

How to get the look, whether your style is traditional, modern or transitional

dining by DESIGN

BY PAUL SEMKULEY • PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISA PETROLE



TIP
Dining room chandeliers should hang between 60 and 66 inches above the floor

TRADITIONAL

In this setting, the furniture is classic, with two small buffets that offer plenty of room to place the food offerings, as well as a large wood-and-glass cabinet filled with dinnerware, crystal and decanters. The pattern on the dining chairs echoes the soft curves of the historical open-shield back. When working with clients who prefer a traditional ethos, it is important to maintain this milieu, but we like to push the boundaries and interject the unexpected too.

A bold red-and-gold, two-toned wallpaper, with an Asian toile-like pattern, helps ground and balance the room, with the large Baccarat crystal chandelier. However, the addition of a metallic-sequined wallpaper on the ceiling adds that extra sparkle and unexpected *je ne sais quoi* to the room.

The months of November and December, and well into January, offer us many opportunities to get together with our dearest friends and family members. Whether it's Diwali, Kwanzaa, Christmas, Hanukkah, or New Year's Eve celebrations like the Scottish Hogmanay, the fondest memories are made when we gather around the dining room table.

As the extension of the heart and soul of the house, dining rooms are where you celebrate all the fine chef work done in the kitchen to create beautiful and delicious meals shared with your guests. The design can be traditional, transitional, or contemporary; it all depends upon how formal or how relaxed and unconventional you want the space to appear. I believe in providing clients with rooms that best suit their homes, personalities and esthetics.

*"Dinner is not what you do in the evening before something else.
Dinner is the evening."* AMERICAN HUMOURIST ART BUCHWALD

MODERN



TIP
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



You have no rules to contend with when working with an unconventional design style—only those that need to be broken. This dining room is filled with curiosities that evoke conversation. In this particular space, the furniture and artwork juxtapose the traditional exterior of this 1908 row house as well as the interior elements.

The dining room table is an industrial harvest style, paired with traditional rolled back chairs, with chrome nail heads and seat back handles. The chandelier is contemporized with a sheer-black drum shade. The window treatment is traditional in form, but exaggerated and unconventional in scale and fabrication. However, it is the art that gives the most interest to the room.

The first piece of art, a resin-coated photograph of shredded bolts of fabrics, is hung on a bronze glass-beaded wallpaper over a distressed-blue antique Quebec pie cabinet (original in colour and patina). The second piece of artwork is a 20-piece grouping that was commissioned to tell a personal story of our clients, inviting you to ask: So what does this grouping mean? This undoubtedly will create a buzz around the table, making for great conversation in an evening of, shall we say, “breaking bread.”



TRANSITIONAL

A more transitional dining room allows you more freedom and leeway when decorating because the design tends to be more open, relaxed and modern.

In spring 2014, a client downsized from a large traditional home to a recently built condominium. With breathtaking views of the city and its skyline, window treatments were custom made in a soft blue-grey with a small tonal pattern, so as not to be too heavy or embellished, which would then dominate the windows and its view.

To make the rest of the room merge with the city sky, we chose a colour-matched paint to enhance the room's overall feeling, giving it the soft and serene ethereal character that would be beautiful at any time of the year. The pedestal table is combined with cream linen Parson-styled chairs for a clean refined look.



TIP
Never put a round table in a rectangular room and never put a rectangular table in a square room

A CHAIR FOR ALL SEASONS

You and your guests should feel comfortable sitting for a reasonable period of time as you enjoy a leisurely meal. Finding the perfect chair can be a challenge as they come in different sizes and shapes, just as do we. As a rule, seat heights should be 17 to 18 inches high with a depth of 15 to 18 inches. The most comfortable seat size is around 15½ inches across the back and 18 inches across the front.

There should also be 12 inches from the seat to the top of the table for ample legroom, and if there is an apron on the table, allow for seven inches between it and the chair arm.

If you want guests to linger, opt for padded, upholstered seat backs. To determine the number that can sit around a table, place the chairs with between 24 and 30 inches of elbowroom for each dining guest. ♦

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