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A Change in the Air

Move into the kitchen you've always wanted without changing your address.

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The Cabinet Studio (Canada) Inc.

Why are we seeing such an increasing interest in kitchen renovations lately?

As recently as a few short years ago there were many enormous homes being built all around the nation and sub-divisions were going up by the thousands. During that same period of time many home buyers thought nothing of purchasing houses for the land, location, or view, then tearing them down to rebuild their new home. Today for many, this is a thing of the past.

We are seeing a shift of downsizing to more modest-sized homes and deciding to renovate them or their existing dwellings. The main factors behind this trend are shifts in the economy, lifestyle changes and the growing concern for the environment. The economic rationale speaks for itself. As for lifestyle changes, people are seeking to live more comfortably and are realizing that their quality of life is what really matters. The biggest home on the block is no longer the dream.

A contemporary facelift was just the ticket for this kitchen. Niches were added with tailored furniture-like cabinetry to showcase the special cookware and art pieces. Design by Tereza Hello, The Cabinet Studio (Canada) Inc.





Before

Now why are kitchens so popular when it comes to renovations? The obvious reason is because the kitchen is one of the main factors in determining the return you will receive when you sell your home. Regardless of whether you are planning to sell or not, the biggest reason for the kitchen renovation is that this room is the heart of your home. The kitchen we once knew is now being transformed into more of a multi-purpose room. We no longer simply cook meals in the kitchen. This is where we eat, do homework, watch television and even entertain

After: Every inch of this kitchen space was carefully considered when planning the renovation. New cabinetry is taken to the ceiling, increasing storage space. Design by Tereza and Leigh Ann Hello, The Cabinet Studio (Canada) Inc.

A place to come home to relax and enjoy with their family seems to be the direction people are headed. Furthermore, as individuals become more sensitive to the environmental issues that are facing not only this generation but also generations to come, we will see this shift in downsizing.

Renovations will increase as people try to incorporate smarter choices of materials and resources into their homes. Reconstruction of existing homes is as popular as utilizing vintage

furniture in new spaces. The notion of “what once was old is new again” is quickly becoming the rage. Make no mistake; huge homes will still be built but all indications for the future point toward downsizing and renovating.

Below and inset: This cottage-styled kitchen from Dura Supreme features fresh, crisp paint hues inspired by sand and sea. Traditional details like apothecary drawers, beadboard doors, and subway tile complete this timeless look.





Interior sliding drawers create easy access storage. Wood-Mode Cabinetry.



An appliance garage conceals a bar area. "Italian Villa" from Wood-Mode Cabinetry.

our guests. This increased use and function of the kitchen lends itself to the desire for people to completely revamp this space.

This being said, the thought of renovating can be a daunting task. Once the decision has been made, you may feel overwhelmed or confused about where to begin. A good place to start is to establish the motivation behind your renovation. The underlying reasons may either be the style of the kitchen doesn't fit your personal tastes or the kitchen is no longer functional for your lifestyle. The desire for a change could also be a mix of the two. Quite possibly the reason may be that the space never looked or flowed properly right from the start.

The kitchen space is defined yet within view to the adjacent spaces with the use of open cabinetry from Quality Custom Cabinetry. Design by Nick DiPierro, Showcase Kitchens, Inc., Mount Kisco, NY. Photography: David R. Sloane.





