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what's new in kitchen trends



EXPERT LISA PECK REVEALS WHAT'S GOT DESIGNERS BUZZING IN 2008

BY BARBARA BALLINGER

YOU THINK IT TAKES a lot of work deciding on the right range, countertops and flooring, right? Consider what your designer goes through to remain on the cutting edge—and also to help you. We talked with designer Lisa Peck, who started Pisa Design in Minneapolis 12 years ago.

We've seen the kitchen morph from a work station to enlarged family room to entertainment zone. What's next?

I see several trends on the horizon. I think the kitchen will remain the heart of the house, but we may see changes based on our country's aging population, changing eating patterns and technology. Kitchens may incorporate more communications centers for busy families and older homeowners. We might find digital bulletin boards with calendars and email options. Technology may make it possible for your kitchen to keep inventory of ingredients on hand. If you run low, an email will tell your favorite store, which will then deliver the food to your door.

Kitchen work triangles may become smaller to ease cooking for people who are preparing more meals at home because of a growing concern about healthy eating, and to accommodate older cooks who may not be able to walk easily. Their kitchens may also incorporate more universal design features for easier access.

Because of growing concerns about the environment, designs may be less luxury oriented and more geared toward using local, renewable materials. Recycled goods will become "status" items. Energy efficiency and ease of maintenance will also be more of a concern when homeowners select appliances. Keeping up with the Joneses may mean demonstrating your concern about the environment.

What new equipment are you seeing in the market that homeowners may not yet be aware of?

Microwave drawers are very new and induction cooktops are gaining in popularity. Super-fast ovens like the Turbo Chef are becoming available for busy homeowners who also like to cook.



This inviting kitchen features cabinetry and other wood accents in warm mahogany.

Granite has become so ho-hum, now that everybody is using it. What are the most exciting new countertop materials? And what are you doing with granite to make it look different?

Paperstone, made from recycled paper, is an exciting, new durable material. Also popular is firestone, an almost solid looking Cambria, which offers a sleeker look than granite. There are also more exotic stones on the market. Newer granites have matte finishes, fewer patterns and a "quieter" look. But granites also can come honed, flamed or with a suede finish.

Not everybody can afford the priciest restaurant-style ranges, whisper-quiet dishwashers, refrigerators with TVs and computers. When do these make sense and when should homeowners stick with the basics?

When deciding between basic and luxury choices decide what your goals are for your project. Are you looking to increase the value of your home? Are you an avid cook or entertainer who's going to get a great deal of enjoyment from your appliances? What rate of return do you want on your investments? How long do you plan to stay in your home? And what types of kitchens are common in your neighborhood, if you're concerned about pricing your home out of the market.

There is such a wide range of appliances on the market that in some homes, upgrading to new ones makes sense. Fresh finishes and new drawer pulls can give you the edge in a neighborhood where aging or basic kitchens dominate. If you have room and the budget to add just one upscale appliance that you'll use—a steamer, microwave drawer, separate cooktop or double ovens—it can upgrade your entire project.

Talking about price, so many homeowners want to redo their kitchens but are flabbergasted at the prices—an average of \$108,000 nationwide for an upscale redo. What are other ways to keep prices down?

If people are on a tighter budget, they should stick with basic appliance brands and upgrade finishes. Or, they can leave appliances and plumbing connections in place and upgrade the fixtures. Keeping existing cabinets but replacing doors is still another affordable choice.



DESIGNER:

Kristen Mengelkoch
Pisa Design Inc.
4500 Park Glen Rd., Suite 260
Minneapolis, MN 55416
952-926-3572
www.pisadesigninc.com

LOCATION: Minnetonka, MN

DIMENSIONS:

20'6" (longest wall) by 16'7"

>>> SPECIAL FEATURES:

Flexible table to seat three or four; Maple and stainless palette; Mondrian-inspired open display wall for art and a TV

PRODUCTS USED:

- Refrigerator/freezer, under-counter refrigerator: Sub-Zero
- Wine cooler: Marvel
- Cooktop: Jenn-Air
- Wall oven: Thermador
- Sink: Kohler
- Faucet: Grohe
- Dishwasher: Fisher & Paykel dish drawers
- Cabinetry, table: Custom-designed Sunray Custom Cabinets, Shakopee, MN
- Lighting: Eureka Lighting, electrical conduits over island

cooking + collecting

NEW SHELVES CREATE
A BOLD SHOWCASE

WISH LIST

- Larger table
- More display space for accessories
- Warmer, more textural finishes

Years after building their contemporary house in suburban Minnesota, the homeowners called in designer Kristen Mengelkoch of Pisa Design Inc. to redesign the outdated kitchen. Its footprint was still very adequate but they wanted better quality cabinets than the white ones that were there, a slightly larger eating table instead of the small one for two, and shelf space for the overflow of their extensive art collection, which included small South American sculptures and accessories.

Because of the home's white, black and maple palette with touches of red, Mengelkoch borrowed the maple for some continuity and used it for custom quarter-sawn cabinets with a splash of stainless steel trim at the top, in the recessed kickplates at the base and in drawer pulls. The maple rift-sawn finish gives the wood a more textured look and movement. The existing maple floor suited the new interior design quite well but needed to be refinished.

