

Feng Shui & The Dining Room

Romancing the Good Life

The dining room holds enormous romantic potential. It's one of the areas in the home that can be arranged to hold everyday romance *in place*. Taking pleasure in dining on a regular basis is one of the rewards of a balanced lifestyle. By slowing down enough to really dine, you invite a romantic quality to become part of your daily routine, one that transforms the act of grabbing a bite into a truly nurturing experience. Dining alone in a delicious atmosphere becomes a time of reflection, while sharing a meal with others provides conversation and companionship that sustains the heart and spirit as well as the body. The more hectic your life is, the more important the daily pleasures of dining are to your overall balance.

Make it a point to create a dining atmosphere that feels romantic to you—a place that has its own intimate, peaceful atmosphere. Arrange furniture, plants, and area rugs to define and beautify a space that supports contemplation, digestion, and intimate conversation. Honor your senses and invite your favorite colors, textures, scents, sounds, and tastes to always be “guests” at the table. Install dimmer switches on lighting, turn off the phone, light candles, play soft music, and include flowers, table linens, and other enhancements that enrich your dining experience.

Because comfort is so important in Feng Shui, ergonomics—the study of the human body's physio-structural needs—is always considered. Dining chairs pass the test when they have cushioned or upholstered seats and backs that embrace the contours of your body and invite you to relax. Just like shoes, dining chairs that are both comfortable and beautiful strike the perfect balance. To promote good conversation and a sense of equality around the table, *every* dining chair should be equally comfortable. And, check the view from each chair. Remove eyesores, embellish views with beautiful things, and screen (or don't illuminate) unsightly views, such as one into a messy kitchen.

Feng Shui favors round and oval dining tables without under-braces or sharp detailing that can pose a danger to diners. If you prefer a square or rectangular table, choose one with rounded corners, or drape those with sharp corners. Ideally, the size of your dining table matches your personal needs. A large table can be made to feel more like a “table for two” by setting an intimate section for dining and appointing the rest of the table with beauty marks that have a serene, nurturing quality. In general, “appetizing” art depicting fruit, flowers, landscapes, waterscapes, and people enjoying

leisurely pastimes are good dining room choices. Conversation pieces that are disturbing or overpowering in color or content aren't recommended. A large mirror that reflects the diners also hurries them through the meal. (Notice the many restaurants that use bright colors, busy art, and large mirrors to move patrons quickly through their meals.) Relocate a large mirror if you can, or reduce its impact by placing decorative furniture or appointments in front of it.

Please don't make a habit of dining in front of the television. Though occasionally fun, it can rob you of the precious time you have to be in quiet reflection or conversation with loved ones. If you have no official place to dine in your home, now's the time to create one! Your health and well-being are greatly enhanced when you design a romantic dining area that invites you to sit down, relax, and enjoy every meal.

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