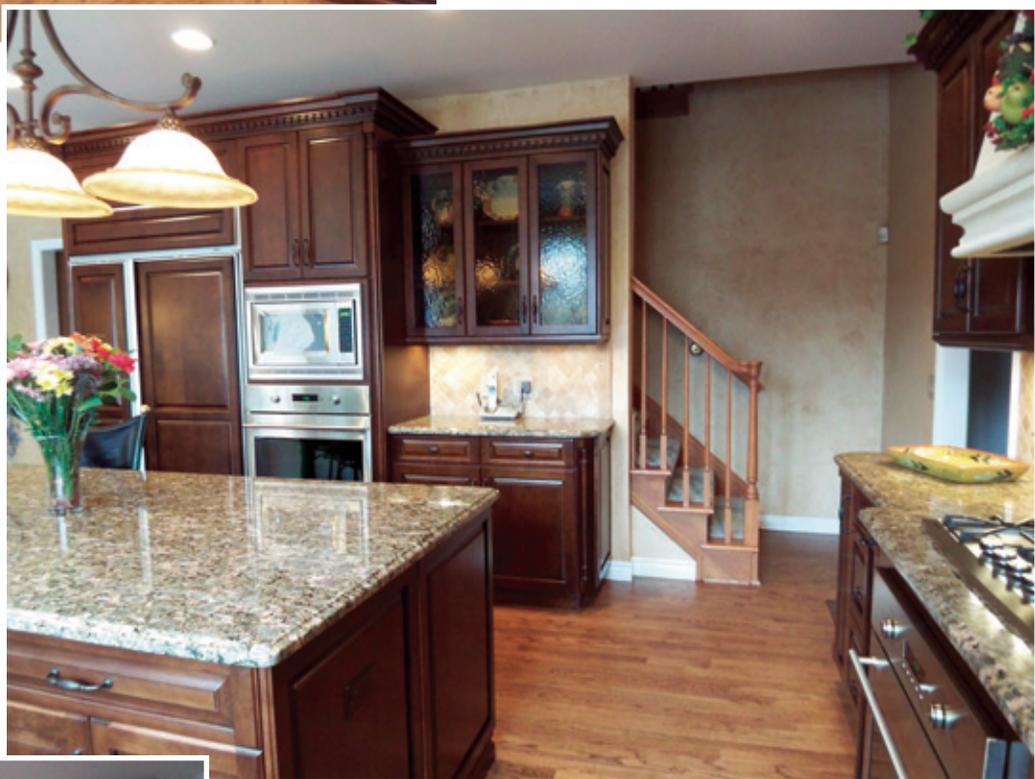
Determining why you want to renovate will help you gauge the degree of renovation you will undertake.

After: Below, an under-utilized space now features additional storage above and below. The beautiful seeded glass doors add character with a sense of nostalgia. Design by Tereza and Leigh Ann Hello, The Cabinet Studio (Canada) Inc.

After: Above, this kitchen now has a focal point: the new cooking area features a commercial style range with custom limestone hood hearth above. The cook has increased efficiency with the additional wall oven. Design by Tereza and Leigh Ann Hello, The Cabinet Studio (Canada) Inc.

Determining why you want to renovate will help you gauge the degree of renovation you will undertake. If the need for a change is to bring the room in line with your style, all that may be required is a simple tweaking by your kitchen designer. However, if the change is because the room doesn't function the way you would like or need it to, then you are ready for a full transformation.

Before



Once you've decided whether you are going to undergo a complete kitchen renovation or a minor makeover, the next decision you will need to make is to find a kitchen designer to help you through the rest of this exciting process. Together you will discuss your budget and determine the design elements and style you want to incorporate into the space. You will need to decide what is and isn't currently working for you in your existing kitchen and finally establish a game plan to make your dreams become reality.

The key to having a successful renovation is to make sure that you choose a professional that can implement their promises. Customer service is and should be the



An ultra-modern European kitchen features Italian cabinetry and bright quartz surfaces. Designer Amir J. Ilin of Küche + Cucina, Paramus, NJ, pairs the Integra Collection from Pedini Cabinetry with Caesarstone countertops. Photography: Peter Rymwid.

top priority with any company you hire. Referrals are paramount. Speak candidly with them and find out how they enjoyed the entire renovation and if promises were met and nothing was compromised.

