

THE CULTIVATED

# Life

SUMMER ENTERTAINING SPECIAL

Arches of espaliered apple trees frame the table, along a path bordered by tomato beds.

## *entertaining* FARM FRESH

Inspired by the just-plucked splendor of his Georgia garden, event designer Keith Robinson hosts a harvest supper that's truly farm-to-table.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Plates, Christopher Spitzmiller; stemware, Juliska; flatware, Anthropologie; runner in a Schumacher fabric; vintage vases. Seasonal flowers including antique hydrangeas, abelia, and zinnias. Keith Robinson in his vegetable garden.



When the asparagus has shot up and green beans dangle from twirling vines in Keith Robinson's planting beds, the seasonal abundance practically demands a celebration. "We're harvesting the best of what the garden has to offer for a fresh and effortless dinner," says the event designer, whose historic plantation is outside Atlanta.

For the setting, he chose a sun-soaked spot on a bucolic dirt path smack in the middle of the vegetable garden. Espaliered apple trees arch overhead while the surrounding plots burst with San Marzano tomatoes, irises, and the spidery leaves of crinum lilies. Enveloped by sweetly scented honeysuckle and colorful legumes, it's one of his treasured locales for taking in the kaleidoscopic beauty of the season.

Robinson gravitated toward a rustic look, with mismatched chairs and a richly

patinated table constructed from the remnants of an old house. He layered in tiny hints of glamour—gold-hued flatware and a patterned runner his mother fashioned from a painterly cotton-and-linen fabric—but refrained from adding too many frills. "If you're inviting guests to dine in a vegetable garden, it most certainly can be very casual," he notes. "It should feel spur of the moment, as if you just pulled everything together to enjoy a magical evening."

A riotous mixture of dahlias, zinnias, and eggplant foliage in saturated shades of pink, tangerine, and burgundy tumbles down the length of the table, along with a smattering of vegetables, which also star in leafy salads and antipasti. The arrangements are small and intimate—all the better for savoring the exquisite details of each bloom in the waning daylight: "As night falls, the soft glow of candlelight draws your eye to what's directly in front of you." □



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