

# ALL THAT GLITTERS

FORGET DECKING THE HALLS WITH BOUGHS AND HOLLY. THREE VETERAN EVENT PLANNERS DISH UP TIPS ON THE HOTTEST WAYS TO RING IN THE COOLEST HOLIDAYS.

BY ANGIE BROMELAND



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**JODI COLLEN //**  
DIRECTOR OF EVENT AND  
CONFERENCE PLANNING,  
AUGSBURG COLLEGE

**Embrace the season's trends.** >> You can make any color work for a holiday event. If jewel tones are big, use those; if the hot color for the year is chartreuse, incorporate that. Be creative and pull in traditional elements in an artistic way.

**Mix and mingle.** >> Use the opportunity to be creative with food and beverage elements. We believe that our guests have a better experience if they're engaged and interacting throughout the night.

**Wrap big flavors in small packages.** >> I've seen a major resurgence of mini items—especially desserts like cupcakes, cheesecake-pops and truffles. All of these are appropriate for the holidays, especially if you get creative.

**LIZA LAMPI //**  
EVENT PLANNER,  
EVENTIVE MEETINGS

**There's no taste like home.** >> It's a comfort food time of year, so make your guests happy through their stomachs. I like doing edible centerpieces, which are as eye pleasing as they are cost effective and delicious.

**Steam the place up.** >> Hot specialty drinks with sweet liquors and liqueurs are a must for any holiday event. I also like deluxe coffee bars.

**Ace history while scouting venues.** >> I love holiday parties at the Landmark Center in St. Paul. The pillars look great up lit in red to give the room a warm holiday glow. Across the street Rice Park is lit up in holiday lights. Not to mention the endless hotel and restaurant options for guests.

**GERI WOLF //**  
EVENT PLANNER, THE  
STYLE LABORATORY INC.

**Think outside the salt box.** >> One of my favorite items to use over the holidays is rock salt, which creates an inexpensive "icy" landscape for buffets and/or centerpieces. The roughness of the salt juxtaposed against a white satin linen makes the monochromatic look dramatic.

**Miniaturize and maximize.** >> Anything and everything served in mini food vessels is hot. Serving items in shot glasses, mini-martini glasses, Chinese porcelain spoons and on Thai toothpicks lets food become part of the décor.

**Don't over-plan.** >> Holiday parties should not be too contrived or controlled. Once guests arrive, don't over-schedule the night with announcements or presentations. It's about celebrating, and, believe it or not, there's a lot to celebrate these days. 🍷



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