



## Cooking up the Latest Kitchen Trends



### Building Success 101

*Q: What is "solid surface" material for countertops?*

A: Solid surface refers to a relatively new breed of countertop and surfacing finish that offers a denser, thicker, and color-through material alternative to ceramic tile, laminate, and stone (such as granite). Made from a combination of real and synthetic minerals and high-strength polymers, these surfaces appear and act like genuine stone, but can also be formulated and installed in a wider range of styles and colors -- including combinations -- to suit any decor. Their formulations are also impact, scratch, and

Kitchens have always been the center of a house. It's where everyone congregates at a party, regardless of the host's intentions. It's where the mail, the keys and the family news are dropped on the way in. The kitchen is so important to most people that it is the feature most likely to make or break the purchase of a home.

Not surprisingly, the kitchen is a lightning rod for design and lifestyle trends. In addition to such products as cabinets, appliances, and plumbing fixtures (to name only a few), the layout, function, and look of the kitchen continually evolves to meet modern needs. Here are a few current trends to consider:

**Outdoor kitchens.** Once you experience a true outdoor kitchen with a full range of function, you'll never go back to a rollout charcoal grill again. Outdoor kitchens have become a legitimate industry. Manufacturers offer improved products that better withstand the weather (such as polymer-based cabinet fronts) and refreshment centers that more aptly accommodate outdoor needs, such as snacks and beverages.

**New fronts.** Raised-panel cabinet fronts are a mainstay in kitchens, but the natural wood look is waning a bit in favor of paint finishes in deep reds and lighter greens. Designers mix and match painted and natural-wood finishes to add distinctive style and to identify subtle differences in function. For appliances, popular stainless steel finishes have evolved into brushed metallic and graphite-like looks to broaden the options and upgrade style.

**Secondary kitchens.** Also called butler's pantries or prep kitchens, these smaller spaces allow caterers and party-throwers to keep the mess out of the main kitchen (where, as we said, everyone gathers) while also creating a convenient access to food and refreshments from the dining room. Smaller-scale appliances, including warming drawers, built-in coffee makers, and wine chillers, not to mention specialty storage options, suit the function of these spaces. Morning kitchens, located in or adjacent to the master suite, are also gaining popularity.

**Specialization.** Once upon a time, there was only one sink in the kitchen. Now, there can be a handful, serving specific functions and equipped with varying styles of faucets. Long trough sinks, those with built-in cooking elements, multi-basin designs with integral cutting boards, small bar basins, and deep, single-basin sinks for large pots and pans dot every corner of the kitchen.

burn-resistant, and protect against microbial growth to maintain a clean and healthy surface.

**Zoned approach.** The advent of secondary spaces has affected the main kitchen. Smaller-capacity appliances and other products have fostered "snack zones" for busy families. Equipped with a microwave oven, dedicated storage for non-perishables, and various undercounter drawers for refrigerated foods, dishwashing, and warming chores, these zones accommodate a wider (and hopefully healthier) mix of quick meals in a self-contained area.

**Center of the universe.** The open kitchen plan that includes kitchen, casual eating area and family room is now firmly established. The newest expansion of kitchen function is the kitchen island that extends farther into the living space, serving as an area for homework and crafts, dining and catering, and all-round hangout. Equipped with flush-mounted or concealed under counter electrical outlets, overhead lighting, and ample storage, today's island is considered by many as a home's true center.

We have been building some fabulous kitchens for clients which incorporate many of the items and ideas from this article. If you know of anyone who is thinking of re-doing their kitchen please ask them to contact us.

Warm regards,

*Richard*

Richard Dickson  
**Dickson Development Corporation**  
666 Plainsboro Road, Suite 1300  
Plainsboro, NJ 08536  
**(609) 799 0220 - phone**



[info@dicksondevelopment.com](mailto:info@dicksondevelopment.com)  
[www.dicksondevelopment.com](http://www.dicksondevelopment.com)

c. 2008 All rights reserved.

[Click here to subscribe](#) to this newsletter.  
[Click here to unsubscribe](#) from this newsletter.

