

Forbes

Interior Designers Share Their Best Kitchen Renovation Ideas



Whether a kitchen is being built from the ground up, demolished and rebuilt or getting a weekend facelift, kitchen renovations are a large commitment at every level. They're also a larger financial investment than other rooms in the home. So it's essential to choose the right finishes and appliances not only for the current homeowner but also for resale value.

Execution throughout the project from measuring to installation is equally important. After all, just one mistake can add thousands of dollars and weeks onto a renovation.

So what's the best way to renovate a kitchen in 2020? Are white kitchens still in style? What type of flooring is ideal? I spoke with several interior designers and industry professionals to learn what their best kitchen renovation tips are.

Start Smart

Nancy Charbonneau of [Charbonneau Interiors](#) recommends starting the project off on the right foot, no matter what the scope of the renovation project is. “The biggest thing with kitchen renovations is not to be in a hurry. If you're in a hurry, it adds twice as much stress to the project. When going into a renovation project, enjoy the process,” she says.

Keep in mind that it is also a team effort. Charbonneau recommends focusing on finding the right people to bring a vision to life. “It's really important to interview professionals and find a designer and a general contractor that can help you execute your project according to your budget, timeline, and vision. Any renovation project is an investment, and the professionals to guide you along the way should be included in that investment, too!”

See Everything In Person

While there are lots of bargains online, Charbonneau stresses not being hasty and seeing everything in person before making a major decision. “You can really tell the quality and features better when you can touch, feel, and see how everything works in person. Again, take your time to find exactly what you want!”

But that doesn't mean you can't shop online. Go see appliances in person and then find the best deal online. Spend a few extra dollars and minutes ordering samples of paint, tiles, flooring, etc, just to make sure they are what you anticipated.

Invest In Quality Cabinetry

Amanda M. Amato of [AMA Designs & Interiors](#) notes that cabinetry is the most important investment in a kitchen. “Cabinets are a product that you will use every day and are difficult to replace down the line (unless you want to completely re-renovate your kitchen). I recommend purchasing the best quality cabinet that suits your budget.”

In terms of brands, one of Amato's favorites is Nobilia, which she shares takes style, quality, and function to a new level.

"Aside from the features mentioned above, Nobilia offers pantry cabinets where the shelves glide forward as the door opens for easy view. The base cabinets have adjustable feet so you never have to use a box of wood shims to level your cabinets. When planning your renovation, keep in mind that Nobilia's lead time ranges from six to eight weeks, but it is definitely worth the wait," she says.

Choose Smart Appliances

Depending on budget, smart appliances are certainly worth considering. Many of them have truly game-changing features. For example, Amato likes a feature on some new Thermador appliances with touch technology that opens the door with the tap of an elbow. This is especially helpful for chefs who always have their hands full.

Another one of Amato's picks is GE appliances with a smart range hood. "It has a guided cooking app to assist while you cook, streams music and video, and can even record a video of your stovetop while cooking," she says.

Prioritize Flooring

Karen B. Wolf, [Karen B. Wolf Interiors](#) notes that flooring is often an afterthought in renovations but that doesn't mean it should be. "While wood is the number one flooring choice for kitchens today, tile should not be overlooked," she says.

Tile has some advantages over wood for kitchen flooring, Wolf explains. "When your dishwasher overflows or the garbage disposal has a back-up, tile will handle the water. With radiant heat becoming more economical, tile is now a cozy selection. Also, tile can solve matching wood issues. With natural wood and driftwood on-trend in today's kitchens, the floor needs to blend or match to the wood cabinetry selections. Tiling your floor is a great way to enable multiple tones and materials to work together."

However, if resale is a concern, Sue MacKay, who is the Vice President of Marketing for [Empire Communities](#) suggest installing hardwood instead of tile. "Hardwood flooring throughout provides a clean and seamless experience for your main floor living space."



If the flooring is a major issue, wood tile is certainly worth considering because it has the look of hardwood with the durability and benefits of ceramic tiles. Just make sure the grout lines are very thin or the aesthetic changes completely and certainly not for the better.

Don't Forget Lighting

There are lots of ways to light a kitchen and while this might feel like a minor detail, MacKay thinks it's anything but. "Lighting is also something that I feel is always a worthwhile investment, such as extra pot lights, under counter lighting and pendant lighting over the island.



These specific task lights make the space come alive and if you can put the pendants on a dimmer, this will make all the difference."

White Kitchens Still Prevail

"I find that style trends tend to happen in cycles and the bold colors that you might love one year tend to become stale as your family evolves," says MacKay.



She suggests keeping finishes neutral and classic for the most part. “I love white subway tiles, shaker or plain white gloss cabinets and white marble or Corian for counters. Basically, any variation of white keeps the feeling classic, clean and modern.”

But that doesn’t mean you can’t have color in your kitchen. Choose bright stools, window treatments, art, and other décor.

Build An Island

Kitchen islands are still very much in style and are far from a fad. If space permits, a renovated kitchen absolutely needs an island. MacKay recommends outfitting the island with power and plumbing because it will make the space more usable. It's also better for resale.