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PRODUCT SHOWCASES: Kitchens and Exteriors



KITCHEN GOLD

A condo kitchen redesign adds substantial space and sparkles with slick style

BY YANIC SIMARD • PHOTOGRAPHY BY VALERIE WILCOX

They say good things come to those who wait, and this gold-touched kitchen is no exception. I've seen time and time again that the best results come with a little patience. After all, a kitchen renovation is a major long-term investment, so it shouldn't be rushed. I recommend that you plan for your project to include a few bumps in the road, and take plenty of time to prepare your design—and you can begin with some of these personality-packed ideas taken from a recent Toronto Interior Design Group renovation.

GOOD FUNDAMENTALS

We had big goals for this kitchen, but we still started with the fundamentals. A good work triangle for any kitchen should have the fridge, oven, and sink within nine feet of each other, to reduce the time spent moving between these essential stations. To follow this, we located the cooktop directly opposite the sink, and the fridge and a wall oven just to the side, with storage pushed farther out to the edges.

It's important to remember that your work triangle shouldn't be too small either—leaving some counter space between each station is important for being able to set down a dish or ingredient and use the station properly, so aim to have these areas more than four feet apart.

OPENING UP—AND OUT

Designer tricks can make a space visually open up, but at just seven and a half feet long, this kitchen needed to truly grow outwards. By extending the pantry wall and island-dining zone to one side, and the fridge and oven wall to the other, we added an additional 20 feet! We also opened up the wall in front of the sink station, so the kitchen is three times as large but feels even bigger.

A few other details that helped this kitchen look larger than life was choosing cabinet fronts with integrated pulls, so no hardware projects into the space. We included both recessed lights over the central hub, and a modern track in the centre, to illuminate all angles. Also, the upper cabinets over the cooktop start almost 30" above the counter—instead of the typical 18" to 20"—so when you're working in the central hub you have plenty of breathing room.



THE RIGHT TIME

Opening up that wall at the sink area was no easy feat: the wall contained conduits that linked to other units, which had to be re-routed, requiring a lengthy discovery process, and quite a few trades and specialists. If you're looking to seriously renovate any kitchen—especially a condo kitchen—plan for the process to take three times as long as you think.

In other rooms, a few fun accessories or a coat of paint can bring instant design gratification, but in a kitchen or bath you should be aiming to get it right the first time and achieve long-term satisfaction. Think big, and give the



project the time it needs (six months+ from conception to completion), even if that means taking an extra few months, or even a year, to build up your budget and your bank of ideas.

UNEXPECTED FINISHES

In many ways, this kitchen uses a classic palette—plenty of fresh white and metallics—but not necessarily where you would expect. Applying a bronze-foil finish to the central cabinet doors, and a white faucet and wall oven, reverses expectations and adds lots of personality. We used the dramatic cabinet application sparingly to create a jewelry-like accent—with the finish extended to the toe-kicks elsewhere for a subtle sense of continuation.

An important angle here was the side of the kitchen, as it is the first point you see when entering the area—so we made the end of the breakfast bar a delicious feature, with the waterfall edge of marble wrapping from the counter down to the floor. Combined with a casually leaning art

piece, this zone becomes a focal point all its own, even before you get a peek of the full kitchen beyond.

ARCHI-TEXTURE

We weren't looking to use bold colours in this space, so it was extra important to enrich the monochromatic palette with plenty of texture. The herringbone floors, broad-veined stone, neoclassical wall mouldings, geometric sheer draperies, velvet and wool seats, bentwood stools, and many sculptural black accents, all give the space a rich and complex visual palette, while still feeling clean and serene.

I am personally not an advocate of popcorn ceilings, and neither was this client, so we exposed the concrete ceiling hiding above to bring an industrial twist to the room, a greater sense of height, and yet another architectural texture. A smooth drywall bulkhead over the counters allowed for recessed lighting, and defines those more intimate areas in a subtle way. ♦

Paint PICK

2124-70 Distant Gray, Benjamin Moore

SOURCES:

PAINT: Walls throughout main space, 2124-70 Distant Gray, Benjamin Moore **APPLIANCES:** Dishwasher, Miele Refrigerator, Bosch; Oven, KitchenAid; Microwave, Panasonic **CABINETRY:** Custom-made, mix of high-gloss white and bronzy gold metal laminate **COUNTER TOPS:** Custom sintered surface (Carrara marble replica) **FLOORS:** Blonde herringbone from Europe custom order; all custom items through Toronto Interior Design Group tidg.ca

Yanic Simard is the founder and owner of the petite boutique interior design firm Toronto Interior Design Group. He has over two decades of experience in the interior design/build business and has made his mark in the industry across Canada due to his concentrated industry knowledge, and abundance of unique design ideas.

