

What Makes A Shopper Buy A Home?

(NAPSA)—Not all new home shoppers are created equal. A recent study found that new home shoppers' preferences differ regionally, but even more so by their life phase, family makeup and whether they are making their first or second home purchase. Here's a look at some results:

Regional Differences

Shoppers' preferences within a new home, especially the kitchen, varied by region. Shoppers in the West prefer homes that incorporate natural materials throughout. Both Western and Midwestern shoppers want homes with an abundance of natural light. The study, which was conducted by Merillat cabinetry, found that light was especially important to Ohio home shoppers who experience dreary winters, and Colorado shoppers who want to optimize their natural surroundings.

New home shoppers in the Southeast expressed a great deal of interest in custom cabinetry. They want their kitchen cabinets to have many decorative details.

Life Phase Differences

- **Empty Nesters**—Priorities differ among empty nesters and families with children. Empty nesters tend to want a home that is "fully loaded" without compromise, since many are buying their last home. But accessibility, ease of maintenance and room to entertain are important as well. "I don't want something so big I can't take care of it, but big enough so we can entertain our friends and family," said a shopper in Colorado. A shopper in North Carolina said, "The layout of a prospective house is important to us. We don't want to have to climb stairs in our later years."

- **Growing Families**—Families with children tended to want a new home that is conducive to family time together as well as "kid control." The layout and



New home shoppers with children tend to look for kitchen islands that can be used as the "command center" of a kitchen.

design preferences for a growing family included a place for the whole family to congregate yet also conduct activities such as homework, cooking, watching television or reading.

Families with young children viewed a home as an environment that grows as the family grows. They prefer a kitchen window that faces the yard to watch the kids. Shoppers also like having a kitchen island they can use as the command center of the kitchen. "With a kitchen island, I can keep an eye on the kids while I'm cooking," said a shopper in North Carolina.

On Buying Their First Home...

Almost all study participants wished they had spent a little more money and time on finding a home that reflected their lifestyle needs. "Looking back, I would've spent more and got something we could've grown into a little bit more, as opposed to buying such a small house," said a shopper in Ohio.

Many shoppers also said they would have taken more time shopping for their first home.

For decorating tips and ideas, visit www.merillat.com.