

Social Space Top Kitchen Priority

The kitchen, along with the master bedroom has always been one of the top two most important rooms in the home whether you are looking to purchase, sell or renovate to “stay in place.”

In today’s underwater home sales marketplace, many stay-in-place homeowners have decided to not just remodel and renovate their kitchen but to make it the number one social area of their home. This nationwide trend shows that today’s homeowner is choosing to do more than just cook in the kitchen and use it as a social gathering place.

For those who are also looking to improve health, prosperity and abundance in their lives from a Feng Shui perspective, this remodeling trend is great news. According to Feng Shui principles, the kitchen is the center for nourishment of all things good. It is connected to the nurturing of your physical health, your wealth, prosperity and abundance in all areas of your life.

The kitchen has long been considered the heart of the home, and is also a mirror reflection of your current health and prosperity. When you give it a more important role in your life – such as making it the social center of your home and make some changes by uncluttering, painting and remodeling you have dramatically improved the flow of energy for better health and increased prosperity.

Where to begin?

Whether you are considering a major renovation or a minor facelift, it is important to begin with a clean and uncluttered space – so quite literally there is nothing standing in your way.

- Clear counters of magazines, knives and appliances (unless used daily)
- Wipe down drawers and cupboards on the inside and outside then organize them for convenience and ease of use
- Fix hinges and hardware, dripping faucets and squeaky drawers – be more environmentally friendly
- Clean the kitchen top to bottom – it improves health and welcomes socializing

Now that you can actually take a good look at your kitchen, you can better analyze exactly what needs to be done for a minor facelift or an all-out renovation. You may decide that a fresh light color coat of paint on the walls, a new appliance or an upgraded countertop will provide that more social atmosphere. Or, if your kitchen is 15 plus years old, perhaps it is time to give it a whole new look -- cabinets, appliances and all.

Either will give you that much needed fresh energy so valuable for creating good health and prosperity. Whether you take pride in preparing meals or bring in takeout, your kitchen is the heart of your home and you will prosper with the new positive, nourishing energy.

Current Remodeling Trends

According to an article in "Professional Remodeler" by Editor in Chief Tim Gregorski, , kitchen trends include cabinetry being considered furniture; the emergence of the gray palette, quartz countertops coming into their own, and the creative use of glass, ceramic and metal for backsplashes.

Cabinetry matters. Since the kitchen is now more of a gathering space, cabinets are no longer relegated to the background but are an important part of the socializing atmosphere. Therefore, treat it like a piece of furniture. If you are considering remodeling, think long term styling and design with great function. If you are opting for a kitchen face-lift, consider the options of replacing just the cabinet doors, or utilizing a fresh stain or paint. White, off-white and gray cabinets are still the top choice although darker woods, even mixing wood shades (usually with the island being darker wood than the rest) also work well.

Try gray. Walls and cabinets have gone gray which is a great neutral energy color backdrop for showing off appliances, a patterned granite countertop or home décor accessories. With the kitchen becoming the social hub of the home, decorating the kitchen to incorporate it into living space instead of a sanitized food preparation area is fun. Encourage the flow of positive energy to move through your kitchen by using accent colors, accessories and flooring that coordinate and complement all other social areas of your home.

Trade granite for quartz? While granite is still the top trend-setter for kitchen counter tops, quartz is becoming more and more popular. It feels and looks like a natural stone but requires no sealing giving it durability with low maintenance. Countertops are often taken up the walls for the backsplash but today's trends

indicate you can creatively use glass, ceramic tile and metal to give a fresh look without huge expense.

Ultimately the kitchen is becoming clean, functional, larger and more welcoming by being more open and accessible to other areas of the home. Technology has also invaded the kitchen, not only with appliances but with built-in electronic equipment including computers, a remote control center for home maintenance, and a television for viewing your favorite chef so you can replicate their magnificent culinary creation.

With a few changes, you can make your kitchen the social center of your home. After all, it is the heart of the home where all good things happen – including nurturing yourself, your family and friends.

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