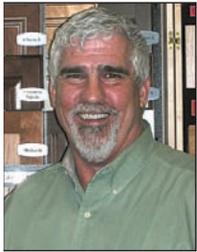


Kitchens & Baths *Unlimited*

**Designers give kitchens nostalgic, friendly personalities with colors**

Cabinetry with painted or glazed finishes add warmth and life to a kitchen. While wood cabinets with natural finishes remain popular, more people are opting for painted



**Pat Perez**

surfaces with hues ranging from traditional white to whimsical blues, greens and yellows.

Color can transform your kitchen into a reflection of your personality.

Hundreds of styles, colors and wood species are available. Many clients of cabinet-makers feels that painted cabinets give a homier, less formal feel, and transport them back to the friendly kitchens of their childhoods.

Whether a homeowner chooses



A breakfast bar can double as a gathering place. Sage-green walls complement the light-colored, natural-grain wood of the cabinets.



Painted white cabinets, paired with sunny yellow window treatments and walls, give this bathroom a light, cheerful look.



Dark-granite countertops blend with soft white kitchen cabinetry. In addition to a rectangular island containing a vegetable sink, an octagonal island adds visual interest and serves as a gathering spot.

## Central kitchens keep cooks, guests involved during entertaining



A center island fitted with an extra sink allows for additional food preparation. Dark wood cabinets and mahogany wood floors with brick-colored walls add character and contrast to the room.

naturally finished wood, paint or glaze, it is important to purchase quality cabinets. Look for features such as three-quarter-inch end panels and shelves, which offer greater durability than the half-inch size. Dovetail drawers are superior to those in which corners are butted against each other.

If you are like most people, you spend a lot of time in your kitchen. Whether you are building a new home or remodeling an existing one, it's a good idea to hire a kitchen designer to provide the most effective layout and to help you make the most of every inch of space.

Choose a reliable designer who will finish the job within budget and on time.

At Distinctive Kitchens and Baths in Boca Raton, for example, design

professionals guide clients through the process of choosing from a variety of cabinetry, flooring and countertops.

The designer will first ask about your lifestyle, then create a plan to complement it.

Do you cook a lot or very little? Having an oven at eye level will save stooping and bending. A double oven will allow you to prepare different dishes at the same time, while convection heat can speed the process.

A cooktop with a warming burner can be especially useful if you create delicate sauces.

If, on the other hand, your idea of preparing a meal is venting the wrapper of a microwave entrée, you probably won't want to waste space or money on extra features.

The kitchen initially served as the heart of the home, where the family gathered near the fireplace for light and warmth.

Eventually, the kitchen became a place that people wanted to hide from sight. The cook prepared the meal while family members and guests waited in another part of the house. When dinner was ready, the cook carried food into the dining room.

Today, however, the kitchen has returned to its earlier role – but with much more style and flair. People use their kitchens for entertaining as well as for preparing meals.

Most kitchens are open to part of the home, such as a great room or family room, so people can move between the areas and feel as if they're together.

Features such as elevated breakfast bars and large islands provide places for guests to gather and visit with the cook. These amenities also offer additional workspaces and often contain features such as vegetable sinks and chopping areas.



Blue painted cabinets give this kitchen a homey, country-style look. Open shelving and glass cabinet doors add to the relaxed appeal.

### Bathroom cabinetry beautiful and useful

Bathrooms have become glamorous retreats that offer an escape from the stress of the outside world. In many new homes, the master bath provides his-and-her areas.

Homeowners are investing in furniture-quality bathroom cabinetry that is as beautiful as it is useful. Vanities might be as long as 10 feet, and the height of a kitchen counter. They offer storage, such as shallow makeup drawers, designed for specific needs.

Retro-style open shelving is another trend. It allows you to exhibit colorful fluffy towels, distinctive perfume bottles and vials, photographs, and even personal collections.

Homeowners are also displaying artwork in their bathrooms to add style and flair. Mirrors can be surrounded by beautiful frames that complement fine paintings. Some baths have elaborate chandeliers that you might expect to see in a dining room.

In fact, it can be fun to have more than one cook in the kitchen, and guests often enjoy helping to prepare the meal.

Special features such as trough sinks – which are long, narrow and shallow to keep cool drinks within easy reach of guests – add a festive ambience.

A beautiful, well-designed kitchen can add value to the home. It is frequently the first area that buyers view when they are considering a purchase.

Investing in this important space will bring a return in personal pleasure every day you enjoy yourself there. Doing so also should help if you decide to sell your home.

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The opinions expressed in *Real Estate Weekend* are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of *The Palm Beach Post*.



Mint-green cabinetry and a center island lend a retro feel to this large country kitchen. Stainless-steel appliances and a deep-colored, planked wood floor complement the design.