



BRENDAN CHARTERS



WHAT'S COOKIN' GOOD-LOOKIN'?

Kitchens are changing. This is how and why.

Kitchens are changing dramatically in Canada as housing forms continue to change, and the driver is the divide between larger, expansive sprawl or estate-style homes versus the shrinking units found in the newer, micro-sized condo suites. They are also evolving to represent the true goal of these spaces – and it may differ from what you may initially think.

SIZE MATTERS

The larger the home, the more likely one can find an eat-in style, more closed concept, dedicated kitchen space. While this room may be somewhat open to either the dining room or the family room for a great-room style feel, it is now more expansive and opulent than ever.

The smaller the home, the more likely the kitchen is completely open-concept to the main living area, adjacent to either the dining or family rooms, or even integrated into the suite as a whole like in a bachelor-style suite. In these types of spaces, appliances are more often hidden behind panel-style fronts, blending seamlessly and completely out of sight when not in use. It provides

more of a multi-functional and flexible space, eliminating the feel that one is always in the kitchen when eating, socializing or even sleeping in those tight urban abodes.

PARADIGM SHIFT

The trends as it relates to colours of the cabinets and counters themselves are changing too. While the most popular all-white kitchen has dominated the last decade, the mood and related colour palette is shifting in a big way. The intermixing of colour, be it stained or painted cabinets, have been dropped into the spaces by way of feature islands or lower versus upper cabinet colouring, for some time now. Designer Laura Thornton from Thornton Design confirms the fashion of this hub has taken a

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virtual 180. “Black,” she says, “as well as deep greys and hearty wood tones in a matte or high-gloss finish,” are setting the dramatic stage. Mixing in more offsetting style includes large industrial ranges and ventilation hood fan covers as popping focal points in larger kitchens. Paired with gold hardware, the strong statement is a paradigm shift from recent historical kitchen projects where hoods were hidden and white cabinets and brushed nickel adorned virtually every project, along with light, if not pure white counters.

INDUSTRY INSIDER

Quartz countertop company Cambria further confirms this. Kirstin Kucy, Toronto market rep from Cambria, affirms that even though white and grey counters are still extremely popular in kitchens, consumers and designers are trending more to a darker, sophisticated, richer colour palette. This is most visible in the kitchen surfaces where consumers are gravitating towards darker hues and low-lustre (matte finish) materials. “We’ve seen an increased interest in Cambria’s Blackpool Matte design, a low-sheen, solid-black quartz surface material, as well as in designs from our new Black Marble collection for use in kitchens, and even in architectural elements such as backsplashes, shower walls and fireplace surrounds, in lieu of tile,” she says.



DESIGN DISTRICT PRIVILEGES

When planning your own kitchen project, be sure to swing by Toronto’s design-decor district – specifically The Building Block – the new one-stop shopping solution at the corner of Caledonia and Lawrence, where you can retain the full suite of both architectural and interior design services for your space, experience a number of the newest kitchen designs in new vignettes, as well as more than 160 countertop styles in the Cambria Premier Dealership in the Distinctive by Design Fine Cabinetry showroom. You can even retain the service of full construction execution – all under one Green rooftop patio! While in the area, be sure to check out some of our designer and trade local favourites, such as the café inside Elte, or for some cured meats or an espresso at Speducci Mercato, where you can feel like a trendsetting European as you sort out the selections you will use for your own amazing kitchen.

Buon appetito! ♦



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