

At Home with QMA

SPRING 2009

Kitchen Trends 2009

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Why Now May Be the Time to Build or Remodel Your Home

When you return home at the end of the day, does your home feel just right or is there always a certain something that seems to be missing? Is your home a place you want to spend time, or does it feel uninviting when friends come over or guests come to stay? And do you find yourself wishing away those high utility bills for a house that's always too cold in the winter or too hot in the summer?

Homeowners who have been putting aside their visions of what their home could be would be wise to heed Warren Buffett's advice, "**You do things when the opportunities come along.**" And that opportunity to come home to a place that fits perfectly with the way your family lives has never been better than now.

While it may be hard to believe there's an upside to the current economy, it's presented homeowners with a short-term opportunity to transform their home at very substantial savings into a place they long to come home to. Just think – outstanding architectural design, quality construction and superior client service are now more affordable, so you can get more of what you want and finally love your home.

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QMA is the winner of numerous regional and national awards including:

2007 Top 500 Remodelers

REMODELING
BIG 50

NARI
COTY



2006 Master Design AWARDS

KITCHEN TRENDS

2009

Homeowners continue to regard the kitchen as the most important of all rooms, regardless of the size or cost of their home. Everyone desires beauty, efficiency and state-of-the-art amenities in the kitchen. The following list of current trends can be your guideline for this year's kitchen makeover—however big or small.

OVERALL DESIGN

- Clean, straight lines
- Simple, rather than highly embellished
- Focus on the details

CURRENT STYLES

- Traditional (still #1)
- Arts and Crafts
- Soft Contemporary
- Rustic
- Shingle style (Hampton)

CABINETRY

- Maple dominates the wood species
- Medium to darker stains prevail
- White with black is coming to the fore
- Greater use of color—contrasting light and dark—is stylish
- “Second-life” furniture pieces provide personality and are eco-friendly
- Decorative hardware is larger, artistic and more textural

APPLIANCES

- Arrange appliances according to work centers
- Appliance and fixture size and number should be appropriate to the kitchen size
- Steam ovens and induction cooktops have caught on
- Cabinet depth refrigerators—French door or slim columns—are all the rage
- Look for energy guides on each appliance: WaterSense and ENERGY STAR



Photo: Courtesy of Aristokraft Cabinetry (www.aristokraft.com)

APPLIANCE FINISHES

- Stainless steel is still the top choice.
- Custom paneling integrating appliances with cabinetry is very popular
- Bold colors are increasingly in demand
- Oil-rubbed bronze is another desired option

SINKS & FAUCETS

- A large sink bowl is well-liked for its flexibility
- High-arc faucets and pull-out sprays are hot items

FIXTURE FINISHES

- Brushed chrome, nickel or stainless steel are the most prominent
- Oil-rubbed bronze is also important

COUNTERTOPS

- Granite is the leading selection
- Wood, glass, soapstone, slate, and quartz provide fashionable options
- Green possibilities include recycled aluminum, recycled glass, and recycled paper
- Multiple materials used together is the rage

BACKSPASHES

- Tile and stone are the favorites
- Standard height is 4" but the material is often extended to the ceiling

FLOORS

- Tile and stone are popular in a 24" x 24" format
- Bamboo, cork and wood are softer underfoot

STORAGE

- Walk-in pantries are in demand
- Interior cabinet storage systems optimize storage space
- Automatic roll-out under-counter trash containers and compost bins are convenient
- Add storage in rooms adjacent to the kitchen, such as the butler's pantry, mud room or laundry room

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- Varied work surface heights designed for cooks of all ages and abilities
- Fewer wall cabinets, but a greater number of efficient drawer systems make storage easy to reach



In *HOT* Water

Are you thinking about replacing your household tank-style water heater? Perhaps you've heard that a tankless water heater will provide you endless hot water instantly, as well as save you considerable money on energy costs. Before you make the switch, it is important to carefully evaluate which type of water heater will work best for your particular situation.

A tank water heater stores hot water, keeping it hot even when you aren't using it. With this method, energy is wasted every time the water in the tank begins to cool and then is brought to temperature again. If your tank is in the basement, it can take a while for the hot water to reach an upstairs bathroom, and some of the heat is lost on the way. In addition, the amount of stored water is limited and you may experience the shock of cold water if you test those limits. On the other hand, tank water heaters are relatively inexpensive to install and maintain. Another positive note is that tank water heaters are becoming more efficient. If you buy a 10- or 12-year warranty tank heater, it will have better insulation and often more efficient combustion chambers, as well as two diode rods that help increase the life of the tank.

A tankless water heater begins to heat the water only after you turn on the faucet, so there is no standby energy loss. If your tankless heater is installed at a distance from the bathroom, it will take some time for the hot water to reach the showerhead, and some of the heat will be lost on the way. If your home is several stories, you may want to install separate units on the upper and lower levels. These heaters don't require much space. With properly sized units, you can have the pleasure of hot water that never runs out.

If the water coming into your home is very cold, it can take a real burst of energy to heat the water to showering temperature rapidly. The higher BTU needed for a tankless device may require a bigger vent and a larger gas line, which makes the tankless heaters initially more expensive to install. If gas is not available in your area, be sure to calculate the extra cost this type of unit will put on your electric bill. The complexity of tankless heaters means that regular maintenance is advised.



These photos illustrate the difference in space requirements for a tank-type water heater versus a tankless.



Dollars & Sense

If you've been longing for a spa-like experience in your master bath—but at the same time hoping to keep your water utility costs down—you'll be happy to know you can have it all! Sleek and stylish fixtures are now available that have earned the EPA's WaterSense label for high-efficiency faucets. These faucets deliver a flow rate of 1.5 gallons per minute (gpm), a remarkable improvement

over the standard 2.2 gpm required by the Federal Energy Policy Act of 1992, yet they do not compromise performance. In addition, these products help you be a steward of our earth's natural resources. And that's another good feeling.

The Kenzo's modern waterfall trough styling is a real eye-catcher.



The Fina features a marquis-shaped spout that offers a beautiful, sheeting water presentation.



Courtesy of Price Pfister (www.PricePfister.com)

Photo: Courtesy of Show House by Moen (www.showhouse.moen.com)

Time to Build or Remodel

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In Hot Water

Dollars & Sense

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Why is remodeling more affordable now? It's thanks to a reduction in materials and labor costs. Now, because our costs are lower, we can pass those savings on to you without sacrificing any of the quality, craftsmanship and personalized service we are known for.

And while this market provides us the chance to give you the home you want for less, it's more than just the dollars saved. In fact, there's another piece of advice Warren Buffet offers, **"Price is what you pay, value is what you get."** You're getting the best service and product at a lower cost for greater added value.



Plus, there's more good news right now:

- Your project's design can start sooner.
- Projects can finish sooner.
- For many types of projects, it's not too late to start and be ready by the upcoming summer season.

This means you'll enjoy the benefit and extra value you get from being able to live in your newly remodeled home without the wait. Of course, timing is everything and markets cycle. Costs will eventually go back up.

But lower pricing is not the only reason why now is a great time to remodel with QMA. All of our work comes standard with the following services:

- Guaranteed construction cost
- Guaranteed completion date
- 3-year warranty on all renovations and additions
- 10-year warranty on all new homes
- All designs provided by our award-winning, in-house architects

When you consider all of the above, it is clear that remodeling now may be the smart thing to do. Of course, it is always smart to use QMA.

So stop adding to that wish list and start living in a house that you love coming home to. Call us today to learn more about how you can take advantage of this unusual opportunity.