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Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

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Home for the HOLIDAYS





Set the



Winter wonderland celebration

Hors d'oeuvres

Artichoke cakes with spicy red sauce

Lobster with chive butter

First course

Duo of smoked salmon and tuna tartare

Entrée

Rack of Colorado lamb with rosemary jus

Braised Swiss chard with toasted pine nuts and caramelized garlic

Crispy potato galette

Papovers with minced sweet onion

Flower

Warm powdered pear and mandarin "beehive" with honey butter



Scene

AS SEEN IN
CTC&G
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THE CREATIVE TEAM AT WATSON'S CATERING & EVENTS DESIGNED THREE FABULOUSLY DELICIOUS TABLESCAPES FOR HOLIDAY INSPIRATION AND BEYOND

BY CATRIONA BRANCA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKI DUISTERHOF

Winter Wonderland

With plenty of glitz for a New Year's Eve dinner or a midwinter get-together, this sophisticated tablescape originated with catering director Jennifer Bonnette, who created working to create an *after*-Christmas party. "We wanted to convey a fresh and modern look, and inspire a masquerade New Year's Eve theme or a dinner party in the dead of winter when things slow down," says Susan Watson Scully, president of Watson's Catering & Events. "There are a lot of reflective qualities to the table—at night it will sparkle and feel very cozy." Bonnette's elegant menu starts with caviar, artichoke cakes and lobster, then salmon and tuna tartare. The rack of lamb entree is accompanied by a potato galette, Swiss chard and popovers. The evening ends with warm poached pears and mascarpone with local honey and artisan truffles.



Precious Metals
(THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE)
Banish midwinter blues with a table of shimmering accents like Armand de Brignac Champagne, Dan Miller Champagne flutes through Artful Home and brushed-gold flatware exclusive to Smith Party Rentals. White amaryllis in a silvery vase adds a sophisticated sparkle to the setting. A divided square plate holds the first course of smoked tuna and salmon tartare with wonton crisps and sea beans. See *Resources*.



Kids' Christmas

For the littlest conductor in your life, a train-themed party might be just the ticket. "I was inspired by my nephew John, who is nine and completely into trains," says Susan Watson Scully. "Luckily, I was able to find the exact size train I was picturing in my head. Once I had that, I could figure out what size table to use—there had to be enough room for the place settings." The design is all about kids, from the Santa place cards and the child-friendly silverware to the conductors hats and fun seating. Foods include cheddar cheese puffs, Maryland crabcakes and maple bacon-wrapped grissini, plus beef bourguignon served in a puff pastry Christmas tree. Kids of all ages will enjoy a dessert spread of Santa hat brownies, eggnog ice cream and Reindeer Oreo cookies.



All Aboard! (OPPOSITE PAGE) A toy train carries Lindt chocolates around a tabletop Christmas tree. Red ticking tablecloth and napkins from La Tavola Linens complement the striped caps. Naughty/Nice drinks are made of ginger ale, orange slices and pomegranate seeds—a new Shirley temple. Plates, mugs and flatware are from Smith Party Rentals. **For Small Pints** (THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) A tabletop tree takes center stage. Hot cocoa with peppermint chips is served in bright Speckleware. Serena & Lily poufs create playful seating. The entree is beef bourguignon Christmas tree vol-au-vent with honey-glazed carrots and haricots verts. See Resources.



Caribbean Christmas

Initially inspired by the Feast of the Seven Fishes that Italians celebrate on Christmas Eve, Susan Watson Scully soon broadened her theme. "Many of our clients vacation in the Bahamas or in St. Barths, so this table created a more relaxed 'island' Christmas," she says. Charts of Long Island Sound and the Atlantic coastline form a unique tablecloth, while white and blue touches reinforce the ocean aesthetic. "Hints of Christmas in the sea green ornaments, boat décor and shell trees were enough to pull it off," says Scully. Seaworthy menu selections include passed hors d'oeuvres such as mahi crudo and foie gras brûlée, an amuse-bouche with jumbo lump crab, seared sea scallops with Madagascar sauce, plus an entrée of baked red snapper. Christmas croque en bouche, passionfruit soufflé and French macaroons top off the dessert menu.



What A Catch (CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM OPPOSITE PAGE) The centerpiece is a replica of Ernest Hemingway's fishing boat; scallops are served on small plates from HomeGoods. Menu and tiny fishing rods on plates are through Watson's Catering & Events. Vintage fish forks and knives with ivory handles are part of Susan Watson Scully's personal collection. Baked red snapper with red Thai curry sauce is accompanied by coconut jasmine rice and matchstick zucchini. See [Resources](#).

