

BY PAUL SEMKULEY

Our days are becoming shorter with less daylight, yet this shouldn't be something frowned upon. Yes we love our summer days and balmy evenings, but this new season gives us the opportunity to get inside and get cozy. There is nothing more beautiful than a room filled with candles, the soft flickering light of the amber flame, giving that delightful glow. And where would the most ideal romantic place be to light these candles...the Dining Room.

Dining rooms are the extension of the heart and soul of the house, where all the hard work and efforts of a great cook or chef has created beautiful and delicious meals to be shared and enjoyed. They can take on a formal approach, bringing grand tradition, transitional, with a more relaxed atmosphere, or contemporary and eclectic vibe for those who like something less conventional. I am a firm believer in providing our clients with rooms that best suit their homes, personalities and aesthetics.

In this traditional dining room setting, the furniture and the paint is classic. The beige colour of the walls provide a natural neutral base from which we could build upon for the rest of the room. The extendable round dining table, with a pedestal base, is nicely assembled with an antique trestle table (with plenty of room to place a stunning floral arrangement or your family tea set heirloom), and the oversized piece of artwork, make a grand statement in this room. With 10' ceiling heights, the room is very spacious. The dining chairs, standing tall and majestic, were reupholstered, Parson-style, with a wide banded trim in contrasting coloured woven fabrics. To continue with this grandeur, we customized the drapery with a two-tone soft sheer linen to diffuse the daylight, and yet still be transparent in the evening, letting the glow of the night moon and stars graze into the room.

Our client wanted a room that would function as a formal dining room, and still have the regular usage of a daily family kitchen and eating area. The counter stools were reupholstered in soft faux leather, making it easy to clean with

younger kids, or just messy drips from the unmentionable adult. The crystal chandelier has just the right amount of weight and curves to keep the room pretty and delicate.

To add more interest to the room, we had our professional painters come in on site and re-stain the kitchen island in dark chestnut, which made it become more of a piece of furniture. We encourage our clients to do this in their kitchens in order to break up the monotony of cabinetry. This also eliminated the need to touch up all those shoe and scuff marks under the cantilevered ledge, that seem to appear on a daily basis.

Dining rooms should be a place of gathering and conversation, where the daily events can unfold, a discussion of an upcoming trip or event, a celebration of a birthday, anniversary or holiday, but sometimes its just nice to light a few candles, serve a delicious meal and spend some quality time together with your loved ones. "I think you will agree the sign of a civilized society is a regular dining schedule," - Philippa Ballantine.

TIPS

Dining room chandeliers should hang 60-66" above the floor.

Use dimmer switches on both your chandelier and pot lights. Wall sconces should also be on a low wattage to reduce the brightness, creating soft ambient lighting.

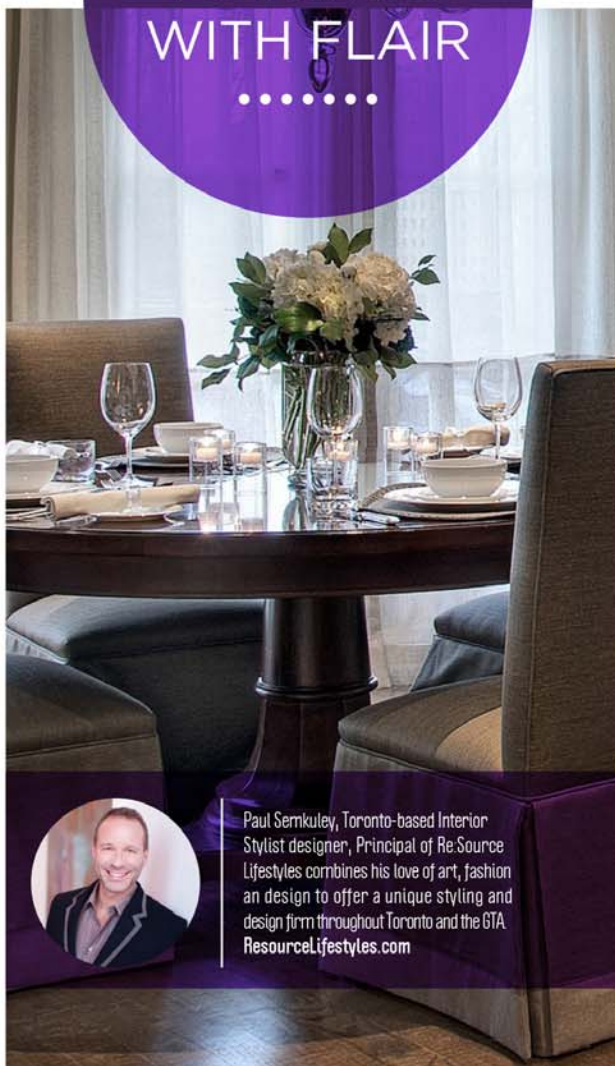
Allow 12 inches between the seat of your chair and your tabletop.

Leave 7 inches between the chair arm and the bottom or apron of the table.

Provide each guest 24-30" at the dining table.



DINING WITH FLAIR



Paul Semkuley, Toronto-based Interior Stylist designer, Principal of Re.Source Lifestyles combines his love of art, fashion a design to offer a unique styling and design firm throughout Toronto and the GTA. ResourceLifestyles.com