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Chicago interior designers share their Thanksgiving decor tips

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By Laura Schocker
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We know interior design may fall pretty low on your to-do list when the kids are covered with gravy and the in-laws are on their way, but don't neglect the ambience. We asked local interior designers to share their best tips for Thanksgiving Day décor.

Go natural

"Thanksgiving is a time of bounty, and I love a natural centerpiece," says Mary Lou Kalmus of Designing Edge in Clarendon Hills.

She suggests gathering colorful seasonal fruits and vegetables, such as eggplant, squash, gourds, kale, pears, grapes and persimmons. Display them in an unexpected container, like a soup tureen, with the items spilling out (red and green grapes work great for this). Add ivy from a houseplant and mix in some decorative balls-you can pick some out at a local Pier 1 store. Finally, keep the arrangement low, adding moss around the base and in the arrangement itself.

"Everything is more casual these days, so instead of a formal tablecloth, use placemats or place a runner on either side of the table with the place settings on top," Kalmus says. Finish off the look with soft votives that won't interfere with the view.

Create interest

For an elegant Thanksgiving table, chocolate brown and ivory is a great color scheme, says SuzAnn Kletzien of SuzAnn Kletzien Design in Chicago. Opt for a deep brown tablecloth.

For the centerpiece, use various ivory ceramic vases and candle holders mixed with white pumpkins and cream-colored gourds. If you want a more casual look, use a mix of clear vases or small-tiered servers filled with pinecones, acorns, large nuts and leaves, with each item in its own container. For either centerpiece, be sure to use various heights and odd numbers, she says.

Less is more

"My favorite centerpieces are very simple," says Karyn Musick of Divae N' Design, based in Buffalo Grove, Highland Park and Chicago.

She suggests heading to a local craft shop to pick up a few bags of colored paper maple leaves. Spread the leaves out in a sparse pile on your table, putting three pillar candles (all the same color but different heights) on top, along with some small pumpkins and gourds. For a more casual meal, you can swap out the pillars for votives.

Or, dress things up by writing each guest's name on a maple leaf and using them as place cards.

See more of Laura's stories [here](#).

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