Chromatic Tablescape with CBTV Live

Chapter 1 -
Chromatic Tablescape
- Hey everybody, it's Courtney from creativebug, coming at you live, like we always do on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which means, remember, you can write in and ask questions, if you have any questions. And the holiday season is upon is, and I've been seeing a lot of really fun platters and appetizer ideas coming up for Thanksgiving, or for just whatever holiday party you might be making. But what I haven't seen, is how to put something together that's also chromatic. So, looking at all of your ingredients and putting them together based on color. And I thought that would be a really fun exercise for your Thanksgiving, maybe appetizer spread. I'm gonna be doing this entirely vegetarian, but you can, of course, add meat, and I'll talk about different ways that you can do that as we go. Remember to write in and ask questions, if you have any, or maybe if you have any suggestions for things that you like to feed your family during the holidays. I've started this whole table as kind crazy and abundant, with amazing ingredients. I went to my local grocery store, Rainbow Grocery, and picked up a lot of fun stuff. I thought I would do cheese and crackers, some fruit and veggies, maybe some nuts, not to forget my chocolate. And all I have on my table so far are some wooden rounds. So I have some large wooden rounds, I've got a marble slab, and then I've got some painted wooden rounds. If you've checked out my creativebug class that's called, I think, "Painted Wooden Rounds", very straight forward. Allie's gonna be putting the link for you in the comments in just a minute, and that talks you through a different way of making a tablescape by using spray paint and acrylic paint to create these really decorative, layered table components. You can use those, I've integrated one here, here's another one. This isn't really with my color palette, so I'm actually going to set this aside, but I wanted you to just get a look at it. You want to make sure that whatever you're using is food safe. In this case, the spray paint is not food safe, but if you varnished it, or you can oil raw wood with a butcher block oil to make it food safe, that's fine. If you want to use something because it has a great pattern or a great color, like this little wooden round, I'm actually going to put a bowl on top of that. So it's fine, I'm not going to put any wet food, I'm just going to integrate it into my table space. Another thing that's super handy to have is a cutting board, a wet prep towel, always have one of those in your kitchen, a sharp knife, a couple of pieces of cutlery for serving, pick out something that's special and that goes with your theme, and a ton of little, clear bowls. You can use colored bowls, but you want to make sure that they fall into your color order when you're making your food display. You can also use white bowls. If you happen to have orange and red bowls, if you put them in the orange and red section, that could be another fun way to introduce color. But I thought the clear was a nice, neutral way to go. And I like to start with maybe a couple of anchor pieces of food, so that I can kind of remember my color order. And I've got everything washed and kind of prepped, but I'm going to be cutting things up as I go, and maybe arranging things by color on their own. So I thought, I've got this amazing loaf of Josey Baker Bread. He's one of our favorite local bread makers. And I cut off a few slices, I'll start with that. So this is gonna be kind of my brown section, so other things that are brown can go here. Got these really fun tamari sesame crackers. And I thought about sweet and savory, about different types of textures, different levels of crunch. I want to do some more white stuff on this side. So, I like that this has a little brown in it. Taking my cheese out of the wrapper, you can slice some of your cheese as well. Think I'm gonna go toward orange here. So maybe I wanna place those, so I

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remember to get to orange. Another thing that's really fun is hummus. So I have some hummus, this one happens to be mixed with red pepper, but I also have some hummus that is regular. So this is a case where I would probably take it out of the bowl it came in and put it in a glass bowl. So this is super easy. You can do yourself a favor by prepping some of your items, washing all of your fruits, maybe cutting some of your veggies. Anything like apples or pears you're definitely gonna want to cut right before you plate this stuff up. So that it's nice and fresh and crisp. And this is just, really, the fun part. It's about kind of playing with color, things are very easy to move, got this little butter than can go with the bread, I put that in a little tiny ramekin. Let's see what else is yellow? I've got some really beautiful crystallized ginger, and I found a lot of this stuff in the bulk food section at Rainbow Grocery, which is so much fun to shop. Whatever your local grocery store is, check out the bulk food, that's where you can find nuts, chocolates, sometimes dried fruits, depending on how extravagant or how excessive the bulk food section is in your local grocery store. There might be cereals and other things that you can put in here. Got some nuts, and I like the look of just a little bit of messiness. This doesn't have to be perfectly contained, I like a little bit of, like, wild, kind of, meandering goods. I've got radishes, this is a place for, instead of just putting all my radishes in one area, I've got pink radishes, and I've got purple radishes, so maybe I'll put the reds kind of over here, they're not exactly placed yet, but I know that this was gonna be red. And I think this dark purple can go kind of toward these brown colors. Don't let the radish roll away. You can leave the greens on you radishes, too. These ones didn't have particularly beautiful greens, so I took them off. But I like little tails. So purple is going there. You could layer in whole fruits and veggies, I think that purple pepper is super beautiful. So in this case, I'm not going to cut it up, you totally could. Another fun thing for this would be little cherry tomatoes. These are super easy to eat, you could include some dips on here, but I'm not going to put them on as is, I'm actually gonna separate them by color. A lot of this is just about editing and curating by color. We have a question. - [Woman] So, Barbara wants to know, can you move this once you set it up, or is this a set and leave situation? - Excellent question, Barbara's asking can you move this once you've set it up. And the answer is, not really. You could do separate plates, and those would be movable, and you could think about that like, you could combine some medium and some large sized plates, and have everything fit on the plate and then arrange the plates. I like this kind of falling off abundant look, so in this case, I am doing it mise en place, so, like, right where it's going to be served. Excellent question. So think about that, do what's comfortable for you and what's going to work for your holiday or your party. I think I want the oranges to go here, so this is like, more reddish orange. You can clear things away as you go. And we got these pistachios in the shell, which I think are really fun, they're more of a pale color, so we're going to put them here, closer to the whites, oh, pistachio in the hummus, no! You can add a spoon or a knife, where necessary. We've got a cheese knife, here. Got a pomegranate that I cut in half, I think that would be really pretty, so it's very fall. Got these peppers which are really nice. So, again, orange and then red, going into my pinks. I also wanted some sweet things, I know jam is often paired with cheese, so I have some jam. This one happens to be blackberry poppy flower, and it's this perfect purple color. The container for this is actually very pretty, so I'm okay leaving in the container and just taking the lid off. If you want to transfer into a smaller vessel, you totally could. Here's another one, this one is apricot and hibiscus. So just move things around and nestle things together. Again, the idea is for it to be abundant and feel overflowing. I like the breadsticks there, might want to slice an apple or two. I didn't go to chef school, so I'm probably cutting this wrong. So, sorry if I'm offending anyone with my cutting skills, my slicing skills. So in this case, I'm actually going to put this in a lighter section. You could put it in

