



Traditional Or Not: Host A Thanksgiving Party Everyone Will Be Thankful For Without Breaking The Bank

Art director and interior design influencer Audrey Kuether discusses entertaining on a budget, Friendsgiving, and how to make Thanksgiving great using the tools in your own backyard—literally.

Luca Piacentini
11/18/2019

Thanksgiving is the time of year for taking stock and celebrating with our loved ones. While the holiday is traditionally spent around a [nice dining room table](#) with extended family, Thanksgiving can take many shapes, each as colorful and exciting as the last.

[Audrey Kuether](#), creative director, [TV personality](#), and [founder of the OhSoLovely blog](#), has plenty of experience when it comes to decorating for Thanksgiving.

“I absolutely love to host Thanksgiving at my house,” she said. “I know most people care more about the food, but I am [all about the tablescape and ambiance](#). Thankfully my husband enjoys

the cooking part, so we balance each other out nicely.”

Kuether’s love for Thanksgiving comes from childhood memories of her family making sure that the holiday was special. “When I was a kid, my great grandmother made us a handmade turkey doll out of a brown gardening glove, rickrack and googly eyes,” she said. “I still own it to this day and every year it always comes out of storage the day after Halloween. Thanksgiving also represented the beginning of the holiday season because we always decorated the holiday tree together that evening as a family.”

The great thing about Thanksgiving is that no two look exactly the same. Since every family is unique, every Thanksgiving is unique as well. For example, for many Asian cultures, Thanksgiving is actually known as Labor Thanksgiving, and it is meant to be a time to celebrate not only food but the hard work that goes into providing it.

For those looking for a way to add their own personalized touch to the Thanksgiving season this year, there are tons of ways to host a unique and fun Turkey Day celebration without breaking the bank.

“Firstly, I love putting my own touch on the decor and the table setting,” said Kuether. “One fun tip is to make your own DIY napkin rings out of simple gold wire or poster board and gold foil duct tape. These will surely receive some compliments from dinner guests. In my experience, the napkin rings end up looking so professional that no one ever knows they are simple DIYs. In addition to the rings, decorate the table centerpiece with various-size pumpkins and candles for a truly autumnal experience.”

To really add a personal touch to the decor while still staying on budget, Kuether recommends walking out the door and shopping the backyard. “Sometimes it doesn’t take leaving your own backyard to find the best Thanksgiving decorations,” she said. “Last year, I went out back and gathered some leaves, foliage, pinecones and a tree slice. To start, I spray painted the leaves and foliage and left the pinecones natural. The tree slice is painted a vibrant hue on one side, and natural on the other side, and I opted for the natural side in this setting to keep it simple. Finally, I laid everything out on some burlap fabric to create a rustic vibe.”

To keep it fresh, Kuether also recommends swapping out the pumpkins for a glass cloche full of six pinecones or an assortment of different sized twigs and sticks, spray painted various golds, silvers and bronzes.

“It is totally possible to have a well-decorated holiday home on a small budget,” said Kuether. “The trick is getting creative and keeping the decor rustic and autumnal for Thanksgiving. Now, I never go to the craft store for decorations before I’ve shopped my backyard.”

While most people think of the traditional Thanksgiving as being hosted from home, sometimes an untraditional celebration can be just as memorable for those who can’t afford to fly home for the long weekend, or even for those looking to spread Thanksgiving cheer beyond the immediate family.

“I enjoy getting our closest friends together for a Friendsgiving the week before Thanksgiving,” said Kuether. “We like to do a potluck-style meal for these as well as have everyone bring a bottle of wine to share. Potlucks are a great way to make the cooking easy on everyone and still enjoy a big meal.”

Whether foraging for decorations in the backyard or celebrating early with friends, entertaining for Thanksgiving can be a rewarding and loving experience where design and food come together to create the perfect atmosphere.

“As long as I'm with the people I love,” said Kuether. “It doesn't matter where or how we spend the holiday.”