

## READY FOR THE HOLIDAYS

# The Dining Room Takes Center Stage

BY HASKELL MATHENY, ASID, CAPS, LEED GREEN ASSOCIATE

That room that only gets used once or twice a year – the dining room – is about to become center stage once again. Family gatherings and holiday parties are right around the corner so you want your dining room to look fantastic. But how? And where do you start? Here are a few suggestions that you can easily and affordably complete before your holiday guests arrive.

### PAINT

You've heard it before: nothing can change a room like a gallon of paint. It's true, but there are some special considerations when choosing a paint color. In determining a color, make sure to look at it in the evening. Most dining rooms are enjoyed during evening hours. You want your dining room to look its best at night. So before choosing a color, make sure you love it in the evening. Also, I suggest choosing colors that are naturally found in foods: greens, reds, oranges and yellows. These colors will naturally complement your food and make everything look more appetizing.

### LIGHTING

Want to add some drama and elegance to your dining experience? Consider a new chandelier. Replace that brass fixture with something in crystal and silver. Or perhaps bronze wrought iron for a more rustic feel. Not sure about the size? Take the length and the width of your room in feet and add them together to get a general idea for the size. For example, a 28" diameter fixture would work well in

a 16-by-12 foot dining room. As for hanging length, I like 33" to 36" above the dining table. If you have a chandelier that looks fine, consider adding shades – even if just for the holidays. There are hundreds of styles, materials and colors available. It's a great way to add a punch of style for very little money.



A great patterned wallpaper can instantly transform a dining space. With a dramatic pattern that acts as art, other fabrics and furnishings can remain simple and quiet.

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(below) All it takes is one wall of something special to make your dining room memorable. Stone sets a rustic tone for this space and two chandeliers give the room a European elegance.



Using two different chairs is a great way to interject another fabric or style into the room.

### SEATING

Let's say your dining room table and chairs are basically fine – classic and timeless. But perhaps you need a couple more seats or you just want to have a different look. Think about adding a pair of upholstered hostess/host chairs. I love to introduce a new fabric in a dining room using a pair of new chairs at each end. Look for tall, dramatic backs and great new fabric. Now instead of six chairs, you have eight. The look is fantastic and you and your co-host will feel like royalty at the table. For even more color and pattern, replace the tired fabric on the seat bottoms of your existing chairs. You have now transformed your tired dining room just by using new fabrics.

### WALLPAPER

Another design trick I often employ in dining spaces is to select the wall that guests see first when entering the dining room, usually one of the long walls, and make it special by applying a dramatic wallpaper that you love. Think bold and big. You can splurge on price because you will only need a few rolls. Paint the other three walls a quiet, calm, coordinating color. This works especially well when you don't have much art and need the paper to make a bold statement. Done nicely, the paper will become the art piece in your room.

With just a few new changes, your dining room will be ready to wow your guests and family, not just for the holidays, but for many more years to come. **CS**

*Would you like to have your design dilemma considered for an upcoming issue? Just send an e-mail to [designerguy@haskellinteriors.com](mailto:designerguy@haskellinteriors.com).*

*Haskell Matheny, ASID, CAPS, LEED GREEN ASSOCIATE is the owner and principal designer of Haskell Interiors, located in historic downtown Cleveland, Tn. Visit [www.haskellinteriors.com](http://www.haskellinteriors.com).*