



Dining room makes a come-back

The separate dining room almost completely disappeared from the American scene for several years in new construction. Architects and builders believed it was the one room that families used last.

It is now back, by popular demand, because living patterns have changed and, despite the space squeeze, more and more people have a sophisticated attitude toward the pleasures of dining.

There's no doubt about it -- a dining room is nice to have. With its potential to be a quiet hobby center, home office, or sewing corner (when not used for dining), it is more important than ever.

Above is an example of a walk-around kitchen/family room area connected by a dining room; it illustrates how truly flexible this "great room" can be.

In a circular-traffic flow pattern, the interior designer has

incorporated multiple-use value in both floor plan and furniture design.

When entertaining, the floor plan allows guests to circulate, dance, sit at a table, or simply chat; at other times, there is ample room in the kitchen for eating and the dining room is restored to an ingenious storage/study complex that offers enormous work space for resident hobbyists.

The unique built-in feature of the dining room is its "disappearing" table which divides and swings under the window where it looks like part of the shelf framework. Flanking the 10 foot long window wall are corner cupboards; open shelves abound everywhere else for maximum storage.

Because the dining room has such versatility now, it has freed the den for a more formal sitting situation. Antiques are mixed with Thomasville pieces from the

nostalgic "Golden Era" and traditional "Carleton Hall" collections.

Queen Anne chair seats from the dining room were wisely upholstered in the same blue fabric as the sofa and wing chairs so they could be brought into the family room for extra seating.

The breakfast table opposite the kitchen window wall, against the curved fireplace chimney, has multiple drawers which is useful as a planning desk also. The butcherblock top is not only attractive but a practical surface as well.

Social and economic changes are affecting our lifestyles. And old ways are adapting to new needs. Lived-in rooms are now the prime requisite of home owners.

Take your home and reevaluate the dining-room space. Isn't there room for a dramatic new approach to living full circle?

Shopping requires thought, skill

Shopping at the supermarket today requires more—not less—skill than it did a decade ago, notes Marilyn Lunner, Clackamas County Extension agent.

In many places, the corner grocery store with its limited stock has disappeared. Today, food choices are often made in a serve-yourself-store that may carry 10,000 food and nonfood items, says Marilyn.

If you often come home with more items than you planned to buy, you could be an impulse shopper, lured to the attractive, colorful, well-designed displays or packages that prompt you to buy, whether you need them or not.

"National surveys show that many purchases made inside America's stores are impulse decisions," says Margaret Bakke, Oregon State University Extension foods and nutrition specialist. High on the list of these unplanned purchases are candy, gum, snacks, books, magazines and toys. Close behind are first aid and beauty supplies, slippers, sneakers, plants, pots and kitchen utensils.

A large outlay for these and similar items will throw a carefully planned "food" budget out of kilter. When you reach for nonfood items in the grocery store, consider your need, your budget, and whether the item is worth the price.

Make a careful list of the foods you need to buy before you go to the store, Bakke advises. Follow it care-

fully, but keep in mind that not all in-store decisions are spur-of-the-moment purchases. You need to be flexible in order to take advantage of unadvertised specials, seasonal foods and special buys.

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School Menu

February 8: Barbecue pork in bun, tater tots, celery chunks, chilled peaches, milk.

February 9: Sweet & sour turkey, fluffy rice, cucumber Namasu, orange, milk.

February 10: Wiener wrap, tater triangles, green beans, chilled pears, milk.

February 11: Italian spaghetti, tossed green salad w/ranch dressing, hot garlic bread, banana half, milk.

February 12: Curly noodle soup, chicken salad sandwich, cheese stick, french fries, tangerine, valentine cookie, milk.

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Soup good for cold winter days

With unseasonal weather throughout, it seems a good idea to put on a "good pot"—as we say. We all have our favorite old reliables, but here are a few good hearty soup ideas, each satisfying enough for a main meal dish, calling for just crusty bread, salad and a dessert to complete the menu. Our selection includes a *Seafood Gumbo* from South Carolina, a *Lamb Soup* from New Jersey and the *Pasta Fagioli*, hearty Italian soup made with

pasta and beans. Enjoy!

