09 379 4674

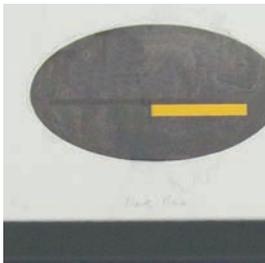


Resene
Chill Out 



Mystic bowls and
sushi dishes, white
platter: Akali
09 300 9404

Resene
Endorphin 



Art: Gretchen Albrecht

Resene
Digeridoo 

Soy sauce bowl:
Pacifico 09 379 4674
Coasters: stylist's own



Resene
Groovy 



Flowers: Vida Flores
09 523 5454

Resene
Tea 

asian inspiration

Asian cuisine, in all its myriad forms, has become hugely popular over the last decade. In addition to being a healthy dining choice, it is also seen by many as the chic new dining option.

Creating a tabletop to complement an Asian meal can be achieved using a minimal number of elements – in fact, with such a look, the ‘less is more’ maxim certainly applies. Composition, balance, colour, and the simplicity of the objects are fundamental to its success. Depending on the regional cuisine you’re serving, you can create quite different effects, from the rich, vibrant red-and-gold scheme of a Chinese table, to the calmer, more subdued tones of a Japanese meal, such as the one shown here.

This table is characterised by simple, clean shapes and colours and a natural look. Rather than using a tablecloth, the table has been left bare, with the wood forming a natural-textured canvas for the smooth ceramic dinnerware. The plates are two-toned, with a matt black exterior and a bright aqua glaze inside, adding a cool, soothing element to the table. Small square bamboo coasters act as placemats, highlighting the tall rice bowls set on top of each one. A shallow, square sushi dish is placed in front of each setting, while a white serving dish set on a single large leaf acts as a centrepiece and contrasts nicely with the black bowls. The geometric shapes and symmetry of this tabletop give it a Zen-like purity.



afternoon tea

Going to Grandma's for afternoon tea, eating tiny iced cakes and cream-filled treats while sipping from delicate bone china cups – it's a childhood memory many of us still hold dear. And it's a scene that can easily be recreated. Whether it's a baby shower, an afternoon get-together with old friends, or a birthday, the beauty of this look is that nothing needs to match, so you can use any odd teacups and dishes you have in the cupboard, including old heirlooms. Such an assortment of different pieces can be brought together in a relaxed and eclectic mix.

Here, a floral paisley tablecloth in tones of egg-shell blue and pale pink provides a subtle, feminine base for the enticing spread of cupcakes, meringues, strawberries and sponge cake. The tea set includes lemon, sky blue and mint-coloured pieces, all edged in gold and arranged almost haphazardly on the table. In the background, two simple bunches of flowers – pink hydrangeas and white roses – complement the tones of the artwork on the wall behind. In lieu of a vase, the hydrangeas are placed casually in a high-sided white fruit bowl. Like the tea set, the cake stands are a carefree mix of shapes and colours, giving the appearance of everyone having brought a plate.



Art: Virginia Leonard

Resene
Floyd



Tea set, teaspoons:
Maxwell Williams
09 520 1224

Resene
Spirulina

Flowers: Vida Flores
09 523 5454
Tall white fruit bowl:
Pacifico 09 379 4674



Resene
Miss Hussy



Cake stands, tablecloth:
Kate Fitzpatrick
09 630 0583
Glass bowl, sponge
cake plate and knife:
stylist's own

Resene
Kidman



winter white supper

Entertaining friends during winter can provide the chance to do something lavish and dramatic – but this doesn't necessarily mean great expense or elaborate planning is required. Unexpected touches make a table interesting, and while white is more often considered a summer colour, it can lend a touch of sophistication to a winter meal.

A subtle French influence characterises this table, which features a crisp, white floor-length tablecloth as a backdrop for the more decorative elements. Much of the colour is concentrated in the middle of the table, where green, burgundy and gold combine to create a visual focal point. Tall, tapered candles, in a pair of romantic candelabra adorned with strings of crystal beads, add a sense of drama without being too overpowering. A hybrid pansy/orchid arrangement in a square, white wicker basket provides an unusual centerpiece – its colours adding a richness and depth mirrored by the wine and the artwork that frames the table. Goblets of green cut glass on transparent stems highlight the tones of the candles.

Both the candelabra and floral display are purposely kept low, so as not to obstruct the flow of conversation across the table. The individual table settings on the perimeter of the table are more muted, with octagonal plates and bowls in a warm cream tone layered for an opulent, European look. Golden, crusty French bread, unpretentiously presented on a wooden chopping board, accompanies the warming pumpkin soup.



Flowers, candles: Vida Flores 09 523 5454

Resene Sensual Red 



Red-wine glasses: Maxwell Williams 09 520 1224

Resene Dutch White 

Candelabra, plates: Baran de Bordeaux 09 524 6949

Green goblets: Kate Fitzpatrick 09 630 0583

Resene Paradise 



Soup spoons, tablecloth: stylist's own

Resene Sisal 

