

Canadian designers tell us what's cooking in kitchens in 2011

The kitchen is the heart of the home. Indeed, no matter how lovely the living room, how comfortable the dining room chairs, you're sure to find a coterie of friends and family hovering around the kitchen whenever they're over. And no one can argue that having an up-to-date space will fill you with pride when you're entertaining, not to mention cooking.

Styleathome.com asked Canadian designers for their forecasts on what's cooking in the kitchen in 2011.

Kitchens will be gray

"We'll see warm gray neutrals, natural limestone colours and textures, paired with sleek white cabinets or dark woods."

Amy Kent and Ryan Martin, Croma Design, Toronto

"Gray will continue to be a prevalent colour in paint and in kitchen cabinets. It can be used in a traditional way with a Shaker-style front, or in very modern high-gloss applications. Gray is definitely here to stay, commonly paired with brown and white."

Lisa Canning, Lisa Canning Interiors, Toronto

"Lots of gray though [the kitchen] and painted cabinetry. Martha Stewart just launched a new line of kitchens for the Home Depot - again lots of neutral painted cabinets in colours like Ocean Floor (gray), Beach Sand, Sharkey Gray for [longtime creative collaborator] Kevin Sharkey."

Samantha Pynn, Contributing Design Editor, Style at Home; host and principal designer, Pure Design

Bright colours in the kitchen

"We're also going to see dynamic pops of colour. In Canada, this will be reserved to neon or jewel-tone colours in fun accessories or small appliances (unlike our neighbours across the pond who may do their major appliances and cabinets in neons and jewel tones).

Lisa Canning

"Inspired by exotic destinations like Africa, India, Peru and Turkey we are seeing bold colours and prints in pinks, oranges, turquoise and greens. Bright colours and bold patterns paired with the classic earthy and neutral accessories create a well-balanced combination of colour for a visual feast in your home."

The residential team of Sizeland Evans Interior Design, Calgary

Colour may not be for everyone

"We will not see striking change in colour or design direction from 2010 moving into 2011, but rather a continuation and strengthening of several trends that have been around or emerging over the last year."

Sizeland Evans Interior Design

"For the most part [kitchens] are staying classic because it's a kitchen and you want it to last."

Samantha Pynn

Kitchen cabinetry will conceal nearly everything

"I think more and more, especially in small homes and condos, people are opting for as clean a look as possible - fridges with fronts to match their cabinetry, garbage/recycling/compost stations concealed in a pull-out cabinet. Economy of space also applies to our eyes; especially in a small space, it helps to make everything as seamless as possible."

Lisa Canning

"For 2011, there'll be hidden equipment and appliances. Everything is in drawers: fridge drawers, dishwasher drawers and microwave drawers."

Céline Pitre, Céline Interiors, Vancouver

"Microwave drawers – they hide microwaves and free up counter space."

Sizeland Evans Interior Design

"Using pantries and drawers for storage and forgoing the uppers will allow a small kitchen to feel airy and open while still maximizing storage."

Amy Kent and Ryan Martin

Sleeker and more streamlined

"Kitchens will be more contemporary – with a cleaner vocabulary. For example, less visible hardware - all doors looking like panelling."

Céline Pitre

"Integrated appliances, meaning appliances built into the cabinetry of your kitchen will continue to be popular. Also, look for shallow-depth fridges – fridges now flush with counters resulting in cleaner lines in the kitchen."

Sizeland Evans Interior Design

A move toward better organization

"Organized cabinet interiors will be important. IKEA is following the lead of high-end kitchen manufacturers like Boffi and Poliform by offering drawer and cabinet inserts to organize everything from bowls to spatulas. There should be a place for everything. Keeping your countertops clear of appliances lets them be a display for a unique sculptural piece or to lean a work of art."

Amy Kent and Martin Ryan

Natural materials will be all the rage in the kitchen

"Let your backsplash be the art. Beautiful natural stone veining or texture may be all the focal point your kitchen needs. Full-height stone backsplashes lets a dramatic appliance like a sleek hood fan take centre stage."

Amy Kent and Ryan Martin

"Martha Stewart for Home Depot also has horizontal wood grain cabinets. The trend toward the unfinished wood look is still going strong. This cabinet is called the Weston and it's in a soft gray, called Persian Gray."

Samantha Pynn

How can you make your kitchen stand out in 2011?

"A built-in cappuccino machine."

Céline Pitre

"Coming on strong from 2010's top picks list is poured glass countertops. Countertops have new additions created by LED lights and decorative interlayers. And matte black sinks and faucets"

Sizeland Evans Interior Design

Fast and slow cooking

"'Speed ovens' or 'convenience ovens' are being added to kitchens in addition to conventional ovens."

Sizeland Evans Interior Design

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