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a bowl. If you're doing something like pears or apples, and your afraid they're going to turn, you might want to toss them in a little bit of lemon juice first and then arrange them. These are going here. You could also flip it, and put it in your orange section. You can put pears whole in here. We've got persimmons as well. - [Woman] We have another question. Emily asks, what item on the table is your most favorite to eat? - The question is, Emily's asking, thank you, Emily, what is my favorite thing to eat on this table? Oh my god, that's so hard. I have to say, cheese. (laughs) Probably cheese. This is why I'm vegetarian and not vegan, because I could live off grilled cheese sandwiches. The Cotswold cheese, and that's another staff favorite, I know Julie at creativebug really likes that cheese, too. That is to die for, I could eat an entire block of that if anybody let me. Cheese and crackers are so classic, and I love it. But the dried fruit and nuts are really nice, too. The Josey Baker Bread that's, like, super seedy is delicious. Also, olives. This is Brian's favorite, if you guys were watching our daily challenge with our creativebug staff, then you'll know, you won't know, but you'll know Brian, and he absolutely loves olives. We don't have any green in here, really. So I'm actually gonna scoot some of my pink over, maybe I'll remove a pear and a persimmon for now, do a little tiny peek of green here, coming off the orange, before we get to the red. And that leads me to another thing, adding some herbs or some greenery in here is really nice, this is rosemary. I think adding sage would be really pretty, I've got some sage here. You can trim anything if it's not the right length. So I think this is pretty to go in my green section. It's coming together. - [Woman] We have another question. Barbara asks, do you have to place anything on wooden rounds, or can you put food directly on them? - Good question, so Barbara's asking, can you put things on the wooden rounds? So, I mentioned this in the beginning, if you're using the wooden rounds, you can seal them with an oil, like a butcher block oil, something that makes them food safe, and I've done that to just the plain wooden rounds. This wooden round, which has paint on it, that's from my painted DIY centerpiece, that is not food safe, that's why I'm putting something in a bowl on top of it. So you just wanna think about it. Just like a cutting board, right? You can also, if you don't want to use the wooden rounds naturally like this, you could just use wood or bamboo cutting boards and layer them, try to keep them neutral, maybe you want to layer in some white or clear plates, and that would be really nice, too. Think about stacking things. So you can have something at one level, and then have a couple of things that are elevated. You can also sneak in some votives. In that same class, I talk about just transforming votives with washi tape, and I think that would be really pretty just kind of tucked in here as well. Got some more crackers here. This is really fun, and it's easy to replenish as people eat, also. I've got this really great dried fruit mix, this was a local fruit mix, and it has all different kinds of things in it. Generally, these tones are brown, but, if you dump this out, and you take a closer look, you'll see that some things are more green, some things are more purple, some things are more orange, so why not split them up and actually divide them by their color? I really like these green figs, figs aren't in season anymore, they're kind of at the tail end of their freshness, and so, I can introduce some figs and some green color, which is a little bit harder to do with what I picked. They didn't have any green apples, but that would be a good way to introduce some green. These figs are so, so pretty. You could tuck in some edible flowers, that would be a really nice thing to add to this. I've got some Turkish apricots, so let's add this here, right in between these kind of purpley figs and these persimmon rinds. Dried persimmons, rather. You can have things appear in two places, so I have some pecans there, maybe I want to put some pecans here, because the color feels right. I've also got some dates, those can get layered in. Maybe want to continue some of the darker brown from here over here to where the orange is happening. I found this really cool pickled pumpkin, maybe that goes in here, just scoot things over. It's pretty easy to

