

Hints For The Home



Creating An Inexpensive Upscale Kitchen

(NAPSA)—Pro designers say a few simple tricks of the trade can give ordinary kitchens a more upscale appearance. Often a few creative elements can bring a custom look to a kitchen that is in need of a little “oomph.”

“It can be as simple as adding low-voltage halogen lighting,” says Marcello Luzi, a Philadelphia-based interior designer. “This lighting makes everything look better and brings the kitchen to life. Even the food looks better.”

Leading laminate manufacturer Wilsonart Laminate recently interviewed Luzi and other top designers to uncover ways to spruce up the kitchen. Here’s what they had to say:

- **Glass-Front Cabinetry**—John Oetgen of Atlanta explains that refacing existing cabinets and incorporating glass fronts is an economic and creative way to make over kitchen cabinets. “It’s a lot cheaper than replacing the cabinets, and if you don’t want to show what’s inside, use frosted glass,” he says. Other design options include colored or textured glass.

- **Metallic Laminate Backsplashes**—“Metallic laminate backsplashes save money and provide a high-end, stainless steel look,” says Luzi. MetalFX and Metalaminates, two metallic laminate collections from Wilsonart, feature brushed, satin and textured metallic patterns in stainless steel and nickel hues. Says Luzi, “The stainless steel look is like jewelry for the kitchen.”

- **Tall Cabinets**—Designer R. Thomas Gunkelman of Minneapolis recommends cabinets that run all the way to the ceiling. “This gives the illusion of high ceilings and creates more impact,” he explains.



Metallic laminate backsplashes are just one inexpensive way to change the look of your kitchen.

- **Custom Laminate Countertops**—Luzi designs laminate countertops that have a laminate border made from a contrasting or complementing color or pattern. Says Luzi, “Having one laminate pattern inset within another gives the countertop a custom look. You can use this design treatment on islands, cabinets and doors too.”

- **Chandeliers as Pot Racks**—Instead of opting for standard light fixtures, Oetgen suggests a stylish chandelier to hang over the kitchen island. To take that idea a step further, Oetgen fits the chandelier with matching hooks or rings so that the fixture doubles as a pot rack.

- **Colored Windowpanes**—To add a bit of panache to the kitchen and brighten it up, designer Laura Mackey of Silver Springs, Md., replaces a few ordinary windowpanes with colored glass in multi-paned windows. In one instance, she replaced just one pane with colored glass in three windows that stood side by side above the kitchen sink. “It looked like stained glass,” she says.

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