



THE TOP 10 DINING CHAIRS

For a formal dinner or a quick bite in the kitchen, a comfortable seat is a must. Designers Nicole Gibbons and Will Wick test the best

It used to be that a Chippendale-style dining table called for Chippendale-style chairs. But these days, we want to put together our own combinations. And it's what we sit on—not around—that makes a statement. "The seating, not the table, is what catches the eye," says designer Will Wick.

Striking a balance of shapes and materials is key. "A round table complements angular chairs," decorator Nicole Gibbons says. "For a glass-topped table, upholstered chairs bring softness." While

kitchen chairs can be relaxed and playful, more formal dining rooms demand a degree of elegance. "A sculptural chair feels right for a dining room," says Wick. "If you throw seated dinner parties, your guests will appreciate a cushioned, roomy chair."

Mixing multiple styles has become popular, but both designers warn against an overly motley collection of chairs. "I'd keep it to one style," says Gibbons, "with armchair versions at both ends of the table. It's nice to maintain symmetry." ▾

THE EXPERTS

NICOLE GIBBONS

This fashion-world veteran established her design bona fides via her blog, *So Haute*, and now creates chic, layered rooms. She appears on *OWN's Home Made Simple*. nicolegibbons.com

WILL WICK

The San Francisco-based designer's understated interiors emphasize organic materials and weathered finishes. His shop, *Battersea*, showcases his signature mix of antiques and industrial artifacts. wickdesign.com

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1 / ARANDA SIDE CHAIR BY JASPER

NG: This one is stately and elegant—a lovely choice for a formal dining room. It's also spacious and comfortable. The cerused oak gives it a wonderful texture.

ww: I love the antiqued-brass inlay along the frame and that subtle curve on the front legs, which means it can mix with traditional as well as contemporary pieces. It's very pretty from the back, too. The scale is great—even for me, and I'm 6'3". 20" w. x 25.5" d. x 38" h., to the trade; michaelsmithinc.com



2 / BELLEVILLE ARMCHAIR BY RONAN & ERWAN BOUROULLEC FOR VITRA

NG: Here's a sleek, cool-looking chair that's perfect for a city apartment. It's got a compact footprint, and it's extremely light, so it's easy to move around.

ww: I could see this in a hipster house on Venice Beach, maybe around an organic, live-edge plank table to balance its modernism. And I love its stackability. 22" w. x 20" d. x 33" h., \$645; vitra.com



3 / CANYON SWIVEL DINING CHAIR BY BARBARA BARRY FOR MCGUIRE

ww: This chair makes it so easy to turn to your dining companions on either side. The rattan gives it an Asian feel. I imagine it in a clean, natural environment. It would also make a great office chair.

NG: Such a simple silhouette, and yet it packs so much visual interest. I love the combo of rattan, brass, and oak trim. It's very comfortable, too. 24" w. x 24" d. x 30.5" h., \$2,605; mcguirefurniture.com



4 / DIEGO CHAIR BY TOKEN

ww: Sometimes you want a low-profile chair like this—say, if you want to highlight an interesting table. This feels like a modern take on midcentury Brazilian, with its many precise details, like the way the steel cuts into the walnut at the seat.

NG: The compact frame appears delicate, but it's actually very sturdy. And the leather seat looks as though it might be dauntingly firm, but you actually sink right in. It conforms nicely to your shape. 19.5" w. x 21.5" d. x 30" h., \$1,800; tokennyc.com



5 / CLASSIC CAFÉ DINING CHAIR BY WEST ELM

NG: When you buy a set of dining chairs, the price can add up quickly. This painted wood one would be my pick for a starter apartment, or if you're decorating on a tight budget. I love its whimsical shape and color.

ww: It's a simple chair, but the red color makes it pop. You could use it at a breakfast table in a country house, but it could also make a fun desk chair for a kid's room. At this price, it's hard to beat. 17" w. x 20" d. x 32" h., \$99; westelm.com

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