

Kitchen at center of home makes host feel like a celebrity chef



A painted or glazed finish creates a retro feel that recalls a simpler time. It can also give a bright, cheerful look to a kitchen.



A kitchen island often becomes a gathering place for family and friends. When the homeowner entertains, it allows him or her to be 'on-stage' like a celebrity chef.



Several years ago, dark-wood finishes were rare in South Florida kitchens. Today, many homeowners prefer them. The cabinets pictured above have the warm, rich look of fine furniture.

finishes to warmer, darker ones with the look of fine furniture.

Paints or glazes, on the other hand, can create a retro look that recalls an earlier, simpler time. A glaze also can add textural detail.

Cabinets should be more than beautiful; they should also be functional. A horizontal stack of three shallow drawers keeps pots and pans organized much better than a single deep shelf. Pull-outs make the contents of just about any cabinet more accessible, and a Lazy Susan allows more effective use of a small corner space.

Investing in these kinds of accessories is usually well worth the money because they increase efficiency and make the cook's job easier and more pleasant.

Choose quality cabinets from a reputable manufacturer. Look for features such as dove-tailed drawers and full-extension slides. Drawers should fit snugly into their allotted spaces, rather than move sideways.

Also, what warranty does the manufacturer offer?

In years past, a hood above

the range was most often simply a place to accommodate the fan.

Today, hoods have become almost like sculpture. With artistic shapes and details such as corbels, carving and overlays, hoods are often the visual focal point of the kitchen.

A beautiful range hood can be made of the same material as the cabinets, or something that contrasts with them.

One style innovation that also is functional is to support the hood with decorative columns containing doors that open to narrow, pull-out spice shelves, keeping seasonings immediately available to the cook.

The island is another important feature of the kitchen.

With today's open floor plans, the island often faces the family room or great room. It puts the host "on-stage" and gives him or her an opportunity to become a "celebrity chef" for the evening.

Some homeowners prefer an island that matches their cabinets; others make a personal statement by choosing one with a different fin-

ish.

Appliance colors tend to come and go much as they do in fashion.

Today, stainless steel is a popular choice, but we are starting to see fresh hues, such as wasabi green and golden wheat. Gun-metal blue and brick red also are among the newer colors.

Investing in quality when you remodel your kitchen will repay you every time you use the space.

Choose products that will last a long time and that give you pleasure as long as they last.



More homeowners today are choosing contemporary-style cabinetry with clean lines, flat doors and stainless-steel hardware. This kitchen has a modern, urban look.

Joe Basile is a manufacturer's representative for Kitchen Craft, a cabinet company based in Winnipeg. For information, call Distinctive Kitchens and Baths at (561) 997-9400.

The opinions expressed in *Real Estate Weekend* are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of *The Palm Beach Post*.