

CLEANING UP **KITCHEN** DESIGN

Goodbye corbels and carved cabinetry. Contemporary design has taken over kitchens just as it has the rest of the house.

Designers tell us more of their clients are requesting kitchens that hide the appliances behind doors with varied finishes on cabinets and countertops. We look at four homes that make the most of current design trends.

By Charlyne Varkonyi Schaub



Photo by Daniel Newcomb

Sean Daigle created this elegant kitchen design in his Downsview showroom to illustrate trendy looks such as moody gray walls and contrasting color cabinetry.



The large 40-inch wide drawers were painted with chalkboard paint, a trend that is popular on walls in children's rooms. A rollout cart was placed under the rotisserie to make removal of the food easier.



A wet bar is set up for entertaining with plenty of room for glassware and a wine rack.

DESIGNER: SEAN DAIGLE
PHOTOGRAPHER: DANIEL NEWCOMB

Chalkboards at child height in the kitchen? Why not, says Sean Daigle, who loves to create non-typical designs in his Downsville showroom. "This is one of the things we are seeing on kids' bedroom walls," he says. "These are primed inserts with chalkboard paint. We did it with a permanent chalkboard marker so kids in the showroom cannot write on it. It would have been boring to do a typical white front."

At first Daigle was going to paint the walls white like in a typical coastal home. Instead he decided on moody gray. Gray may be trendy right now – but may have a short shelf life. The better choice for those who don't want to redecorate a lot is white, Daigle says, adding that 60 to 80 percent of new kitchens are all white.

"Now everything is simple, transitional," he says. "In this kitchen even the millwork is literally square material. The average cost of a kitchen is down 20 percent because of the change of level of detail. The typical [kitchen] – which used to cost \$90,000 – is now \$60,000 to \$65,000."

Other trends he sees are:

Hoods: They are generally at eye level and are usually the focal point. We are seeing different metals – stainless with a polished mirror feel, antique brass, burnished brass, pewter and nickel.

Cabinets: Think contemporary – Euro-style metals, textured laminates, metal wrapped cabinetry and acid-washed metals. Often cabinets are touch activated with no visible hardware.

Manmade: People are tired of granite. Even what looks like stone is porcelain and it now comes in large slabs. Manmade quartz is in high demand.

Appliances: Induction cooktops are popular. Many of his clients are adding a vacuum sealer that uses heat sealing technology to ensure the air stays out of the bags and allows food to stay fresh for longer. Daigle uses Zero by Irinox, the first stainless built-in packaging unit. Its companion is Freddy, the first flash-freeze chiller for domestic use that prevents freezer burn.



Clockwise, Doug Feldman opened up the kitchen beyond the archway to create a bar and desk area. The Palm Beach Gardens kitchen has contrasting countertops — granite on the island and quartz on the work areas. Vertical windows with a view of the greenery make a frame for the eight-burner gas stove.

DESIGNER: DOUG FELDMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN STILLMAN

Doug Feldman's clients loved the home they bought in Palm Beach Gardens, but the floor plan wasn't the best for entertaining.

Feldman opened up a dark narrow room and created a wet bar with wine cooler, beverage center and fully stocked liquor area. The butler's pantry became a work area with a desk for the wife. Horizontal windows were replaced with custom decorative glass to block some of the sunlight.

"She wanted the feeling of a traditional beach look," he says. "We picked up the feeling with bead board inside the cabinets and seeded glass. They are from North Carolina and they wanted to bring in earth tones in a relaxed traditional design. They wanted a showpiece."

Another problem was designing the proper scale for a home with ceilings that ranged from 12 to 15 feet. Feldman's solution was to increase the crown molding size and bump up the cabinets from 36 to 42 inches using a cream finish with gray glaze in the corners.

The island was designed with a contrasting natural wood. Countertops are also contrasting — granite on the island and quartz flanking the stove.



Clockwise, Bill and Joe Feinberg used glass countertops and a glass backsplash as a focal point in this Coral Gables home. Integrated cabinetry that hides the refrigerator and dishwasher gives a clean, contemporary look. The designers picked up the stainless appliances in contrasting glass front cabinets with stainless surround.



DESIGNERS: BILL AND JOE FEINBERG
PHOTOGRAPHER: DARRYL NOBLES

Bill and Joe Feinberg's clients in Coral Gables requested a sleek, contemporary kitchen with high-gloss maple veneer cabinets. The wow factor is the ThinkGlass countertop on the island. It is maintenance free, non-porous (great for kosher kitchens) and can endure high heat without cracking or scorching. A glass backsplash followed the theme. Hidden storage is a key element of the design. Two cabinets pull out to reveal pantry shelves for bottles and canned goods. Corner cabinets feature lazy susans. Appliances, such as the refrigerator and dishwasher, are flush mounted and integrated so they blend in with the cabinetry. A stainless-steel cabinet breaks up the wall of wood. Bill Feinberg adds a caveat about pullout pantries. "These are not my favorite type of pantries," he says. "When they are loaded, there is a lot of weight and you may have problems in the long run. In five to 10 years it would wear out."

DESIGNER: ERIN PAIGE PITTS
PHOTOGRAPHER: ROBERT BRANTLEY

Erin Paige Pitts and her husband, Gregory, had to think outside the box when they purchased a derelict 1940s home on historic Swinton Avenue in Delray Beach.

“What normally happens in Delray is they take a derelict house and level it,” she says. “Although the house looked like it had never been renovated, it was symmetrical and felt like something I could work with. I renovated to the point that people think it is new.”

The major part of the renovation was opening up the rooms, adding beams and raising the ceiling. When she stands in her new kitchen she can see the living room, dining room and family room.

What had been a small window in the kitchen is now French doors. Two windows in the main wall were redone the same size.

The white cabinetry and waterfall countertop is accented with cerused wood, created by using a wire brush to expose the natural wood grain. The flooring is coral stone. In keeping with the trend, no upper cabinets are used to create a more modern appearance.

Pitts’ first choice for lighting was on back order and she substituted three pendants with clear glass shades that hang from a braided rope. The rope wasn’t long enough but her electrician rewove it with macramé.

Sometimes a change is for the best,” she says. “In the end, the new fixture was the better choice.”

Sources

Coral Springs Appliance Center

3500 Coral Ridge Drive, Coral Springs,
954-752-3880, csappliances.com.

Sean Daigle

Downsview Kitchens, 12800 Federal Highway,
Suite 100, Juno Beach, 561-799-7700,
downsviewkitchens.com.

Doug Feldman

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Bill and Joe Feinberg

Allied Kitchen & Bath Design Center, 3484
NE 12th Ave., Oakland Park, 954-556-3751,
alliedkitchenandbath.com.

Erin Paige Pitts

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Erin Paige Pitts designed her second home in Delray Beach in a clean white but added contrast with cerused wood in the front and back. The three pendants above the island were a second choice but she loved the braided rope, which the electrician had to extend because it was too short.

