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10 Trends in Kitchens and Baths For 2010

Strong colors, Asian influences, beverage stations and more are showing up in today's kitchens and baths.

By: [Courtesy of NKBA](#)

How big is your appetite for good design? If you're hungry for another helping of kitchen and bath ideas, check out these savory trends, courtesy of the National Kitchen & Bath Association's 2010 design competition. The winners were honored at KBIS in Chicago this spring.

1. Concealed Kitchens



Credit: Susan Gilmore

Kitchen design has reached a new level of integration with the quiet incorporation of the kitchen into the home's primary living and entertaining rooms. Concealed appliances allow the kitchen to enhance, rather than intrude, into other spaces. Clean structural lines, coupled with sleek color palettes enable the space to establish a distinctive identity, without overpowering surrounding rooms.

Design by David Heide
David Heide Design Studio, Minneapolis, Minn.

2. Beverage Stations



Credit: Peter Rymwid

A new element added to many kitchens is a beverage station. This area often includes an under-counter refrigerator and wine refrigeration, as well as a coffeemaker. This appliance can be as varied as the homeowners using them, ranging from simple single-pot coffeemakers to larger units capable of espresso, latte, and cappuccino. This functional destination within the kitchen typically houses stemware, coffee cups, silverware, cream, sugar, and tea. It may also have a smaller bar area.

Design by Peter Ross Salerno, CMKBD
Peter Salerno, Inc., Wyckoff, N.J.

3. Scaling of Elements



Atkins Residence, Black Butte Ranch, Oregon June 2009

Credit: Paula Watts

Scale is an important consideration in the overall composition of a kitchen or bath. Shapes, textures (both actual and implied), and thoughtful placement of fixtures are all elements that can be used to create focal points, functionality, and visual appeal. Here, an irregularly textured pebbled wall, marbled countertop, reflective metallic material, and symmetrically hung pendant lighting directs the eye around the room and contributes to a feeling of balance. Distinctive wall coverings, tin ceilings and the implied texture of a pronounced wood grain are all stand-out details contributing to balance and scale in today's designs.

Design by Kirsti Wolfe
Kirsti Wolfe Designs, Bend, Ore.

4. Color with Energy



Credit: Lazzarone Photography

Bold colors are creating a vibrant splash in room palettes for 2010, with rich blues, purples, greens, and citric yellow making confident appearances in kitchens and baths. Colors that act not merely as a passive backdrop for the room, but bring life to the space through lighting, wall colors, and wood tones are influencing the most innovative designs. Meanwhile, hues from nature combined with others that are more synthetically blended, are inducing a feeling of movement and motion throughout the room through sharp contrasts.

Design by Adel Visser, CKD, CBD
All About Kitchens & More, Sacramento, Calif.

5. Soft Geometry



Credit: Jason van der Burg

Rounded organic shapes can be seen in the edge of a counter or island top, an arch over an entryway or cooking hearth, the curved lines of a light fixture, or well-placed, space-defining soffits. Softer geometry is showing up in contemporary and traditional designs alike. Rounded islands and countertops create a smooth-flowing traffic pattern throughout the room, while an appropriately placed arch will soften the more angular fixed features common in kitchens and baths.

Design by Earl Lawson
V6B Design Group, Vancouver, B.C.

6. Space Subtleties



Credit: William Lesch

Fixtures once confined by location are now incorporated into kitchen and bath designs in almost limitless ways. This freedom in the use of space allows designers to create design-driven room plans, rather than those driven by necessity and space solutions. Floating vanities and wall-mounted toilets allow an unobstructed and spacious feel to a bathroom, while appliances that are stacked and positioned within islands are contributing to functionality in the kitchen by bringing together task space with the right tools.

Design by Lori Carroll
Lori Carroll & Associates, Tucson, Ariz.

7. Design Framing



Credit: Averill Lehan/Pro Active Imaging

Designers are bringing artistic details to new heights, in many cases using structural elements as picture frames. A seemingly simple detail--such as a ceiling soffit or a width of wall space surrounding inset cabinetry--can help to define a functional task area, while also providing visual balance to the room. Increasing the thickness of a countertop can highlight the materials used, particularly if the ingredient is a natural stone with interesting veining. Portions of a room can be treated as a piece of art, with a frame indicating its presence.

Design by Tanya Rentzos
Andros Kitchen & Bath Design, Mississauga, Ontario

8. Varying Heights



Credit: Wendy Illian

Island tops, countertops, and partial walls are being customized for specific tasks and functions, and in many cases, in response to the specific needs of the homeowners. For example, pairing a lower desk and prep area with a higher breakfast bar fosters a greater level of family interaction within the kitchen. This design concept not only provides functionality, but also visual balance. Varying heights of bar tops, countertops, and cabinets can also create aesthetic appeal.

Design by Robert Kinsley
Kinsley Design Group, Highland Park, Ill.

9. Asian Influences



Credit: Brian DalBalcon Photography

Japanese design, in particular, is making inroads in subtle spaces marked by clean lines and neutral color palettes with bold splashes of accent color in strategic spots. In many cases, a simple design will center on an anchor piece of artwork or antique furniture. These cultural effects are not additions or embellishments, but rather are embedded as a primary ingredient.

Design by Leslie J. Jensen, CMKBD
Signature Woodworks, LLC, Tacoma, Wash.

10. Art Integration



Credit: Bob Narod

The personalization of kitchen and bath spaces can take many different forms. Many of today's designs start with an owner's piece—perhaps a framed painting or an antique sculpture—which becomes a springboard for colors, fixtures, finishes, and theme elements. Artwork, as a reflection of the owner's personal style, creates an immediate sense of intimacy and originality. This method of integration allows the designer to fold all other aspects of the room around the piece.

Design by Savena Doychinov, CKD
Design Studio International Kitchens & Bath, LLC, Falls Church, Va.