

# WINTER BLUES

Spin winter's natural beauty into a delightful party to kick off the New Year.

BY HANNAH STRANDBERG  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAUREN MCBRIDE

## Soiree

"I think having natural elements really makes the table because it brings the freshness of the outdoors inside."

Throwing a warm and inviting party can feel like a challenge when frost freckles your window panes, but the natural joy of winter is all around you. It just needs a little nudge from the backyard to your table! From her cozy home in Connecticut, blogger Lauren McBride dishes out expert advice on how to prepare for a glowing winter soiree.

### WARMTH OF WINTER

Lauren's natural accents are wintry, yet radiate a welcoming warmth. "I think having natural elements really makes the table because it brings the freshness of the outdoors inside," Lauren says. Use fresh or faux greenery as the table centerpiece to harvest the beauty of winter without chilling the party atmosphere. Lauren also recommends that you use "fresh stems, florals, berries or even other organic items like fruits and vegetables" to refresh a winter tablescape.

Add a snow-custed faux spruce tip to every place setting. Greenery with a spritz of icy sparkle celebrates the coldest season of the year without the cold.

(opposite) With simple yet stunning décor, you can create an inviting and functional environment. Save space for guests to pass around food platters and converse with ease.





### TEXTURE MIXTURE

The textural mixture of Lauren's metallic accents, candles and greenery is stunning. But what makes it so eye catching? It's all about balance. "I start with a base—something smooth and simple, and then add in from there. The smooth, simple details of the plates nicely balance the texture of the greenery, wood details and mercury glass," Lauren says. "I love mixing different greens like juniper, pine and eucalyptus." The variety of textures brings the entire table to life in a way that cheers and welcomes all the guests.

### COHESION OVER CLUTTER

If you want a cohesive look, Lauren's advice is to cut the clutter. "If I'm creating a larger centerpiece, I will create a less heavy look

for the place settings and vice versa," she says. "I always make sure each has similar elements or tones. The gold flatware and charger plates play nicely with the gold votive candles in this setting, as well as the mix of greenery." With the less-is-more factor, you can save more room on your table for farmhouse treats like homemade soup and hot apple cider.

## Winter COLOR SCHEMES

The right palette can breathe life into the dullest winter day.

Before you begin your tablescape, pick out a color palette that says 'winter' to you. Your décor will revolve around this palette, but if you're not sure what to choose, don't worry! Lauren has shared a few of her favorite color schemes for a winter party.

**NEUTRALS WITH METALLICS.** You can never go wrong with neutral colors and metallic accents. When you decorate with natural tones, you create a look that can travel through every season with minimal changes. Since shiny metal is already eye catching by itself, make the majority of your décor neutral with a few metallic accents to balance the textures.

**SHADES OF BLUE.** Blue is a breath-taking option for homes with minimalistic white and gray color palettes. Stack your place settings with different shades of blue, from darkest to lightest, for a frost effect. Then you can finish with snow-crust spruce tips and gold silverware to soften the look with natural simplicity. Lauren especially recommends this for a beach home.

**BLUSH, SILVER AND GOLD.** Mixing a light color like blush with two metallic accents will brighten a cloudy sky. Blush is sweet and gentle, and almost impossible to overuse. Dress your table in the dewy glow of blush with table runners, napkins and floral arrangements. Then add metallic accents in pieces like silverware, candlesticks and icy glitter on faux spruce tips.

Tip

MIX DIFFERENT KINDS OF GREENERY INTO YOUR DÉCOR FOR A NATURAL, HOME-GROWN LOOK.

•••••

The way these candlesticks look like they're growing out of the garland ties the natural and metallic decorations together effortlessly. Then the birch candles mixed with the rustic metallic jars doubles the effect.

(opposite) Match the tone of your place settings to the stain of your wood table to make metallic accents pop and balance the textures.

"I love mixing different greens like juniper, pine and eucalyptus."