



# DRESS DOWN FOR DINNER

Forget starched linen and clunky silverware – entertaining just got much more relaxed. Here's how to set the scene

REPORT: EMMA J PAGE

## ◀ PICK A PATTERN

Here, plates and bowls in an abstract design and muted palette are standout without being stuffy. 'Instagram has fuelled the demand for unusual tableware, featuring interesting glaze techniques, colour and pattern,' says Kate Butler, head of design at Habitat. 'The shapes here are inspired by paper-cut collage and give a clean, contemporary look.' Pair bold ceramics with matt black cutlery and use raw materials, such as a simple oak dining table, to provide visual contrast. Dinnerware, £60 for a 12-piece set, cutlery, £95 for a 16-piece set, all [habitat.co.uk](http://habitat.co.uk)





## KEEP IT SIMPLE... AND STYLISH

'Creating a setting that combines beauty and practicality is important,' says Alex Hely-Hutchinson, founder of Neal's Yard restaurant 26 Grains. 'I love aged wood surfaces and handmade earthenware crockery, which complement a simple but considered style of food.' Dining table, £529, pendant lamp, £47, dinnerware, £119 for a 12-piece set, all swooneditions.com



## ADD A TOUCH OF GOLD

Using metal and stoneware against a warm wood backdrop creates a relaxed feel, while the gold cutlery adds a sense of occasion to dinner parties. The key here is to layer – use stacks of ceramics paired with linen napkins. Dinnerware, £119 for a 12-piece set, swooneditions.com. For similar cutlery, try anthropologie.com or zarahome.com



## GO FULL CIRCLE

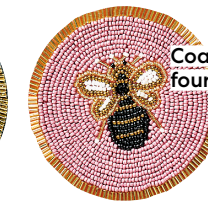
A statement table and chairs will anchor your space. The circular shape creates an informal feel and works well in small spaces. For a laid-back vibe that shows off the beauty of natural materials and craftsmanship, opt for honed wood paired with chairs that have a classic design. Mismatched colours loosen up the look. Visit conranshop.co.uk for similar chairs





## AND RELAX...

'Stylishly casual restaurant dining is influencing the way that we decorate our homes,' says Philippa Prinsloo, head of design for home at John Lewis. 'For a pared-back look, ditch the tablecloth and mix and match your dinnerware. Add a large rug underneath the dining table to help zone an open-plan space.' Dining table, £799, bench, £220, round rug, £100, all [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)



Coasters, £16.50 for four, [oliverbonas.com](http://oliverbonas.com)



Oak chair, £630, [dykeanddean.com](http://dykeanddean.com)

## TABLE TALK

Nail informal dining with playful prints and a shot of colour



Salad bowl, £25, [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)



Pendant light, £149, [abigailahern.com](http://abigailahern.com)



Cake plates, £25 for two, [made.com](http://made.com)



Chopping board, £30, [habitat.co.uk](http://habitat.co.uk)



Jug, £10, [anthropologie.com](http://anthropologie.com)



Glasses, £16 for two, [oliverbonas.com](http://oliverbonas.com)



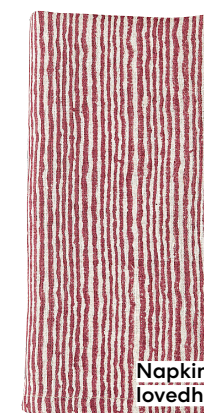
Platter, £48, [anthropologie.com](http://anthropologie.com)



Plate, £39, [rockettstgeorge.co.uk](http://rockettstgeorge.co.uk)



Cutlery, £79 for a 16-piece set, [made.com](http://made.com)



Napkins, £49.99 for four, [lovedhala.com](http://lovedhala.com)



Eight-seater dining table and benches, £399, [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)