

TOP 5 TRENDS

Italian-style cabinetry

European system hardware

Eclectic style variations & softer interpretation of contemporary

Low-voc (volatile organic compound) products

No more lost space

Cabinets

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Cabinets

Italian-style cabinetry is very popular. Helene Lindquist, CKD, CBD, Certified Interior Designer, says, "There is a softer interpretation of contemporary now, using beautiful woods and colors that give a warm rich feeling as opposed to the hard-edged contemporary projects of the past."

Michael Borelli, AKBD, president of the San Diego Chapter of the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) and owner of Borrelli Design + Cabinetry, recently attended the Eurocucina show in Milan. Michael says that clean gloss finishes are back. Michael says, "The combination of gloss white and high-end veneers gives the same level of sophistication as an automobile. Veneers are a very green option because we get a thousand times more yield from a log used for veneers than one used for solid pieces."

The biggest change in cabinetry is the use of European system hardware. "The Italians, Germans and Austrians have all the hardware down," Michael says. "We're now using their self-closing hinges, concealed hinges and beautiful drawer slides. All you see is the face of the cabinet."

Norma Byrd, president-elect of the San Diego Chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), explains that eclectic variations of paints and stains are current. Norma says, "Cabinets may be stained, though the island is painted."

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Jackson Design

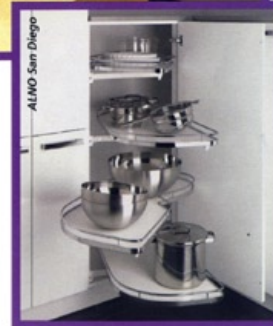
Contrasting colors and surfaces add interest, but simple lines remain popular."

In sync with the eclectic trend, upper cabinets may be finished differently than base cabinets. Some doors may have glass panels, or may be faced in metals or resin surfaces with some open shelves for displaying favorite pots or bowls. According to Helene, cabinet doors that flip up are very popular as well.

Sophisticated advances in hardware maximize convenience and minimize stress. Norma comments that base cabinets now have roll-out shelves. "All

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ALMO San Diego

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TOP 5 TRENDS

Well-illuminated spaces

Energy-efficient LED lighting

Task-specific and accent lighting

High-quality motion sensors

Lighting specialists

Lighting

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Lighting

With the kitchen's role as a gathering place, good lighting is key in setting a comfortable ambience. One lone fixture in the center of the ceiling doesn't satisfy anymore. The American Lighting Association gives some overarching guidelines. Think about layering light, allowing light to fill the space, with larger fixtures above, adding task lighting in work spaces and decorative lighting to accent cabinets.

Today's greener technology makes a well-illuminated kitchen possible without outrageous long-term cost. The initial price of fixtures and bulbs may be high, but the savings in energy over the long-term pays off.

One of the most exciting options are LED (light-emitting diode) lights. They can be installed in recessed cans and the high-quality bulbs have a shelf life of more than 20 years. Lee Hawley says, "LEDs take so little wattage, just a fraction of fluorescents. The light quality is also much better than fluorescents; it can compete with the color rendering of an incandescent or even a halogen."

LEDs are dimmable and don't emit much heat, so they work well inside cabinets also. They can be retro-fitted into other bulb fixtures. And unlike fluorescent bulbs, LED bulbs do not contain mercury so they are not toxic to dispose of.

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Candescant

Due to the rapid changes in the sophisticated technology of lighting, it can pay off to hire a lighting specialist to advise the best plan for the specific needs of your kitchen.

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DON'T forget

High-quality motion sensor lights are now available.

Also, decorative finishes on fixtures are leaning toward rust- or earth-toned wrought iron, pewter, satin nickel and painted finishes instead of basic brass.

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