

Kitchen Remodel turns Kitchen into the Heart of the Home

By now, we're all used to the fact that regardless of style, size or configuration, "the kitchen is usually a magnetic force in a home, drawing people in and keeping them there" according to Shaun Warwick of Lumbermens Pro Build. Whatever the reasons, the kitchen-as-family-room concept is here to stay, particularly with the prevalence of open floor plans so common now, in which the kitchen is as much a part of the living area as – well, the living area. The Remodelers Council of the Central Washington Home Builders Association (CWHBA) will demonstrate trends in kitchen remodels live at the 2008 Central Washington Home & Garden show. Throughout the three days, the Remodelers will transform an old outdated kitchen using Green Remodeling techniques to fit the lifestyle of today's families.

Fit for Family and Friends

"Kitchen and dining areas are becoming less formal. They are larger, more open and are often set up for multiple chefs," says Brice Baxter, of Baxter Construction, LLC, chair of the Central Washington Home Builders Association (CWHBA) Remodelers' Council. Kitchens are becoming more of a living area now than just a place to cook in. Kitchens which used to be walled away from the rest of the home are now being transformed into spacious comfortable rooms. The Remodeler's Council will renovate an unappealing L shaped kitchen into one that is welcoming to friends and family.

Warmer Textures

During the 1990's, the commercial grade look of stainless steel appliances was explosive in its popularity. First found only in the highest end homes, the gleam of stainless steel and brushed metal soon found its way into the middle market. Though stainless steel appliances are still popular – if for no other reason than a shortage of options – an increasing number of homeowners are balancing the metal with lighter wood tones and simple lines for a more inviting, cozy atmosphere. "The trend seems to be toward cleaner, simple and warmer" said Eric Torres of Pacific Contracting, LLC. This principle will be illustrated with the use of a Knotty Alder cabinet.

The trend toward warmer, more livable kitchen atmospheres with the use of more natural tones and textures will be displayed during the full green kitchen remodel at the show. Cabinets with simple lines, beautiful cork flooring, granite and reclaimed wood counter tops, and tile back splashes will complement the stainless steel Energy Star® appliances.

Softer Lighting

In addition to the cabinetry and countertops, kitchen lighting is also becoming softer and more inviting. "We're getting rid of the fluorescent lighting that used to be so popular in the 70's and 80's, and we're putting in recessed lights instead," reports Brice Baxter.

Eric Torres has also seen more flattering & functional lighting in the kitchen. "Under-cabinet lighting has been really big lately. Recessed lighting and pendant lighting are also very popular," he reports.

In general, lighting is among the most dramatic and effective changes in today's kitchens. Jim Engbretson of Inland Lighting reports, "Lighting has become both softer and more plentiful, designed to highlight work areas without creating shadows."

The Green Movement

Everything seems to be going green these days. You can't open up a newspaper, or watch a primetime television show without seeing Green. But what is Green for a kitchen remodel? Green means choosing:

- Countertops made from recycled content materials such as ceramic tiles or fiber composites
- Installing Energy Star appliances and lighting fixtures
- Using low-flow faucets

- Choosing all surfaces for their ability to be cleaned easily with soap and water instead of harsh chemicals
- Choosing flooring made from hard surfaces such as hardwood, tile or stone that are durable and easier to mop up with soap and water
- Installing sustainably produced wood for flooring, framing, trim or cabinetry, Opting for cabinetry made without urea formaldehyde and without high-VOC varnishes, or made with rapidly renewable materials such as strawboard
- Selecting operable windows that will bring in daylighting and natural ventilation
- Enhancing space for storage of recyclables and compostable materials
- Using non-toxic finishes, paints, cleaning products.

The Event

Please see the seminar schedule located on pages 8-9 for a full schedule of the Kitchen Remodel Transformation.

The Auction

A silent auction will be held throughout the three days of the show for a cabinet package and granite countertops. Take advantage of the three-day pass and don't miss your opportunity to bid on the package valued at \$9,000.

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