

# Essential INGREDIENTS



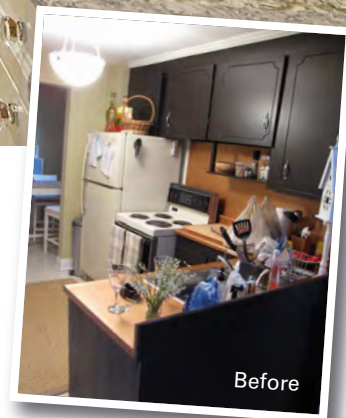
By Brendan Charters

EXPERTS DISH OUT ON THE LATEST IN KITCHEN UPGRADES



**N**o doubt you spend an immense amount of time in the kitchen, even if cooking isn't really your thing. Maybe that's why the majority of the projects my firm is involved with include a kitchen remodel of some kind. And, while I don't personally cook a lot (I feel compelled to tell you that), I do find I'm much more creative and excited to cook in my new kitchen. Plus, I am eating at home much more frequently than I did when my kitchen looked like the Before photo on this page.

An entire team collaborates on the kitchen design-build projects at Eurodale Developments. I posed the following question to three of the experts typically involved when we work with a client: "In your opinion, what are the best kitchen upgrades for 2012?" Read on to find out what they think of appliances, lighting, technology, colour choices, countertops, and more.



**BEFORE:** My kitchen prior to my own upgrades. **AFTER:** Crystal hardware adds sparkle, and carrying the quartz counter surface onto the backsplash creates a seamless look.



Combining white and charcoal-coloured cabinets adds character and sophistication to this kitchen reno.

*Sarah Baltare*

Architectural Designer  
@ Eurodale Developments

**FUNCTION** Identify the functional placement of appliances, maximize storage solutions and manage traffic patterns so family members are not in the way while you're preparing a meal.

**STYLE** Two-tone painted kitchens prevail over the stained island. Try mixing a cool grey or taupe into a pantry or island for a fresh, sophisticated look.

**TECHNOLOGY** Think ahead and prep for iPod or iPad docking, allowing instant access to recipes and dinner ideas, or weather info, news or music in the morning. It also ensures your device is charged and in a consistent place.

**APPLIANCES** Panel-integrated appliances are not new to the marketplace but there is a whole host of appliances, even full refrigerators, which can be concealed below the base cabinets. This is key for those kitchens featuring a view beyond, and where the upper cabinets have been eliminated.

*Laura Thornton*

Interior Designer  
@ Thornton Interiors

**COUNTER SURFACES** Carry the selected counter slab up to the backsplash for the truly clean look of a flawless and grout-less finish. It's also easier to maintain, provided the stone is not porous.

**HARDWARE** Often overlooked is how hardware can complete the look and function. Consider that the upper-cabinet hardware is at eye-level; the first kitchen detail you see. This is what differentiates your high-end reno from your box-store special. You've been warned!

**LIGHTING** Bad lighting can make a room feel dated and unwelcoming, even if the lighting is brand new. Good lighting adds an unparalleled "Wow!" factor. Kitchens require a variety of lighting: ambient or background lighting for all the general open areas like the kitchen table; task lighting for close-up work, commonly for food prep or the kitchen-desk area; and accent lighting to highlight special features such as glass-insert cabinets.



Lighting and the white backdrop created by white cabinetry and backsplash with light-coloured walls, strikes a beautiful contrast with the dark-wood island and table.

*Jimmy Zoras*  
Owner @ Distinctive by Design  
Fine Cabinetry

**LIGHTING** The more the better as it really helps show off the textures and finishes, and it helps you see what you're cooking.

**WHITE** Always a popular choice, a white-painted kitchen looks fresh and clean, plus it helps brighten the space.

**QUARTZ** It's estimated that 80 per cent of mid- to high-end kitchens are now finished with a quartz countertop, especially given the newer natural-looking styles.

**ORGANIZATION** Not only doors and counters make the kitchen. Built-in garbage, recycling and composting drawers, space-saving racks, organizers and cabinet pull-outs (not your mom's Lazy Susan!) are the tools that make a kitchen work, while maximizing the storage behind the beautiful finishes.

*Last words from Brendan...*  
There you have it. Armed with the advice from our team of experts you can start planning that perfect kitchen renovation.



Work with a professional to get great advice and the best results. Start at [renomark.ca](http://renomark.ca) to find professional renovators that have the skills required to do the work and are bound by a strict code of ethics and conduct.

And be sure to invite us to the first dinner party, so we can see how well it turned out! ■

*Brendan Charters is Development Manager of Toronto design-build firm Eurodale Developments – 2011 BILD Renovator of the Year. For more information, call 416.782.5690 or visit [eurodale.ca](http://eurodale.ca).*