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move, to accommodate any new, delicious item you might find in the back of your pantry, a special pickled item. For whatever reason, my mother's cabinets are full of pickles, hot peppers, I've never seen anybody with so many pickled goods. This would be the perfect, like, clean out your pantry at the end of the season, bring out all those amazing pickled things you think you're gonna use and you never do. A lot of stuff works really nicely with a goat cheese, or a really soft cheese. It could be delicious. Do we have grapes? We don't have any grapes in here. Maybe this is a case where this bowl gets nestled in here. You could also take the grapes off and it could be kind of falling off your plate, I think that could be cool, too. These have already been washed, so they're good to go. Just tidying up as we go, so you can see what everything is looking like. Maybe I want to stack a second piece of cheese, here. Add some spoons to things. I like these natural wooden spoons. Some really pretty brass cutlery that I have as well, that can go in here. Don't forget your cheese knives. Maybe that gets layered in. I'm just cleaning up as I go, so you get the full effect of this. Then you can see what it looks like. I think it's ready to come together. One thing I haven't added yet is chocolates. So let's add the chocolate. Let's move things aside. I like the butter, I just saw the butter over here, and I was thinking the butter out is nice for this bread, but also works really nicely with radishes, so it's nice that the radishes are next to that. You could add all kinds of delicious things to this. All right, chocolate is a must. I think it's really, really good with cheese, I don't know, feels like it goes here. So let's find a place to tuck this in. Maybe here, and these crackers really need to go over here, because they're so pale. I actually was at my friend George McCalman's class this morning, at CCA, talking to his graphic design students about color, and one of the things that I mentioned that's important as someone who's working with color, is having an editing eye. So maybe not everything goes on this, maybe you hold back a couple of things, think about how you're going to group color, chocolate has to come, though. Chocolate has to be on here. All right, I think we're pretty close. Just gonna tuck this in, I forgot about these really adorable little baby apples! I'm gonna put a few right here, coming from our orange, red, into our green, because these apples are both green and red, maybe I want to put a few of the darker ones down here in the red area, also. I think fall is definitely my favorite time for food, especially for produce. And so many of the holidays are based around eating, so that feels like a good place to be. Yeah, I think that looks pretty awesome. So we went from our really pale colors to our browns, into our orange, and then kind of brighter colors, we've got reds, if anything feels like it's getting a little buried, we can adjust it. Little tiny peek of green, here. Maybe you wanna add a little bit of sage here, too. I think that would be nice. You can experiment just by, like I said, going to the grocery store and responding to what you like, flavors that you're interested in, textures, we've got a lot of delicious things, and, of course, you could add in meats, if you wanted. You definitely want to make sure that those are prepared in the right way, so, if you have anything that's raw or needs to be kept separate, just think about that as you're plating up all of your delicious food. I think this will be a super showstopper, for Thanksgiving or for any holiday, and while we're talking about color and organizing color, I wanted to just mention the backdrop that I'm in front of. So this is a set that I did a couple of weeks ago, and it was so well received, and so many people were really interested in it. I personally love it, because it's featuring projects from the last four years of, not all of, but a good majority of over 120 artists that we have on our site now. So, if you take a look, starting on the left, we've got the pinks and the reds, we've got some awesome crochet projects, we've got like a little four granny square with pink and yellow and white, and right below that the Ohio star, which is a quilting project. We've got some ribbon from one of my classes that's hand painted, we have Annabelle Wrigley's weaving here, it has these big, beautiful, white puffy bits with a little bit of neon pink, which I love. Jen Hewitt's hand stamped bag, which has the

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brown and the red, so you can see how I'm integrating colors going from kind of red into more warm tones and then coming out into the yellows. Got Yao Cheng's beautiful paintings, both the floral and the abstract. Lisa Congdon's really fun star paper collage with a bunch of bright colors there at the top. Olivia Acheter's paper flower, kind of top center. Wendy Bernard's hand knit dish towels, which are too beautiful to even use in the kitchen, I'm dying over those. Ashley Nickles' bib, Carolyn Friedlander has this really cool abstract quilt, with this beautiful chartreuse color. Gudrun Johnson has this amazing lace cardigan, and it goes on and on and on. So you can do this kind of same prismatic, chromatic color spectrum with anything. If you've watched our color tutorials, sorry, if you've watched our creativebug tutorials that are 30 Days of Creativity, I've got a few different ones on organizing things by color, Leanna has some color stuff, we've got a ton of color on the site, so check out creativebug.com so that you can get informed about color, and see how all of our different artists play with color. I thought applying it to food would be a really different way for us to play with color, and I think everyone is super excited to dig into this. And we'll see you next week for our next live shoot.

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