

Holiday style tips make tables sparkle

By Cecilia Nasmith

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This is the time of year when hostesses are looking for new ideas to make their holiday entertaining sparkle.

The Style For Home Entertaining evening planned for November 24 is just the ticket — and a Northumberland United Way fundraiser as well.

The event is hosted by the new Port Hope business Table Talk. It was owner Nikki Dersnah's idea, but she turned to her friend Tracy West for organizing, planning and pulling together all the ideas.

"It was truly a joint effort," Ms. Dersnah said.

"We are all about entertaining and food and style and helping people figure out what's efficient and what kind of look they want to have," she added. "That goes from the cooking-studio lessons to helping people with creative culinary ideas, gourmet foods, tableware, barware, linens.

"That was a natural extension, to put on an evening that pulls all that together."

The big draw will be the expertise of three masters of the art: Renée Montpelier, David MacPhee and Tracy Kundell.

Ms. Montpelier has been the television host of the WNetwork's do-it-yourself program *The Decorating Challenge* for seven years. She began a health-care career in the field of palliative care, but took the plunge to pursue her dream of acting.

"I am so pleased to be doing this event with David and Tracy," she said. "It amazes me how their minds work. They are artists — when they get inspired, there is no stopping them."



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Sharing expertise — From left, the expert celebrity design team of Renée Montpelier, David MacPhee and Tracy Kundell will give you ideas to make your holiday entertaining sparkle at the November 24 Style For Home Entertaining fundraiser for Northumberland United Way.

Tracy Kundell, owner of Avalon Interiors, has more than 15 years of experience in the design field and is a veteran of more than 60 television appearances.

David MacPhee, owner of David MacPhee Design Services Limited, has run his successful company for more than 20 years, tackling assignments throughout North America.

"The event will be fun, because we can all relate," Ms. Montpelier

promised.

"All of us entertain, and most of us like to have great table settings to woo our house guest. Well, you won't be disappointed.

"You can expect to pick up some of the tricks of the trade, and the best part of it is that David and Tracy will be demonstrating do-it-yourself projects that can easily be done in your own home."

The evening will feature four tables designed by this team of

experts in different themes: *Après Ski* with a European flair, a glittering forest for a *Traditional Christmas Dinner*, *Lobster-Fest Family Feast* with the latest in the 2006 colour-palette combination, and a *Romantic Everything Edible Dinner* for two.

The designers will demonstrate do-it-yourself centrepieces for each, which will be given away as door prizes. And there are special plans for the tables themselves.

"Once the designers talk about

them, why they are a certain style, how to capture that style, at the end of the evening they will be auctioned," Ms. Dersnah said. "Several very lucky people will be able to walk away with beautiful designer tables."

Each table is sponsored by a company Ms. Dersnah works with, she said, and they are all delighted to be supporting United Way. And each will come with expert menu suggestions and tips by chef Elaina Asselin of the Hillcrest Victorian Inn.

Recipes and tips from the evening will find their way into the smart take-home goody bags everyone will receive, she added, along with a number of small items to say thank you for coming.

The busy organizers have also planned a silent auction.

"These items will be a beautiful collection of — as Tracy says — must-haves, a variety of things that all have to do with table design and table décor," Ms. Dersnah said. "There will be some gourmet foods too."

There will be food sampling, courtesy of two companies Ms. Dersnah works with — Wildly Delicious and Stonewall Kitchen — of both products they recommend and others that are available at her store.

And Carmela Estates Winery of Prince Edward County will be offering selections for an evening of sampling.

"It's an idea that's very unique to the area, and we have had a lot of positive feedback already," Mrs. West added.

The evening runs from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Best Western, and tickets are \$50 (available at Table Talk in downtown Port Hope and the United Way office).