SEAFOOD GUMBO

1/4 lb. butter or margarine
4 tablespoons flour
2 quarts water
5 fresh tomatoes
2 lbs. fresh okra (chopped fine)
1 lb. fresh crab meat
1 pint raw oysters
2 lbs. fresh raw shrimp (picked and deveined)

2 pounds fresh fish fillets
Salt and pepper to taste

Melt butter and add flour, making a smooth paste; stir constantly over moderate heat until a rich brown. Add water, tomatoes and okra. Cook slowly for one hour. Add crab meat, oysters, shrimp and fish. Cook 15 minutes; add seasonings. Soup should be thick. Add steamed rice to each serving. Serves 8.

LAMB SOUP

2 shanks of lamb
1 large carrot, cut up
2 celery stalks, cut up
1 onion, sliced
1 medium can tomatoes
1 bay leaf (remove before serving)
1/4 cup parsley, chopped
3 quarts water
Seasoning to taste

Simmer all ingredients in a 6- to 8-quart pot until meat is tender—2 to 3 hours. Add seasonings to taste.

PASTA E FAGIOLI

1 cup dry white beans
1 small onion, chopped
1/2 cup chopped celery
2 garlic cloves, minced
3 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 lb. smoked ham, cut in small cubes
1/4 lb. salt pork
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1/2 cup pasta (spaghetti, small shells or small macaroni)
Grated Parmesan cheese

In pot or bowl, soak beans overnight in enough water to cover. Drain beans, reserving liquid. In another saucepan, saute onion, celery and garlic in oil until onions are tender. Stir in ham, and continue cooking for 3 to 5 minutes. Add beans, salt, pepper, and tomato paste and reserved liquid plus enough water to make 8 cups. Bring soup to boil and reduce heat to simmer for 1 1/2 hours or until beans are tender. Remove half of the beans, puree and return to soup. Add pasta and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Taste and correct seasoning. Serve with grated Parmesan cheese. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

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COLD WEATHER TIPS FROM JAPAN

One of our readers, Carole Woods, picked up a lot of ideas about coping with cold weather while she was growing up in Japan. She points out that most Japanese houses are not centrally heated, but that her winter experiences there proved that the Japanese people (who live in temperature zones comparable to those of the United States) generally manage to live comfortably during cold weather... in homes that are designed primarily for summer heat.

The typical Japanese winter bed covering is a quilt called a *kakebuton*. Ms. Woods describes it as being something like a comforter: "It consists of a light nylon covering over each side of a loft (or thickness) of approximately four inches—composed of untold layers—of cotton. This quilt isn't sewn through as a Western one would be. Instead, only an occasional thread—which is not pulled tight—runs from the nylon on one side, through the filling, to the other cover. This produces, essentially, a big, flat, warm and wonderful, rectangular sleeping bag."

During the winter, families often center their evening activities around a *katatsu*, which is a heater placed on the floor underneath a traditional Japanese table (like those used in Japanese restaurants). A special quilt is draped over the top of the table to help keep the feet and legs placed beneath it warm, and a second table top is rested on the quilt.

A *hibachi*, which more closely resembles a large vase or flowerpot made of fired and kiln-glazed clay iron than the cooking apparatus called by that name in this country, provides heat for the *katatsu*. Various grates or tripods can be put over the fire so that food may be cooked or water boiled on the *hibachi*. For the most part, a kettle of water is kept simmering on the unit to humidify the room. (Such open fires may be safe in a rather lightly constructed, well-ventilated Japanese structure, but we do not advise you to try it, since an open fire emits dangerous carbon monoxide.)

The Japanese cover their wooden floors with *tatami*... straw mats that are approximately 1-1/2 inches thick. In especially cold weather, a layer of newspaper is often put between the straw mats and the wooden floor for extra insulation.

Carole says that many Nipponese items of clothing are designed to provide winter comfort in cool houses. A short kimono-type garment called a *haori* is constructed in the same layered manner as the *kakebuton*, except it's covered on the outside with cotton fabric. Such jackets are worn indoors and out. Under the *haori*, the Orientals wear several layers of sweaters and other garments.

Carole's favorite memories of her life in Japan concern her late-afternoon visits to the *ofuro*, a sort of hot tub/sauna combination. "After a soak in the *ofuro*," Ms. Woods states, "you'll be warm for at least a half hour, and if you're staying up for a while, you won't need as many sweaters as before." At bedtime the Japanese get out the *yutampo*, a device akin to a metal hot water bottle, to warm up the bed (*futon*) before climbing in. "Then, when you're ready to slip under the warmed cover," she says, "you'll have something nice to put your feet against as you drift off cozily to sleep."

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