But the most important change the designer made was to install a Mondrian-inspired floor-to-ceiling wall cabinet with open shelves for art. Designed with thicker shelves than normal to give it its contemporary edge, Mengelkoch installed lights throughout to illuminate works and also covered the entire back with stainless steel for shimmer and reflection. Attached at the center is a stainless steel table that Mengelkoch designed, which can sit two or three most times when pushed up against the wall unit so that it matches the height of the lowest cabinet shelf and looks like part of the wall art. But it can also be brought further into the room to seat four.

A solid wall of adjacent cabinets runs from floor to ceiling providing more storage for pantry food items. Opposite, sliding glass doors open to a deck and bring in gorgeous views of the yard surrounded by woods. The homeowners delight in the glorious change of seasons.

For more display space, one corner of the existing island was clipped to create room for an additional shelf, and stainless steel shelves extend from cabinets near the sink, which also have glass fronted cabinets at the top to provide punches of color of what lies behind.

Walls were faux-finished a terra-cotta hue, which matches colors of some of the South American clay art on display in this room and the red used elsewhere in the home. Countertops were fabri-

ABOVE LEFT: Glass sections at the top of wall cabinets mimic the windows' geometry beneath.

ABOVE RIGHT: The Mondrian-inspired wall unit offers generous display space and a sophisticated art gallery ambience.

OPPOSITE: A good designer knows when to leave parts of a kitchen in place and replace what's dated. In this design that meant new cabinets, a larger eating area, more display space.



floor plan





ALEX STEINBERG, MINNEAPOLIS

big on amenities

MOLDING AND FANCY TILE WORK
ADD OLD-WORLD PATINA

WISH LIST

- Traditional heirloom-quality space
- Modern amenities
- Convenient, storage, low maintenance

For their empty-nester years, a couple in a Minneapolis suburb asked architect Bruce Knutson and designer Lisa Peck to design a 1 1/2-story lakefront home that would look old but include modern amenities to allow them to age in place and enjoy a more maintenance-free home. Working closely together, Knutson, Peck and the homeowners fulfilled both requests in their selection of traditional-looking building materials, finishes, shapes and colors. But they

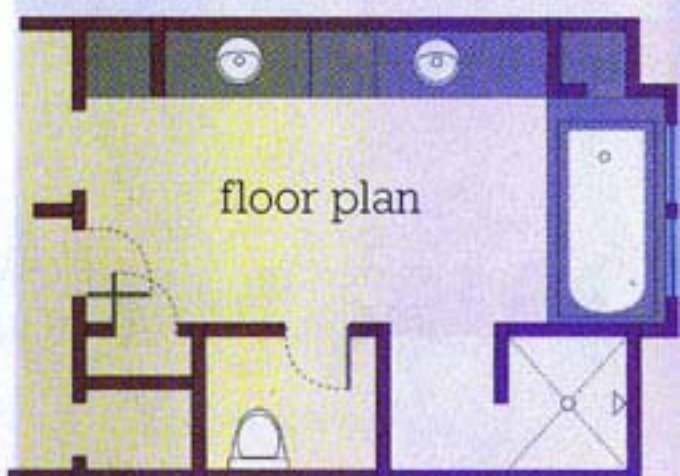
also added some twists, so the home has a lived-in feeling appropriate for today.

The first-floor master suite reflects the approach perfectly. A double vanity with extra counterspace between sinks allows the husband and wife not to bump into one another when brushing teeth or washing faces. The cabinets stand atop feet to make them resemble furniture rather than purely utilitarian storage units.

A long, wide tub (72" by 42") gives the wife the place to soak that she desired; her husband gained a clam-shell-shaped shower without a door. And a separate toilet compartment gives privacy to both. To illuminate the space well—a concern of many baby boomers—Peck installed recessed ceiling spots for overall ambient illumination and sconces on each side of the two mirrors for specific tasks such as shaving.

Traditional detailing was used in the furniture-style vanity cabinets, paneling on the face of the tub, wainscoting, crown molding, window trim, mirror frames and a large niche where a bronze sculpture by Tom Corbin was placed. To complement the painted beige woodwork, Peck selected dark granite for the tub surround and countertops and paved the floor in random-sized ashlar—taupe limestone tiles, heated underneath.

Peck credits her clients' forthrightness as a prime reason for the room's success. "You have to get clients to be brutally honest. The husband knew he wouldn't bend over to use storage beneath the counter, so we put storage at his shoulder height. Each also loves never having to squeegee a shower door," Peck says. —Barbara Ballinger





DESIGNER:

Lisa Peck
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Minneapolis, MN 55416
952-926-3572
www.pisadesigninc.com

LOCATION:

Lake Minnetonka, MN

DIMENSIONS: 10' by 18'

>>> SPECIAL FEATURES:

Art niche as a focal point near the bathtub; Storage tower at vanity; Handmade tiles on walls

PRODUCTS USED:

• **Vanities:** Custom designed, painted enamel wood

- **Knobs:** Personal collection of homeowners
- **Sinks:** Kohler • **Faucets:** Moen
- **Tile:** Field tile by Meredith Art Tile; Accent tile by Jeffrey Court Inc.
- **Tub:** Kohler (actually Pearl)
- **Sconces:** Justice Group
- **Sculpture:** Tom Corbin, Kansas City, MO
- **Rug:** Hand-knotted rug, Aubrey Angelo, Minneapolis, showroom

The wall border in diamond-shaped tiles in taupe and two shades of green adds kick to the otherwise classically-styled, monochromatic bathroom.

OPPOSITE: Not everyone wants a TV in their bathroom; for tranquil soaks, these owners have a sculpture niche to gaze at.