

Good LIVING

HOME, STYLE, BEAUTY, HEALTH

/ THE WELL-KEPT HOME /

GET GLEAMING

Give us your delicate dinner plates, your tarnished silver, your smudged stemware. We'll show you how to make them shine and sparkle, right in time for the season of celebrations.

TEXT BY ELYSE MOODY

How to Clean . . .

SILVER

Most pieces need only a quick wash by hand in warm, soapy water; take care not to submerge decorative elements, like wood or mother-of-pearl. If your items look more yellow or blackened than you'd like, give them a deep cleaning first: Pour a little silver lotion onto a soft cotton cloth (a piece of an old T-shirt will do) and wipe carefully, says Julien Goudard-Lemoine, director of collections for Parisian silversmith Puiforcat, which makes its own tarnish-prevention cream. (We also like Wright's and Hagerty.) To fight future tarnish, wash items after dinner and store them in cotton cloth or bags. If it's humid where you live, consider bundling the cotton in plastic bags or wrap, suggest Lally Brennan of Commander's Palace, in New Orleans, and Mary Ferguson of Greyfield Inn, in Georgia.

GLASS

Great news: Most items can go straight into the dishwasher, says James Murray, vice president of design and creative at Simon Pearce, in Quechee, Vermont. Just make sure your machine is in good shape—rusty prongs can scratch, so if they look worn, buy new rubber tips. And space pieces out. Certain products (like GreenShield and Jet-Dry) can help prevent cloudy water marks. Hand-wash vintage stems and pieces with gold detail—and take off jewelry before you roll up your sleeves, says Lori Hedtler, owner of Devonia Antiques, in Boston and West Palm Beach, Florida: "Diamonds and bracelets can break glass."

CRYSTAL

Rinse each glass in warm water and a teaspoon of white vinegar to remove tannin and lime deposits, then hand-wash and dry with a soft cloth, says Céline Sanchez, brand director for French crystal maker Saint-Louis.

PEWTER

The beauty of this material is that it tarnishes very slowly—all it usually needs is a light dusting, even if it's been stored away for years. But because it's soft, it's vulnerable to scratches. Italian pewter maker Match suggests removing them with metal polish (like Cape Cod) or grade #0000 steel wool; then hand-wash in warm, soapy water and dry right away. After dinner, wash solid pieces and any with crystal or glass components by hand. If you have hard water, hand-wash the rest, too; otherwise, ceramic items with pewter trim can go in the machine on the china or gentle setting, with no heat-dry. Let them cool before taking them out (the materials can contract and loosen from the heat). To prevent scratches, store stacked pieces with plate separators or paper in between.

PORCELAIN

It's sensitive to temperature changes, so if your porcelain spends the off-season in storage, give it time to adjust, says Hedtler. "Say your dishes are in an unheated attic. Let them sit in the garage for a day or two before you bring them into the kitchen. Otherwise, the temperature shift could cause crazing [lines in the surface] or a crack. Even 20 degrees matters." Hand-wash vintage porcelain, taking care with the edges. That's the rule for hand-painted or gold-trimmed plates and bowls, too. That said, some porcelain is dishwasher-safe on the light-wash or china cycle, says Daniel Da Silva, USA president of Portuguese porcelain maker Vista Alegre. Check for markings on the bottoms. For safe-keeping, place a linen or felt protector or a paper towel between plates, says Hedtler, and don't stack more than 12.

BRASS

Some modern types are lacquered and don't tarnish. Unlacquered brass, however, is similar to silver in that it develops a patina when exposed to air. If you want a high shine, rub brass polish (such as Weiman or Wright's) onto the surface using a polishing cloth or mitt, then buff it gently, advises Tina Frey, founder of Tina Frey Designs, a San Francisco-based maker of resin and brass tableware. After dinner, hand-wash pieces in warm, soapy water using a soft cloth, and store them in a climate-controlled part of your home, away from humidity.

THE DETAILS (from left): **Williams-Sonoma Presidio pitcher**, \$100, williams-sonoma.com. **Richard Ginori 1735 Virginia ladle**, in Silver, richardginori1735.com. **Ralph Lauren Home Broughton Champagne flute**, \$125, ralphlauren.com. **William Yeoward Crystal Wisteria wineglass**, \$94, williamyeowardcrystal.com. **Hoffmann Patrician Service wine decanter**, \$583; and **brass nesting tray**, 12½" by 15½", \$165, shop.neuegalerie.org. **Match cloche**, \$280; and **Convivio butter dome**, \$135, match1995.com. **Wedgwood by Vera Wang Gilded Weave salad plate**, \$30; and **Vera Lace Gold gravy boat**, \$185, wedgwood.com.

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FAMILY FAVORITES

A serve-yourself setup feels personal when you bring out pieces in an interesting mix of materials and shapes. Pair curvy pewter and ironstone or ceramic tureens with leggy candlesticks and tiny gourds (which happen to make sweet bottle stoppers). Our DIY leather-handled trivets—made from scraps of the lantern trim and napkin pockets on the previous pages—offer common ground. For the how-to, see page 132.

THE DETAILS: Match oval tureen, \$570, match1995.com. Jamali Garden porcelain candlesticks (similar to shown), from \$24 for 4, jamaligarden.com.



FOND FAREWELLS

Dispatch guests with a sweet, sustainable parting slice. Line pre-made paper boxes with parchment; serve up the last of your crew's favorite pies, and garnish with sprigs of wheat, dried or faux berries, and raffia (aka leftover wreath supplies). And don't forget the fork.

THE DETAILS: A La Modo deluxe lidded pie slice boxes with forks, from \$30 for 25, alamodo.etsy.com. Ashland natural raffia, \$6, michaels.com.

ART DIRECTION BY JASPAL RIYAIT

