



PHOTOS BY LAURA YEAGER SMITH HOME & DESIGN

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According to legend, King Arthur and his knights sat around the Round Table at court. They chowed down on pheasant, raised goblets and maybe debated whose favorite jousting team was going to win the next tournament. A round table was the perfect symbol for the order of chivalry. And because there was no head to the table (unlike a rectangle table) everyone who sat there was considered to have equal status.

Round tables have appeared in almost every culture and country right up to modern times. They make conversation easy for everyone seated and are a pleasant shape to most people. Unfortunately, they also take up a lot of space. A cute little round bistro table works for a couple people, but if your dining needs mean you will be seating a gang, you better have space for that big round table. (And think about trying to reach into the center of a large table for a bowl of mashed potatoes.)

But if you have the



right area, enough space and the right table, incorporating this round piece of furniture table can make an exceptional statement.

Laura Yeager Smith, principal with Laura Yeager Smith Home & Design in Hudson, considers the dining area in what she calls her Global Jewel Box whole house renovation to be among her favorite projects. And yes, she designed a 90-inch diameter table with a lazy Susan in the middle to help with the sharing of food and other items. The table is surrounded by eight fully upholstered

chairs, spaced with comfort in mind.

"The dining room in this house was already existing, and it could accommodate a round table. Not many rooms can use a round table or at least not the size you would need to accommodate as many people as you would like," said Yeager Smith. "The table itself is a conversation starter. I could see myself sitting at that table all night having conversations after dinner. This classic table will stand the test of time both with quality and aesthetics."

Yeager Smith said her

client "loved bold color and globally inspired materials." Embracing that preference, the designer paired the traditional wood dining table with modern brass light fixtures. In addition, "deep ochre natural woven wall covering was contrasted with fuchsia and persimmon-colored, hand-painted wall coverings" to make the room a colorful treasure.

Planning

A space plan is needed for every dining project, whether that is a space

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Dinner

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reserved in an open floor plan for dining, a formal, separate dining room, or a kitchen island, according to Yeager Smith. For a new construction, she will ask her clients about the ideal number of people they want to seat for holidays or special occasions in the dining area, as well as how many people need to be counted for every day meals. Seating needs should also be determined for breakfast at the kitchen island or dinette.

For a renovation or furnishing project, Yeager Smith has a number of ideas to make a family comfortable. She may “scale the chairs to be a bit smaller in order to fit more guests at the dining table.” Or for a family with four children, she will recommend four counter stools plus seating for two parents on the end of an island.

“This works particularly well when there is not a dinette table. More families are opting to omit having two dining tables,” said Yeager Smith, whose design team includes 17 individuals.

In both new construction and a renovation, she suggests a consultation as early as possible so plans can be coordinated with a builder or architect.

Choose the right table

The table is obviously the focal point of any dining space, whether it is used for just meals



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and/or crafts, home-work or a home office. Yeager Smith suggests that “no matter how a family functions – be it more formally or casually -- a high quality dining room table is an investment and should last a long time.”

“Purchasing what is becoming known as ‘fast furniture’ can be tempting because it is immediately available and often at a lower price point,” said Yeager Smith. “However, the quality typically is not there and the pieces aren’t designed to last more than a few years. Investing in a table that won’t stand the test of time means you will be purchasing a new one soon. We advise

our clients to invest in a classic, high-quality table that will last generations. Not only will it perform for them, it also saves energy and waste in the long run.”

Yeager Smith attended the International Home Furnishings Market in North Carolina this fall where she reports seeing a lot of natural wood finishes and travertine stone veneers.

“While this may be a trend in design, they are still classic materials that have been around since furniture design began,” said Yeager Smith, confessing that although she doesn’t often use her own dining room for dining, she’s glad she has one.