



LIVE LARGE IN A SMALL KITCHEN

Want the recipe for transforming a cramped kitchen into a comfortable multi-tasking cooking space?

by **JANINE MACKIE**

Reflecting about the word “home,” it’s easy to be transported back to grandmother’s kitchen. Just a small room in a modest bungalow, yet the warmth this space conveyed still carries on with memories of canned peaches, dill pickles and ripe raspberries with generous dollops of cream. There was always an extra spot at the table for an unexpected guest, and always second helpings of mashed potatoes. While today we live with the notion that bigger is better, grandma’s kitchen is a reminder that wonderful things come in small packages.

The National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) considers any kitchen 150 square feet or smaller to be a small kitchen, but that doesn’t mean you can’t make it look more spacious with some big ideas.

“It is really amazing how the small kitchen can look larger with the right material and choice of finishes,” said Corey S. Klassen (AKBD), an independent interior, kitchen and bath designer and certified member of the NKBA.

Of all the rooms in your home, the kitchen serves up the most activity. Not only do you prepare meals and feed the family, but you store food and finery, entertain, scrapbook, supervise homework, and yes... do the dishes. Small kitchens that sparkle with both efficiency and style can have just as much impact as a mega-kitchen while embracing cosiness.

REPLACE SOLID CABINETRY DOORS WITH GLASS FRONTS

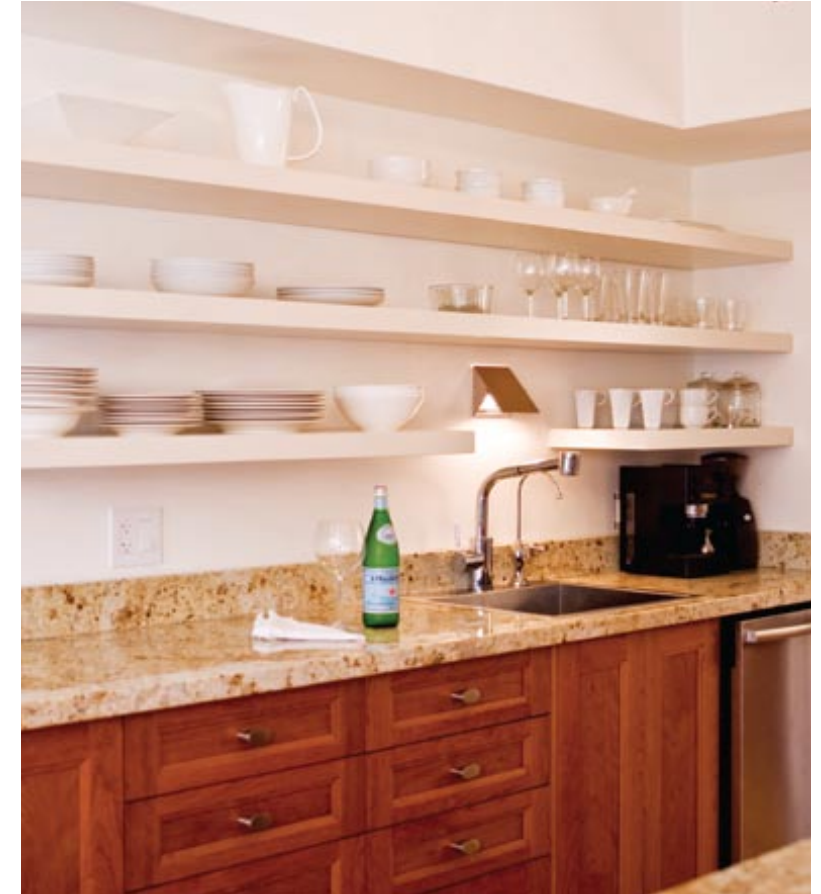
Experienced kitchen designers are worth their weight in gold because they will be able to create

something for you that will make your life run so effortlessly you will simply not know how you managed before. For those beginning a small kitchen renovation Klassen offers three pointers for getting off the starting line: Determine a realistic budget, get educated on products and materials and stay positive through the process. Having a plan is the key to a successful small kitchen renovation, and that usually unfolds as you visit home improvement stores and thumb through remodelling magazines to get ideas for cabinets, flooring, lighting fixtures, appliances, sinks and backsplashes.

As you dream and plan your kitchen space your main focuses should be on storage, lighting and appliances. But before considering storage, edit your stuff. Cluttered kitchens aren’t efficient. Cull your clutter and narrow down to the basics.

