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MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2024

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RETHINKING THE RENO

By Designer Jessica Cinnamon

The kitchen is truly the heart of homes today. It's where we dine daily, gather with friends and loved ones, and retreat for quiet moments of reflection. It's the most-used and most-scrutinized room in the home, and I'd argue that it's also the most valuable. This spills into renovation budgets, too. If you're planning a project, chances are that the kitchen will eat up a good chunk of your dough.

With that said, not all kitchen upgrades are created equal. Here are some that are worth a second thought.

REMOVING WALLS: The allure of an open-concept floor plan has captivated many homeowners, but before knocking out your walls, consider the challenges of reduced privacy, noise control and structural integrity. Additionally, removing load-bearing walls requires professional assessment and reinforcement, adding to the project's complexity and cost. Partial walls, glass partitions or strategic openings might strike the right balance between openness and function.



MATERIAL SELECTIONS: I know from experience that selecting the right materials for a project is critical, and can be a daunting task. Carefully weigh your priorities, such as budget, lifestyle and environmental impact. For example, when choosing countertop materials for kitchens, marble or natural quartzite boast natural beauty, but a hefty price tag and high maintenance. Meanwhile, quartz offers a comparable aesthetic, but is lower on upkeep and cost.

BUILT-INS: As a designer, I appreciate the functional and aesthetic benefits of custom built-ins. They provide tailored storage solutions and streamline organization, but they're not always the most cost-effective option. Built-ins are inherently permanent, limiting flexibility in furniture arrangement. And if budget is a concern, freestanding furniture pieces offer versatility and mobility while allowing for easy reconfiguration as needs evolve.

PRIORITIZING BEAUTY OVER FUNCTION: A visually stunning kitchen has its obvious appeal, but you'll quickly discover that you need more. Features and upgrades that look great but lack comfort or ergonomics, impractical layouts that impede daily routines, or decorative accents that hinder usability can detract from the overall liveability of a home. Striking a balance between form and function ensures that your renovation not only looks great but enhances your daily experience.

Avoid costly mistakes and maximize long-term satisfaction by giving careful consideration to your renovation. Evaluate every decision through a lens of aesthetics, practicality and budget, with an eye toward the future. Taking this thoughtful approach ensures that your home reflects your vision while maintaining its enduring appeal.



Jessica Cinnamon is the award winning Principal Designer and founder of Toronto based Jessica Cinnamon Design Inc. The firm is a multi-disciplinary design company that has become known for creating stylish and well curated interiors. They provide complete bespoke residential design services throughout Toronto Ontario, the GTA, Cottage Country, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

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