How do you decide which kitchen designer to hire? Finding the professional that fits you, your family, and your personality is key. You will be spending a lot of time with this person in the coming months so it is important to take the time in the beginning to make sure you feel very comfortable with the designer you choose. You must be comfortable not only in the designers' creative ability but also their business ethics, and how well you interact with each other. You must be able to rely on this person completely. You will be entrusting this individual with not only designing your kitchen but also with your money, time, sanity and your family's comfort. It is

important that above all else you are able to speak openly with your designer in order to always be on

With the creative use of cabinetry interiors, your new kitchen will be just as organized and efficient as it will be breathtaking. Design by Robert Kinsley, Kinsley Design Group, Highland Park, IL. Culina Blu Cabinetry. Photography: Marcel Page.



the same page throughout the entire process. Your trust will allow you to feed off of each other and this in turn will help you both determine the best use of the space. A designer with no design limitations will be able to see the potential in your existing home and will better help you achieve your dream.

Keep in mind you may have some ideas that may not be achievable, but your professional will be able to help you with making the suitable decisions. On the same token your designer may have a vision that you may not want to live with. You both should be weighing out the pros and cons of what you want and what your kitchen designer envisions, remembering that this is a partnership. Fairly consider any suggested ideas that fall outside of your comfort zone, as this may be exactly what the design needs to achieve outstanding results.

Sometimes the most overwhelming part of renovating is just getting started. The best way to get on track is to see the big picture of what this

project will entail in terms of both time and expense. Be prepared to talk budget with your kitchen designer. This should be a guideline to follow, but not necessarily so rigid that it will inhibit you from moving forward throughout the project. Keep in mind it might be necessary to exceed this budget simply to improve or add to your initial ideas. Start pricing to get a realistic estimate. To get as close a projection of the job you must price cabinetry, countertops, flooring, wall coverings, plumbing, electrical, and then allow for what-ifs that may come up. Once you have arrived at an estimate, remember there may be extra work that you can't account for until the job actually gets started: until walls are knocked out, flooring is pulled up and soffits are ripped down. Even small, unexpected issues will add to the final budget. This is not to scare you but only to prepare you to achieve the most realistic estimate. One-stop shopping might be enticing but it may not be the ideal answer for you. It may even come at a cost. Your kitchen designer will be able to provide experts in their individual profession to help attain a total and successful renovation.

When renovating, with the help of your designer, you should be able to realize what you can do, what you can afford and what you can't afford not to do. Sometimes going that extra mile at that time is the smartest thing to do. Be aware that times have changed and even though in some markets the price of homes have gone down, the cost of materials in many cases have gone up.

You may have already noticed that there are some design trends that seem to carry throughout. The classic trends in the kitchen such as spacious islands and

Not only do you want the style of the room to stand the test of time but you also want the quality to last as well. Dura Supreme Cabinetry.



A sleek contemporary kitchen radiates warmth with rich walnut cabinets and frosted glass doors. Design by Deborah Jacobs, CKD, CBD, Glen Alspaugh Kitchens & Baths, St. Louis, MO. Heritage Custom Cabinetry. Photography: Alise O'Brien.

door panels to conceal the appliances are all still very fashionable. These trends along with decorative hand carved posts, corbels and valences, detailed wood hoods and skirted toe-kicks allow you to appreciate the warmth and beauty of the natural woods. Niches are being added to the design with tailored furniture-like cabinetry to showcase special dishes, cookware and even art pieces. With so many beautiful stones, metals and materials available to you today, your kitchen doesn't necessarily have to be entirely wood.

The lines between traditional and contemporary styles are starting to blur, each drawing components from one another. Although European and Asian influences still play a pivotal role, we are finding that the Spanish persuasion is adding a new spice to design.

People relate trends in design to color, style and



This large kitchen remodel features Crystal Cabinet Works. Design by David Stimmel, Stimmel Consulting Group, Inc., Ambler, PA. Photography: Charles Meacham.

decorative accessories. Even though these are important when determining the final overall look and beauty, lifestyle trends should be seriously discussed before designing your dream room. It is one thing to be impressed by a design you see and quite another to still enjoy and love those choices ten years from now. Will the decisions you make today still satisfy your growing family or your changing lifestyle? If you decide to sell, will the next homeowner love it as much as you have? These are questions you honestly have to ask yourself.