OPEN SHELVING CAN MAKE A SMALL KITCHEN FEEL LARGER

“Making use of every square inch of a kitchen is very important,” explains John Friswell, registered renovation and housing expert with CCI Renovations in North Vancouver. His team, which includes kitchen designer Robyn York, has completed several amazing makeovers on small kitchens this year.



PICTURED TOP
Kitchen Design by Corey Klassen, AKBD. PHOTO BY I LOVE KITCHENS LTD

PICTURED BOTTOM
Kitchen Design by Robyn York, CCI Renovations

PICTURED OPPOSITE
Kitchen Design by Tammy Sagar, Heart of the Home Designs. PHOTO BY JERRY SEGISMUNDO



PICTURED TOP
Kitchen Design by
Robyn York, CCI
Renovations.

“Using hardware to access blind corners is a great solution, as well as using drawers for storage in as many locations as possible,” says Friswell.

In the small kitchen, the actual space is often limited to only two walls so the best way to increase storage capacity is by going vertical. Use full height cabinets to give yourself as much storage as possible. Design considerations for the small kitchen, in addition to the “NKBA Kitchen Planning Guidelines,” include adding pullout shelves, rotating inserts and tilt-out bins to increase accessibility and storage within the cabinets.

Another great tip from principal designer Tammy Sagar of Heart of the Home Design, is to choose light or white coloured cabinetry, or better yet go with open shelving. In a recent reno to a Vancouver condo, she transformed a galley-style kitchen into an efficient and stylish space with a cabinetry makeover.

“You need storage but closed cabinets can make a small kitchen feel closed in. We went with open shelving, and when you group your dishes and coordinate them, it looks fabulous,” said Sagar.

Counter and floor surfaces should also be similar in texture, hue and tone. This design trick will fool the senses into believing that the small kitchen is actually larger than it really is. Combine

this trick with the back-splash selection and not only will it establish a strong horizontal line, but it will make the room appear wider and taller.

Want to add a little “bling” to your small kitchen? Using the same colour tones as the flooring and countertop, a large patterned backsplash can create movement and style!

THE MORE LIGHT YOU HAVE THE MORE SPACIOUS YOUR KITCHEN WILL SEEM

Ready to put some light on the situation? Add the illusion of space by adding a skylight, Solatube, strategic pot lights, as well as good ambient and task lighting.

Recessed LED under-cabinet lighting is an excellent choice as it is concealed within the cabinetry and focused on the centre of work surface itself.

Another way to earn some lighting points would be to use a curved track system on the ceiling. If there is the opportunity, use a great pendant light over an eating area to highlight and pronounce the space. Even the best kitchen designers suggest working alongside a lighting specialist to determine the best solution for each individual project.



IT'S IMPORTANT TO ANALYZE THE USE OF THE SPACE AND DETERMINE WHERE SMALL APPLIANCES ARE STORED, CUTLERY AND UTENSILS ARE ACCESSED, AND HOW IT ALL FUNCTIONS TOGETHER FROM MORNING TO NIGHT

COREY S. KLASSEN ASSOCIATE KITCHEN & BATH DESIGNER (NKBA)

CHOOSE COMPACT, SPACE-SAVING APPLIANCES

Now for the fun part... choosing appliances! There are numerous high efficiency, sleek appliances that will allow individuals with small kitchens to have the same luxuries as those with large kitchens. Small kitchens of the past had no choice but to squeeze in standard 30-inch width ranges, 33-inch wide refrigerators, and 24-inch wide dishwashers, leaving little space for prep, cooking and storage. That has all changed with compact space-saving appliances.

Take Fisher & Paykel for example, they have a 24-inch gas range, a single-drawer dishwasher that could be mounted under the sink, and a 31-inch wide refrigerator. LG and AEG Electrolux also have small capacity appliances. No longer are there

compromises when going smaller and not only will the symmetry and balance be brought back to the design, but the valuable storage capacity is returned to the small kitchen. A few tips from the NKBA for increasing counter space include keeping your cooktop and oven in the same area, and building your microwave into the cabinetry. Keep all small appliances stored in either an appliance garage or pantry to maintain a clutter-free workspace.

Before you christen your kitchen with a martini party, don't forget to add your personal touch – something as simple as a white vase of pussy willow branches, a metallic bowl filled with shiny red apples or a platter of vibrant green artichokes can be the perfect finishing touch to your new and improved small kitchen design.

PICTURED TOP
Kitchen Design by Corey Klassen, AKBD. PHOTO BY I LOVE KITCHENS LTD