

# Fabulous FURNITURE 2001

## DESIGNER'S CORNER

### Kitchen

Today's consumers are looking for comfort and function, as well as style, when selecting furnishings for the kitchen.

It is important to select the correct size and shape dinette table for the space. There should be a minimum of 30 inches walking space around the table - 36 inches is ideal.

Maple and cherry for cabinetry and flooring seem to be the current woods of choice. Light, clear finishes have become very popular. Consumers are opting for dinette sets with more than one finish. Painted finishes and colored stains, in combination with woods that blend with cabinetry and flooring, are a popular trend.

Family dining habits have changed dramatically in recent years. Meal time has become much more casual. The designs of kitchens have changed as a result. Many builders are incorporating eating spaces built into the counters for "on-the-run" meals.

Fabrics and accessories are being used to bring color, pattern and warmth to the kitchen. Fabrics for window treatments and seat cushions bring warmth and color to the area. Accessories on tabletops, walls, counters, and above cabinets give the kitchen life and personality.

### Dining

Longevity is key in the mind of the dining furniture buyer. Homeowners are looking for styles that will transcend time and stay in style through changing trends. Because of this, traditional and transitional styling remain popular.

For a more formal look, traditional styles with carving in darker woods that resemble



Duane Petrowsky

European antiques are used. In contrast, cleaner lines and simple detailing keep the Louis Philippe style in demand for those wanting the look and feel of understated elegance.

Today's consumers are becoming more comfortable mixing different styles in the same room. It is no longer required to buy an entire matching dining room set. Rather than a standard china cabinet many people are choosing sideboards with accessories and artwork to add interest and character to the dining room.

In smaller rooms where the use of a china cabinet is prohibitive, scaled down non-traditional dining pieces such as hand painted secretaries, curios and chests are being introduced. These accent pieces supply storage and display space as well as a warm and comfortable dining atmosphere.

Column written by Duane Petrowsky, an interior designer at Newton Furniture.

## Kitchens follow personal mixes

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI  
SPECIAL WRITER

Since most of us spend more waking hours in our kitchens than anywhere else in the house, it's not surprising that we pour a lot of our decorating energies into the cabinets and accessories.

"Quality time is limited, and because you have to eat, you have to be there," said Candice Waller, designer at DeGiulio Kitchen and Bath in Birmingham.

"You're trying to create an environment that is rich, warm and where everyone wants to be," she said. "People spend a lot of time and effort to create a place to share and nourish. That's why the kitchen is so important."

"Kitchens are much more customer-oriented than they ever used to be, because the customer is so much more aware," said Lorette Keeth, vice president of Top Shop in Farmington Hills.

"You have to make the kitchen fit the homeowner and their way of life. It's an individual thing. And each one is styled to that individual."

Choices abound today compared to 15 years ago, she said, when customers chose from either white cabinets or light, medium or dark oak.

"All of a sudden there are colors and different styles of wood," Keeth said.

"People gravitate toward the new. Kitchens are much more fun than they used to be. You're allowed a lot more creativity. You're not locked into somebody's idea of what it should be."

Most moms don't stay in the kitchen eight hours a day, seven days a week anymore, Keeth added.

The kitchen has become central base for crafts, homework, entertaining and appreciating

the warmth of home and family. "It's the core of the family and the core of the home," Keeth said.

### Planning

When planning a new kitchen or making changes to an old one, it's important to identify the space that will be used and it's important to decide if you want an open or closed area, according to an Internet Web site, [www.homeadvisor.com](http://www.homeadvisor.com).

"Some serious cooks are appalled by the idea of a space where they can't concentrate in solitude, or where messy pots are in view," the Web site said.

The two main poles in kitchen style are country and contemporary. Beyond that, there are period, geographical, romantic, gourmet and eclectic styles."

Styles come and go, but Dave Stapleton, owner of New Concept in Livonia, said oak kitchen cabinets have been "popular for 100 years and probably will be for another 100 years."

The lighter oaks are more popular than the dark. More and more people are asking for glazed finishes on their cabinets.

They start with a stained wood and take either a darker or lighter stain as a contrasting color that gets picked up in the crevices.

Distressing the wood and making it look antique is another popular technique.

The other extreme would be the very clean, very polished look using things like aluminum accents," Waller said. "You can pretty much create anything that you want."

Light maple and other natural looking woods are making their way into a growing number of homes, Stapleton said.

Cherry is another popular



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW CONCEPT KITCHEN & BATH

Clean and bright: This kitchen is warm and inviting with the smooth grain of Brighton maple cabinets offered through HomeCrest Cabinetry.

wood that a lot of homeowners are asking for, according to Carmen Hancock, president and owner of Kitchen Plus in Livonia.

While white is still popular in kitchens, Hancock doesn't see it as a current trend. She does, however, hear a lot more people asking for creams and light-toned yellow on their cabinets.

### Accessories

Homeowners are also looking for convenience by adding loads of accessories to their kitchens that ultimately make their lives a lot easier, like roll-out trays and shelves, fold-out pantry racks for pans and lazy susans in all sizes. Roll-out trash containers with a multitude of bins for recycling are requested a lot, too, Stapleton said.

"The number one question is: 'Can you get me more room in my existing kitchen?'" he said.

Efficient design patterns to make the most of an area is essential. Builders sometimes are more concerned about cost and less focused on whether they're creating space that can't be used, Stapleton said.

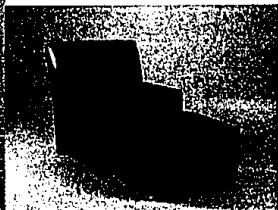
"I always start by trying to get the work triangle," he said. "The triangle consists of the sink, stove and refrigerator. We're looking for the most convenient setup for the person working in the kitchen."

Gail Fekorn, sales manager for Kitchen Suppliers Inc. with showrooms all over metro Detroit including Canton, Livonia and Waterford, has seen a

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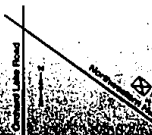


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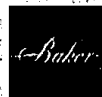
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