

## Cutting Edge Kitchens Grow In Popularity

(NAPSA)—It's happening again. Kitchens are changing dramatically. In fact, for the third time in two decades, kitchen design is making an about-face.

"Fifteen years ago, if it was for the kitchen, it had to be black," said Gary West, president of the National Kitchen & Bath Association. "At that point, white was the poor man's kitchen choice. Then, about eight years ago, white-on-white became all the rage.

"Now, if you want the latest kitchen look, you want stainless steel," continued West, a certified kitchen designer with 30 years experience. "And, you want it to be a major design element throughout your kitchen to make that sleek, contemporary statement. That means having stainless steel fronts on your dishwasher, refrigerator and stove; a stainless steel sink and a stainless steel counter top."

As vice president of creative and design services at Alderman Studios in High Point, North Carolina, Kathie Pendergras sees the hottest kitchens even before many designers.

"We photograph cutting-edge kitchens for home magazines months before those publications hit the newsstand and the latest kitchen products for manufacturers up to a year before they're introduced," said Pendergras. "Thus, we see trends while they're unfolding."

Pendergras agrees that a distinct shift is taking place in kitchen design. She notes the commercial look at home has built quickly in popularity and is now taking a definite form.

"Crisp, simplistic designs with straight lines; commercial-size appliances with a high-tech look; large, deep sinks and stainless steel everywhere—that's where kitchens are headed," said Pendergras.

Manufacturers are responding to this change by making commercial-style kitchen products readily available to homeowners. This is evidenced by the expanded assortments of large appliances with stainless steel fronts offered at numerous retailers and consumer showrooms. Even small appliance manufacturers have added high-tech, stainless steel microwaves, blenders and toasters to their product lines.

Now, Elkay Manufacturing Company, a leading provider of innovative stainless steel sinks and faucets for 80 years, is completing



**A NEW KITCHEN DESIGN TREND—This custom-made stainless steel countertop will always look new.**

the state-of-the-art kitchen by offering customized stainless steel counter tops to consumers across the country.

"Throughout our history, Elkay has designed and built high-end, custom stainless steel counter tops for commercial applications," said Bates McIndoe, Elkay's manager of specialty plumbing products. "Now, we're applying the expertise used to give the finest chefs the perfect work surfaces and creating one-of-a-kind stainless steel counter tops for homeowners."

Elkay's stainless steel counter tops are available with cutouts for a drop-in stainless steel sink, range top and other appliances. Homeowners may also have a custom stainless steel sink bowl integrated into the counter top.

Beyond adding crisp, modern appeal to the kitchen, a stainless steel counter top provides many practical benefits. A non-porous surface, stainless steel won't absorb stains. With no exposed seams, a stainless steel counter top promotes sanitation by virtually eliminating places where food scraps and bacteria can collect. And, it won't rust, fade or chip. So, it always looks new.

"If you examine kitchens over time, you see two trends," said Pendergras. "Homeowners have grown tired of a look and wanted the opposite. Yet, they've always leaned toward versatile finishes for major elements that allow color to be added through other pieces in the room. Thus, the movement from black, to white and now to stainless steel."

For more information on Elkay's custom stainless steel counter tops, contact Elkay Manufacturing Company, 2222 Camden Court, Oak Brook, Illinois 60523, (630) 574-8484, or visit their Web site at [www.elkay.com](http://www.elkay.com).