Not only do you want the style of the room to stand the test of time but you also want the quality to last as well. What good is it to renovate your home and have a timeless kitchen if in a couple years you can already see the finish on the cabinets starting to fade or the drawers no longer sliding the way they once did? The longevity of the mechanics and finishes of the materials used is just as important if not more important to some families than its style.

More times than not, the cabinets need to be changed but it has been

seen in certain instances where people move into a new condominium or home and love everything except the kitchen. Although the room is new and functional, it doesn't match their style. In this instance it would not be a good use of your money to completely renovate your kitchen with the expense of new cabinetry. Smaller changes can turn your less desirable kitchen into a much

better fit for you. Just changing the countertop, backsplash and hardware can significantly change the appearance of the room.

If your family is getting bigger and you feel you are outgrowing your home, do you really need to move to gain extra space or do you need to use the rooms you already have in a more efficient manner? Your professional should become aware of how you use the space. You will want to discuss with them what you like and what you don't like about your existing layout. You may want to realistically discuss which rooms get the most use and where your family "actually" lives. You may have an office set up for the kids to do their homework and yet they are gathering at the kitchen table or the island instead. You have a formal dining room, but does your family ever eat there or is it reserved for dinner parties that you never seem to have?

With the right designer by your side you can increase the flow, efficiency, storage, floor space and countertop space in your kitchen without even expanding. The change can be, and usually is, very dramatic.

Today is the most exciting time to do renovations with so many cabinet

A fresh, new kitchen appears timeless with exquisite custom-made cabinetry, hardwood floors, and imported backsplash tiles. Design by Peter "PJ" Salerno, CMKBD, Salerno's Custom Cabinetry & Architectural Woodworking, Saddle Brook, NJ. Photography: Peter Rymwid.





Carved details from Enkeboll are in keeping with the extensive interior woodwork of this grand home. Design from Tom Shirley, Cabinets and Design, Inc., Lexington, KY. Wood-Mode Cabinetry, Rustic Manor finish on maple. Photography: Walt Roycraft.

door styles and finishes, wall and ceiling coverings, appliance choices, stones and endless elements. When you are renovating, one of the luxuries of removing old cabinets and installing new ones is that you can usually get more counter space and even better use of the room simply by modifying the layout. With the creative use of cabinetry interiors to organize items such as utensils, pots and pans, dishes, cookie sheets, oils and spices, trash and recycle, your new kitchen will be just as organized and efficient as it will be breathtaking to look at.

After your cabinetry design and finishes have been chosen, visits to specialty shops with your kitchen designer including granite and stone warehouses, appliance stores and hardware boutiques, can be quite enlightening and so very inspiring. These little trips will ensure that your project includes the latest materials available. One-stop shops

may not have all of the newest arrivals. Your kitchen designer will help you explore all of the possibilities to find the choices that will define your personality and make your kitchen truly unique.

Keep in mind renovations are not about re-inventing the wheel. It is all about making the wheel you already have work more efficiently and giving it a new style you will love. A modestly sized home can still be your dream home with all the luxuries of an extravagant house. If your home is a diamond in the rough do not give up on it too quickly. You will be amazed at how rewarding it is and how proud you will feel once your existing house has been transformed into your dream home. ♦



Tereza Hello is the owner and principal designer of The Cabinet Studio (Canada) Inc. Her award-winning team of professionals is a proud member of the National Kitchen and Bath Association, their local Chamber of Commerce and Executive Women International. Now joined by her daughter, Leigh Ann Hello, this dynamic mother-daughter duo is at the forefront of the business bridging the generational gaps. Together they ensure that every associate maintains the genuine personalized touch Tereza established the company on over a decade ago. The Cabinet Studio (Canada) Inc. is based out of Canada but personally serves clientele across both Canada and the United States. They have also been published in both international and local publications. To see more of their work or contact one of their talented designers please visit their online showroom located at www.TheCabinetStudio.ca