



Luxury Trends in Kitchen Design

By Amy Fischer

Kitchens come in all shapes and sizes, but the larger the room, the more design opportunities to consider. Whether you are dreaming of remodeling, developing blueprints, or pouring over plans to be sure you've thought of everything, read on for inspiration in the latest trends in luxury kitchen design.

WORK STATIONS

If your kitchen has the space to plan focused work stations (beyond cooking/cleaning/entertaining), a seasoned designer can show you where to put your appliances and storage to best serve your needs. You'll reduce traffic to help get everyone out the door in the morning and get dinner on the table timely in the evening.

The Morning Bar

Start your day off right simplifying your morning routine with a "Morning Bar." Consolidate cereal storage, bread drawers and an appliance garage to hide the toaster or Vitamix and reduce your steps. This is a great place for the built-in espresso maker, coffee station and under counter refrigerator to house the morning creamer and temperature sensitive vitamins.

The Kid Zone

Wouldn't it be wonderful if the kids could be more self-sufficient in the kitchen? Designate a "Kid Zone" with organized snack drawers, fruit basket pull-outs, a refrigerator drawer for yogurt cups and a freezer drawer for after-school frozen treats. Create a lunch-making station with storage for lunch boxes, thermoses and water bottles.

The Baking Station

Do you love to bake but hate having to haul out the heavy mixer and all of the supplies? Design a "Baking Station" with in-cabinet electrical

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for a pop-up appliance lift and a dropped marble counter for rolling out dough. Consolidate storage for baking ingredients, pans and utensils.

DOUBLE ISLANDS

There is no better way to provide designated work zones than adding a second island to your kitchen design. Double islands allow more people in the room without bumping into one another.

First Island

The first island, closest to the core of the kitchen, is just for the Chef. Personal preferences vary, but this might include a sink for quick rinsing and a trash for easy cleanup.

Second Island

The second island can be for everyone other than the Chef. Tuck in barstools to encourage congregating and casual dining. Use this countertop for entertaining with an appetizer arrangement or meal presentation and buffet line.

APPLIANCES

If you are considering resale value in your new gourmet kitchen design, it is expected to include a 48 inch or 60 inch cooktop, 36 inch refrigerator, 36 inch freezer and two dishwashers. Two full ovens are the minimum, and for larger entertaining needs, more options are being added to the mix.

Steam Convection Oven

For the healthiest form of cooking, consider supplementing with the steam convection oven to retain vitamins and minerals while improving moisture. It's not just for steaming vegetables. Think soft bread, flaky fish and ribs where the flavorful meat falls right off the bone. In under 15 minutes, you can reheat a delicious meal without drying out the food or changing the texture like a conventional oven or microwave will. The steam helps prevent flavor transfer between mixed dishes on multiple racks. And just by adjusting the settings, you can enjoy defrosting, accelerating cook times and even browning.

Speed Oven

Life moves quickly, so when you need to prepare a high-quality meal in a fraction of the time, the speed oven could replace the microwave. Combining technologies of 90% convection with 10% microwave, you get quality heating at the speed you need. Stackable in width to the steam and convection ovens, this unit is just about 2/3 the height and cooking capacity.

Wine Refrigeration

Enough about warming, how about chilling? Wine enthusiasts that want easy access to their evening bottle during meal preparation will appreciate the wine refrigerator in the kitchen. With independent zoning, you can store both red and white wines at their optimal temperatures and humidity settings. The units come in varying widths from 18" to 30" with a capacity range of 46 to 147 bottles.

Have fun navigating the options in kitchen design by engaging your interior designer early in the blueprint design development phase. Your dream kitchen has the potential to not only look beautiful and function well, but also improve your overall quality of life.

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