

## ASK THE DESIGNER: Hallowe'en Glam

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?I'm hosting a Halloween cocktail party and I want to decorate my space but I'm worried that it might look juvenile. Any suggestions??

Halloween is one of my favourite holidays. I enjoy the history of it as much as I enjoy seeing the kids go around the neighborhood trick-or-treating. There are several variations on the holiday's origin but they all agree that it stems from Celtic culture. October 31st, the last day of the Celtic calendar was the time they harvested the crops for the winter. It seems the Celts believed that the souls of the dead roamed the streets at night and would steal from, or damage, the yield. To keep the evil spirits happy people would leave gifts at their doors for them- thus creating the tradition of dressing up as ghouls and trick or treating.

Today, Halloween gives us a great excuse to decorate, have parties and, in general, have some silly fun! It can be tricky (pun intended) to find adult appropriate décor for the holiday. Much of what is out there is cartoon-like and made from disposable materials, which can look a bit kitsch. Here are some sophisticated ways to get your home ready for your grown-up Halloween soiree:

Decide on a colour scheme. Black is always chic, but steer clear of pumpkin orange for an accent colour. It can look a little juvenile. We're seeing tons of whites and ivories paired with black for a modern twist on traditional Halloween décor. Try painting some pumpkins white, or for a dash of glam, get creative with silver or gold metallics.

If you just don't feel right excluding orange from your party, introduce the hue subtly by choosing more of a burnt orange or rust colour. Use these colours in your table settings. Black table covers with black plates, black napkins and white napkin rings is both sleek and eerie at the same time.

Once you have selected a colour scheme it's time to decorate! One of the easiest and most affordable ways to decorate is by painting pumpkins. I once saw white pumpkins lining both sides of a black staircase all the way up the stairs. It was such a striking look as soon as you entered the home.

Try painting your initial in script on a pumpkin, or get creative with an ikat pattern, stripes or polka dots. Try painting some faux lace if you're feeling really adventurous? there are tons of templates online and the finished product screams sophistication.

Small gourd pumpkins are perfect for table décor. Hollow them out and add tea lights to set the tone for the evening with lighting. Another fun idea is to cut a sliver in the stem of the pumpkin and slide a place card in for a fun and festive seating arrangement. I've also seen large pillar candle holders being used as bases for small pumpkins. For a unique twist on this, place full-sized pumpkins on plant stands or pedestals. Small groupings of these around your home will really make a statement.

Use flowers to decorate as well.

We were recently at a Style at Home event where each guest was given an autumn floral arrangement. The flowers were all very deep shades of reds and purples ? they looked almost black. They were stunning and the dark hues added a dash of Halloween glam. Alternatively, dried flowers add ambience and play on the idea of darkness and all things old.

If you haven't filled your vases and glass containers with flowers, try throwing in some fake insects, or black feathers for a spooky look. Seeing something unnerving and unexpected will be sure to create the right atmosphere for your evening. The only other thing that can help to create atmosphere at your adults-only Halloween bash would be a signature Halloween cocktail- I love a good black devil martini!

Tag us (@nichedecor) in your Halloween decor photos to show us how you decided to decorate. Happy Haunting!