Gather Grand Groups with Extra-Long Dining Table

by Linda Pescatore

Finding room for all the guests you want to entertain during the holidays and year-round dinner parties can be a problem, but you won't have to set up rickety card tables or serve people standing up to accommodate a large group with the Parisian banquet table from Century Furniture's Bordeaux Collection.

Since a typical place setting with a full complement of china and silverware occupies 22 inches, the 17-foot-long table seats 16 people comfortably, and as many as 18 in a pinch, according to Edward Tashjian, vice president of marketing for Century.

Granted, not every home has space for a 17-foot table -- and even without a leaf, the Parisian banquet table is nearly double the length of most dining tables, which typically measure 6 feet. But if you have the square footage, don't be afraid to fill it with something dramatic.

"For a really special and memorable meal, there is nothing like entertaining at home," Tashjian says. "And if you have a really spectacular house, there is no better way of showing it off than hosting a dinner for 16."

GREAT LENGTHS - Homeowners can entertain in a big way with the 17-foot-long Parisian banquet table from Century Furniture's Bordeaux Collection. It can comfortably seat 16 hungry people. CNS Photo courtesy of Century Furniture. In fact, because the company can customize this table with as many 44-inch sections as needed, your table can ultimately accommodate all the invitations you can write. The 49-inch width -- just a few inches wider than the typical 44 inches of most dining tables -- allows for comfortable seating on the ends, while allowing for easy conversation across the table. (The extra width will also come in handy for those dramatic centerpieces.)

The top of the Parisian banquet table is decorated with strips of walnut inlay and can be finished in your choice of one or two of 11 possible finishes. The four cabriolet legs are carved with flourishes leading to a gently scalloped apron, or front edge. For extra stability, a leaf is supported by two additional legs. The Bordeaux Collection's Parisian dining chairs sport similar styling to complement the table.

The French countryside-inspired design is versatile enough to work with a dressed-up formal look or a casual, everyday treatment.

The Parisian banquet table starts at $14,985. To find a retailer near you, visit www.centuryfurniture.com and click "Retailers."

GET A HANDLE ON STORMSBefore the nip in the air turns into an arctic blast, you'll want to make sure your storm door is in good shape, with a nice tight fit that will protect your exterior door from the elements and keep the warm air in.

Aesthetics are important, too. A weathered storm door can make your home's entryway look shabby, but if the structure is sound, you can replace battered or just plain ugly parts without going through the work and expense of replacing the whole storm door.

Consider replacing the handle with one of the two styles just introduced by Hickory Hardware's Wright Products division in its Accents line of decorative storm door hardware.

Garrison is a graceful, stately design for more traditional homes. Chateau is more contemporary, with clean, unembellished lines. Both are made of solid brass and available in polished brass or satin nickel finishes.

Another reason to trade up is Accents' "no lock-out" feature, which prevents the latch from accidentally locking the storm door.

Accents hardware is designed to fit most wood or metal storm doors that swing outward. If you have a standard push-button handle, it can probably be replaced by these handles and latches.

The company also sells pneumatic storm door closers - the cylinders on top of the door that prevent the door from flying open or slamming shut. If your storm door no longer swings opens and closes easily, it could be time to adjust or replace the closer.

Look for Wright Products storm door hardware at most hardware and home supply retailers. For more information visit www.wright-products.com.

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