

# Entertaining Ideas

## Sterling Secrets For A Successful Holiday Season

(NAPSA)—When it comes to setting the mood for holiday entertaining, one of the most important areas to set is the table.

According to a recent survey by the Sterling Style Council, 83 percent of Americans focus on the table when entertaining. Nothing gives a table a special holiday glow or lets guests know just how much you value their company than the timeless beauty of sterling silver flatware. From Thanksgiving through New Year's, the table is a beautiful place to showcase your personal style.

"The most prominent place to highlight your decorating style is the table, where friends and family gather to connect over food," said Hildi Santo Tomás, one of the designers on "Trading Spaces."

Here are some holiday table setting tips from Santo Tomás:

- **Use Color.** Create a festive mood for your guests by mixing and matching linens and tableware. Don't limit yourself to only red and green for the holidays—gold, silver or snowy white will provide a sophisticated backdrop for your china and sterling silver flatware.

- **Showcase Your Sterling.** When you use sterling flatware on a daily basis, it develops a natural glow called *patina*, which reduces the amount of polishing necessary. Sterling flatware looks beautiful for any occasion, but especially during the holidays when paired with light-catching crystal, flickering candles and sparkling decorations.

- **Seasonal Cues.** In the fall, leaves and berries make a beautiful, colorful centerpiece. For winter holidays, spray paint bare branches with white or silver paint and decorate with miniature ornaments for a shining centerpiece.

- **Less Is More.** Instead of one big centerpiece, give each guest his or her own mini-centerpiece. For Thanksgiving, decorate each guests' setting with mini pump-



**Popular "Trading Spaces" designer Hildi Santo Tomás and fashion icon Nicole Miller create a festive holiday table by incorporating fresh flowers and sterling silver flatware.**

kins. For winter holidays, candles, flowers or sparkling ornaments can be placed on individual plates to prop up a place card.

- **Bridge the Generation Gap.** Holidays are a time to celebrate family and a creative way to showcase heritage is to display and use family heirlooms. Sterling flatware and accessories are popular heirlooms that have traditionally been passed down through generations. Feel free to mix and match new sterling pieces with older patterns to create an elegant table for your guests to enjoy.

"The secret to successful seasonal entertaining is uncovering your signature style and letting it shine through," said Santo Tomás. "The selection of a sterling flatware pattern or table accessory accentuates personal style in a unique and delicate manner."

Sterling silver flatware is available at all fine department stores, including Bloomingdale's, Marshall Fields and Dillard's. For more tips on how to create a sensational table setting, visit [www.SterlingStyleCouncil.com](http://www.SterlingStyleCouncil.com).