

tabletops

Tea With a Twist

By Erika Kotite

Set a pretty-in-pink (or blue!) tea table with some whimsical place settings and plenty of fun details.

Let's face it—most of us spend our days eating sandwiches and drinking our morning coffee from less-than-inspired plates and cups. In our busy lives, we forget how much enjoyment can come from a pretty piece of china or a decorative

silver fork. Delightful serving pieces can make even yesterday's store-bought cake taste good.

So when we laid eyes on Rosanna Inc.'s Pink Tea and Hot Chocolate collections, we were instantly smitten. Like the warm chocolate drizzle

on a fancy restaurant dessert, words like "Earl Grey," "Jasmine" and "Chocolat" are sprinkled all over each piece, written with a soft brown glaze in a fun, loopy script. Their oversized proportions and gentle curves, along with a nice heft, mean



We used pink and brown ribbon, fastened necktie style around our "Love Knot" silverware. Real chocolate truffles in the centerpiece are there for the plucking.



Draw up a chair to this not-so-ordinary tea party. Billowing taffeta and a lush centerpiece are backdrops for the wonderful scrawled-upon place settings of Rosanna Inc.

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no worries for the hostess. They'll go back into the cupboard at night, as shiny and strong as they left it.

A HAPPY COMBINATION

At first, working with pink and brown might seem strange, but it's actually a most fetching pair. Think mounds of strawberry and chocolate ice cream in a crystal bowl; or better

still, a pink organdy prom dress with a soft brown velvet sash. You'll find all sorts of ways to combine napkins, tablecloth, centerpiece and accessories with delightful results!

Our table starts with a glimmering taffeta tablecloth in "cappuccino" from Gracious Style. It's both warm and glamorous, softened just slightly with one of Saro Trading Company's

sheer tasseled table toppers. Pink damask napkins, folded into "rose-buds," complete the foundation.

For the centerpiece, we discovered that the round box holding our dessert plates made a perfect container. After inserting a plastic liner and florist's foam, we created a simple rose arrangement with sprigs of Queen Anne's lace tucked in. Then, just for



White teapot, sugar and creamer are a nice contrast with the pink and brown palette of the table.



(Left) Vanilla votives stand on giant hunks of Ghirardelli chocolate on our cozy hot chocolate table.



fun, we placed some milk chocolate truffles on skewers so guests could pop them into their mouths any time they wished.

LOVE KNOTS

Despite its pinkness, this table is also built for a man. Because the cups and plates are generous in size, they fit a man's hand (as well as man-sized portions) with ease. Also, consider the silverware: Vera Wang's "Love Knots" collection is perfect for the occasion. The silver-plate pieces are strong with clean lines, yet finished with a graceful bow at the end. Instead of wrapping them in ribbon tied in a traditional bow, we opted instead for a tie knot. Using double strands of pink satin and brown grosgrain ribbon, we made a tie knot around a fork, knife and spoon. A personal tea strainer wrapped around the setting reminds us that tea love brought us here in the first place.

Use plenty of vintage tea towels, doilies and complementary serving ware (we used a combination of

Depression glass and milk glass pieces) to give your table its romantic flair. Then light the candles, turn on some music...and pass the scones.

HOT CHOCOLATE VERSION

Cocoa lovers are going to swoon over your homemade treats—especially if you serve them up in the blue-and-brown Hot Chocolate collection. Instead of a teapot, sugar and creamer, these cups, saucers and dessert plates come with a charming chocolate pot. Pair them with a per-



fectly chocolate-y centerpiece and cinnamon sticks, and your sweet-toothed friends won't be able to resist. The robin's-egg-blue background is perfect for either a country-inspired theme, with gingham and cornflowers, or as a brilliant ending to an elegant soiree, paired with crystal and white roses.

Rest assured, these charming pieces are ready to enhance your table no matter what the mood or occasion. Tea and chocolate never tasted—or looked—so good!

*Produced and styled by Erika Kotite
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See Shopping Guide, page 90.*