

SIZZLING KITCHENS

Kitchens are leading the home-innovation stakes and there are plenty of exciting new developments on the horizon. We asked experts Lou Farrugia from Kellyville Kitchens and Michael Kitchener from Kitcheners Kitchens what features their clients will soon be enjoying. And, straight from Milan Design Week, Simon Scott from Sydney Kitchens dishes up some of the top trends heading our way from the design capitals of the world. Everyone agrees there's a focus on natural elements and incorporating more technology into the heart of the home – the kitchen of the future is an elegant and functional space.

STORY SELINA GORDEVICH



Image courtesy of Fisher & Paykel



Image courtesy of Sydney Kitchens

MICHAEL KITCHENER, KITCHENERS KITCHENS

It's not just kitchen technology that's improving, manufacturing technology is too. The choice of materials now is so different to what was available five years ago – amazing grain, amazing texture and feel – but the material is laminate. Another trend steadily on the rise is open-plan living; people are blending the line between the living area and the kitchen, everything is merging.

LOU FARRUGIA, KELLYVILLE KITCHENS

For benchtops, the timeless appeal of natural stone such as granite and marble is still popular and there's a trend to using stone throughout the kitchen, not just for the benchtop. Think marble splashbacks and islands predominantly made from natural stone.

SIMON SCOTT, SYDNEY KITCHENS Reporting from Milan Design Week

There was a distinct resurgence in timber this year. Walnut and dark timbers featured dominantly, juxtaposed with neutral tones of white or grey. It was also very stylishly mixed with pearlescent metallic finishes in champagne or pewter.

The new innovation in automatic closing devices for large doors, lift-ups and drawers gave kitchens the definite 'wow' factor. Glass shelving forming the bottom of the wall cabinets directed LED lighting inside the cabinet and to the benchtop below.



Image courtesy of Kitcheners Kitchens

Custom designed and built joinery is making waves says Scott, with appliances and benchtops set at different heights to suit the cook, providing improved ergonomics and functionality. The trend of concealing appliances and benchtops behind sliding doors for greater aesthetics is still popular.

KITCHENERS CREATES KITCHENS THAT ARE STYLISH, PRACTICAL AND SAFE FOR KIDS

STORY BY MICHAEL PENNY, PHOTOGRAPHY SUPPLIED BY KITCHENERS KITCHENS

Life at home for young families centres around the kitchen, so when it comes to building a new kitchen they need something practical and most importantly, safe - style is often just a bonus. In Australia, around 14,000 children under five years of age are admitted to hospital each year with kitchen related injuries.

"I'm a father of 2 inquisitive young kids who love to touch everything so I want to protect them from the kitchen, and naturally the kitchen from them" says Michael Kitchener of Kitcheners Kitchens. He says parents should look for a kitchen company that will first examine a family's behaviour and needs. Most of his design team are parents who comprehend the importance of safety aspects like optimal bench heights to reduce the risk of potential harm for curious kids.

Other recommendations include low maintenance, durable surfaces that won't easily scratch, quadruple glazed oven doors, and handle-less drawers that avoid grubby little fingers.

Yet the question always arises about whether after all this, a kitchen can still be stylish. Well, yes it can, as Kitcheners, with all its HIA Design Awards, can implement the latest trends to create a kitchen that has plenty of style to complement the safety.

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