



BRENDAN CHARTERS

KITCHEN TRENDS



Still the most popular colour in cabinetry, white is starting to share the space with greys, blues and greens for a bit of fun.

Don't get caught up sporting old trends in the most crucial room of the home

The most popular room in every home, the kitchen has become more than a space to simply prepare meals. As a family, we all congregate there, socialize, entertain and fill two of the basic needs of life to sustain our existence—we eat the food and drink the beverages we store within it. Given the wide spread popularity of the space, more and more homeowners are allocating sizeable parts of their new home or renovation budget to creating the perfect kitchen for them. It has also become a very fashionable room, and often dictates the architectural or interior design style of the rest of the home. Cabinet doors, countertops, appliances and backsplashes set the stage for the rest of the rooms in the home to follow. And those style trends are in a constant state of flux. In working with our in-house Design-Build team here, I will break out the key trends we are implementing in this all-important room for our clients in 2018.

THE EXPERTS WEIGH IN

Interior designer Laura Thornton from Thornton Design, Jimmy Zoras from Distinctive by Design Fine Cabinetry and Jim Cunningham, architectural technologist from Eurodale Developments, all shared key elements they are recommending to clients. These experts guide homeowners in two areas of the kitchen—functionality and style—and at times, those two areas of focus can be at odds with each other.

Thornton suggests, no matter what the style or trend of the day is, no one can ever go wrong with paying for quality in this room of the home. Kitchen cabinets, counters and appliances are all touched on a daily basis, and if things begin to break down quickly, it will both look horrendous, and limit the true effectiveness of the space.

FUNCTION BEFORE FORM

In line with HOUZZ's annual consumer survey, she also states that ingenious and creative storage is a must, allowing us to hide everything and create the esthetic of a clutter-free and vast countertop. This also lets people show off the style of that key kitchen feature more easily. It will

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The kitchen is no longer a room on its own, with only one function. A built-in banquette seamlessly provides lounge, eating and working space when desired.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY VALERIE WILCOX

also create a calm feeling of order. She notes that many people are experimenting with the removal of upper cabinets from their designs, or the introduction of open-display shelving. While it may look great in a staged photograph, or could work for a single person, it is somewhat impractical for a family with a greater need for organized and hidden storage.

MINOR UPDATES

Because these style trends change so rapidly, there are cost-effective options that freshen and update a space in order to remain current. Thornton recommends starting with the lighting, door and drawer handles (hardware) to inject some new life. Cunningham believes a countertop and backsplash change, while slightly more costly and invasive, will really alter the esthetic and feel of the room.

COHESIVE & CLUTTER-FREE

Zoras from Distinctive still sees many white cabinets running through his production line, however, people are starting to experiment more with colour for islands and base cabinets, which is helping to tie the kitchen together with the other rooms in the home. This bleed effect is something Cunningham from Eurodale sees architecturally. With smaller urban homes, the kitchen is increasingly becoming part of the dining, family or other common spaces. Kitchen cabinets tying into desk spaces and eating spaces, or even media millworks are starting to erase the word "kitchen" from blueprints, replacing it with "great room," making it difficult for people in the space to clearly identify where one room ends and the other begins. This further enforces the need for

creative and ample storage to keep the spaces collectively clean, so the visual focus can be on the beautiful finishes rather than the clutter of dishes, cooking utensils and countertop appliances required to execute the culinary magic occurring in the space (or hidden places for your takeout container trash, depending on your lifestyle).

TO TECH OR NOT TO TECH

Lastly, while kitchens are under the technology assault, implementing Internet connectivity to appliances and creating hubs for device-charging or television or tablet screen integration, the kitchen as a lounge is helping people to actually disconnect from tech and speak to one another. Built-in banquettes, eat-in kitchens, desk spaces are allowing families the ability to congregate in one main room to remain connected to each other vs. ducking away into private rooms with their personal devices. Cunningham believes wet bars and butler pantries are helping to connect entertainment spaces to the kitchens, so families can easily eat, live, play, entertain and clean in an attractive and organized environment. Zoras helps us all get there by designing amazing pullout waste-sorting stations, baking and serving tray sections, full-extension Lazy Suzan inserts and deep-drawer organizers. These are the things you don't see, they add some cost but completely revolutionize the function of a kitchen.

When planning your own kitchen in a new home or renovation, remember there is real value in working with a professional to design and build the space. Function is as important as form here, and planning your search at renomark.ca, the home of the professional renovator, is a great place to start looking for help. ♦



This walnut cabinetry tucks away clutter and frames the style of the entire home. This contemporary style offset against the concrete floor and ceiling is then paired with furniture for a unified, clean and dramatic esthetic.

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