



change of pace

RELAX INTO SIMPLER ENTERTAINING WITH DECORATIONS THAT HAVE A PRACTICAL PURPOSE.

WORDS AND STYLING PIA JANE BIJKERK PHOTOGRAPHY CRAIG WALL

ONE OF THE THINGS I love most about summer is its unflustered easiness. Although the season is often described as harsh, over the years I have learnt to surrender to the heat — to let it take over and slow me down. My focus has shifted to things of convenience rather than social acceptability, and tasks and events happen spontaneously, spurred by the merest touch of a cool breeze.

Each summer I aspire to being more relaxed and free-spirited. This year, I hope to spend less time with technology and more time lying in my back garden, listening to the birds in the trees and enjoying tea parties with my baby girl, making dandelion soufflés and tiny mud cakes to serve with our pretend cups of tea. However, allowing time for such merriments means other things, like chores, need to be managed in a more efficient manner, with some being sacrificed altogether: a quick sweep of the living area instead of a full house vacuum, for example, while ironing anything is completely out of the question for the whole season.

Preparing for guests can also be re-evaluated. Come summertime, I create a season-inspired vignette on an antique table in the corner of our dining room. I add small stacks of vintage plates and bowls alongside glass jugs large and small — some with fresh flowers, others waiting to be filled with iced lemongrass tea. There is a very old bottle caddy, every opening of which I have

filled with glass jars. In these I place handfuls of knives, forks and spoons, an assortment of mismatched linen napkins and serving utensils. Little condiment pots stand nearby as well as a pile of beeswax tea-light candles, a linen tablecloth and a woven tray. Loose assemblages of seedpods, seashells and fallen petals complete the vignette, which is not only eye-catching but also useful for the hot days ahead.

If you like the idea of displaying and using a carrier like this, remember it doesn't have to be fancy or shiny new — a little rust and signs of age will bring rustic charm to your setting as you use it to transport the cutlery and condiments to the table. Once these are distributed, pop a beeswax tea light in each empty jar of the caddy and let it light your summer table, casting pretty shadows on the leaves and blossoms you've collected from your garden as improvised decoration.

I like to add things to the vignette as I see them around my home or at the local markets. The latest pieces are a couple of old dice and set of French playing cards. Happy days. ✱

PIA'S LINK LOVE

- 1 www.ageoldtree.virb.com
- 2 www.laporterouge.blogspot.com.au
- 3 www.shipbuildingblog.blogspot.com.au
- 4 www.stillblog.net

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY OLGA BENNETT AUBERGINE PORCELAIN VESSEL FROM MUD AUSTRALIA VINTAGE GARDEN POT HOLDING SEED PODS FROM GARDEN LIFE DELPHINIUMS FROM GRANDIFLORA ALL OTHER PROPS, STYLING'S OWN, FOR STOCKIST DETAILS, SEE PAGE 135