



The Coral Homes
cleverliving
team

NEWS FROM THE HOME FRONT

Trends in kitchen design and finishes

Presented by Juanita Swain from the Coral Homes *Clever Living* team

One of the many advantages of building your own home is that you can design your own living spaces to suit your family's needs. And as the heart of the family home, it's no wonder the kitchen receives so much attention when it comes to choosing the design and finishes for this important family space.



There are some definite design trends emerging in the kitchen as families continually strive for a balance between functionality and aesthetics. Because we spend so much time in the kitchen it has become a real focal point of the home – a hub where family members can meet and share time together.

A design which lends itself well to the needs of families is the galley kitchen. They have been around for quite some time but are becoming more and more popular of late because they offer more effective use of space in the home. Not only can a galley kitchen provide great bench space and storage capacity, but it can also maximise the size of surrounding living spaces.



HEAD OFFICE

36 Laver Drive,
Robina Qld 4226

Phone 07 5585 2555

Fax 07 5585 2500

www.coralhomes.com.au



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Today, families are more likely to catch up for a meal in the kitchen rather than use the traditional dining and meals areas of the home. As a result breakfast bars are becoming a more popular feature of the kitchen, and they are also getting bigger (800mm wide instead of 600mm). Breakfast bars are easily incorporated into a galley kitchen design.

Another very important aspect of the kitchen is appliances such as the oven, cook top, rangehood and microwave. Correct use of these appliances can create a visual “wow” factor in your kitchen. However they also need to be practical and functional. As a result there is a trend towards using larger appliances such as freestanding gas/electric cookers and 900mm wide ovens and range hoods.

Some clever new designs are emerging where the fridge and microwave (perhaps two of the least attractive appliances) are hidden from view but at the same time are easily accessed. The microwave is starting to appear more often below the bench (along with the traditional oven) to maximise bench space and enhance clean design lines.

The use of a white gloss finish to cupboard doors and bench tops is becoming more common because it creates a “clean” feel and is stylish. Oak colours and light timber looks are popular for under bench cupboards. There is a strong trend towards reconstituted stone bench tops, in particular granite and Caesarstone. These surfaces are very functional for families because of their durability, but also add “wow” factor to the kitchen design.

Under the bench, there is a trend towards installing drawers in place of cupboards. Deeper pot drawers have been around for some time but these types of drawers are now being used to store all kinds of items including plates, cups and cooking utensils. Overhead cupboards are extremely popular for storage, and the use of aluminium framed overhead cupboards is becoming increasingly common for a hint of sophistication.



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Glass splashbacks are very popular because they add to the design visually (there is a great range of colours available) but also because they are hygienic and very easy to maintain. Depending on your kitchen, the glass splashback can be installed with no seam, or join, for a very clean look. With tile splashbacks, the trend is to use large format tiles (eg 600mm wide x 300mm high) to reduce the amount of grout lines and provide a cleaner overall look. Metallic colours are proving a popular option in splashbacks, and metal strips are even being incorporated into tile splashbacks for extra “wow” factor.

Even though the kitchen is almost part of the living areas these days, families still want to create a visual distinction between the kitchen and surrounding areas. This is being done by installing a “drop-down” bulkhead over the entire kitchen. This lowers the ceiling height in the kitchen but effectively defines the space.

In terms of lighting, recessed down lights are very popular for task lighting (especially with drop-down bulkheads) to avoid a cluttered look to the ceiling above the kitchen. As the breakfast bar has become a more important feature of the home, so have pendant feature lights above the breakfast bar. There is a wide variety of pendant lights on the market to choose from.

For ideas to help you create your next kitchen, take a look at Coral’s latest display homes at Coomera Retreat, Gold Coast or visit www.coralhomes.com.au.



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