

## The Perfect Dining Room Table

Have you ever thought of a dining room table as being a symbol of one's life? I have.

You see, somewhere there exists your perfect dining room table, but you do not possess it. There are many reasons why you do not own this dining room table. The first one is that when you began your married life, you could barely afford the small table in the kitchen eating area, let alone a dining room table, or more likely, you could not even afford a place with a dining room. Or, if you were fortunate enough to be given a hand-me-down dining room table – and you had a dining room - you were grateful enough, but did not pretend, even for a moment, that this was the perfect dining room table for you – that table would have to come later.

As children came along, it became even more difficult to afford the perfect dining room table, there were more important purchases to be made, and you simply made do with the dining room table you had. The perfect dining room table would come later.

Or, if a beloved aunt passed away, perhaps you inherited her dining room table. Certainly, this new table was an improvement over what you had used for so many years, but you never confused it with the perfect dining room table you longed for – some day, you said.

Oh blessed day, your daughter is to be married and is in need of her own dining room table, why not give her yours? Of course you do, and besides, now that you are living in a downsized and empty nest, you can easily make do with the very nice table you have been using in the breakfast nook – but you are not confused, it will not become your perfect dining room table.

Grandchildren have arrived, and even though they live hundreds, or even thousands of miles away, that hoped-for day will certainly come when all the family will return again and sit down for the festive homecoming dinner. Alas, there is no suitable dining room table for this mythical occasion.

So today, after forty-two years of marriage with ten grandchildren chalked up to our credit, and after living through a half-dozen or so perfectly usable dining room tables, we purchased our perfect dining room table – sixty inches square that with two leaves will seat twelve.

I wonder, is this really our perfect dining room table, or at our age now, is this as close as we get?