

It has been some time since we had an episode of The Tour Of Homes, so today we will take a close look at the dining room. It, like the kitchen and lounge, is a focal point of family life. A lot of good things happen here, and it is a place where we celebrate special occasions. This room centers around a table and chairs. Here in Western society, there are often more than four chairs around a table. When there is a special occasion, often friends and family come to celebrate, so more chairs are needed. The table is 'laid' (what we say in England), or 'set' (which is what we say in the U.S.) To do this, we need cutlery, crockery, glasses, sometimes a table cloth or a 'runner' which is a much skinnier version of a table cloth, and a salt and pepper shaker, and perhaps some candles. Don't forget serviettes, or napkins as they call them here in the U.S. For special times, the table can be decorated with candles, flowers, or some craft type arrangement. Here in the North West, it is very popular to mix candles in some pretty arrangement for the table, especially during the Winter. I have seen some center pieces that are a mix of flowers, pebbles, plastic fruit, and candles. But it's up to the imagination of the owner. Anything goes. Other furniture in the room includes dressers to store crockery and cutlery, wine glasses, and wine bottles. Often a dining room is decorated with art work of different forms, pretty curtains, perhaps a rug, and often a chandelier or other light fixture that has more than the average amount of detail. We use our dining room for family meals often during the week, even though sometimes we will eat at different times depending on our schedules. The special occasions are: Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Birthdays. These are the times that I really dress the place up, get out the nice plates and glasses, and make the effort of ironing a table cloth. Even though the way of

life in the U.S. is crazy busy, the dining room still can be a place of togetherness and relaxation.

Grammar notes.

Dining room vocabulary: cutlery, crockery, runner, center piece.

1. We like to get out the decent cutlery when we have people over to dinner.
2. We store the nice crockery in the dresser in the dining room to keep it safe and on display.
3. My mother bought me a lovely Indian table runner the other day which goes perfectly with the art in the dining room.
4. At Thanksgiving, we usually have a center piece that has Autumn flowers and fruit of the season.

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