



The Awesome Kitchen... *just insert the **WOW** factor!*

The Kitchen has become the new entertaining space of your home

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Why is it that the best parties end up in the kitchen? Is it the heart of the home? Is it easier to talk to someone when you are standing next to them? Whatever the answer, the kitchen has become the new entertaining space. Walls are coming down to open up and expand the kitchen area. Large islands or eating bars with numerous stools are high on the priority list. With this trend to entertain in the kitchen, the standard kitchen just isn't good enough for those who want to WOW their guests, not only with the great food and wine, but with their surroundings!

The WOW factor can be inserted into any kitchen design with unique custom details. Likely, we have all seen kitchen renovations that are functional and pretty because they are new and updated. However, when you want WOW, you need to implement the custom detailing that takes the design to another level... the Awesome Level!

The kind of custom detailing that I am referring to implements interesting materials and interesting ways of using the materials. Its custom fabricated hardware, unique lighting details or interesting door details. Once a functional layout is worked out in your kitchen, these custom details can be worked into the design. Here are a few pointers on realizing the awesome kitchen:

- Gather ideas and details that appeal to you. For inspiration, look to furniture for interesting details or the detailing in a restaurant or hotel lobby. Many of these details can be modified to work in a kitchen design.
- Work with a kitchen designer who



Photo 1

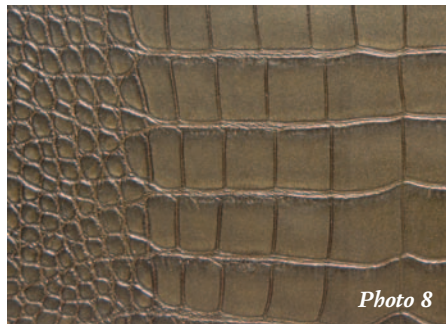
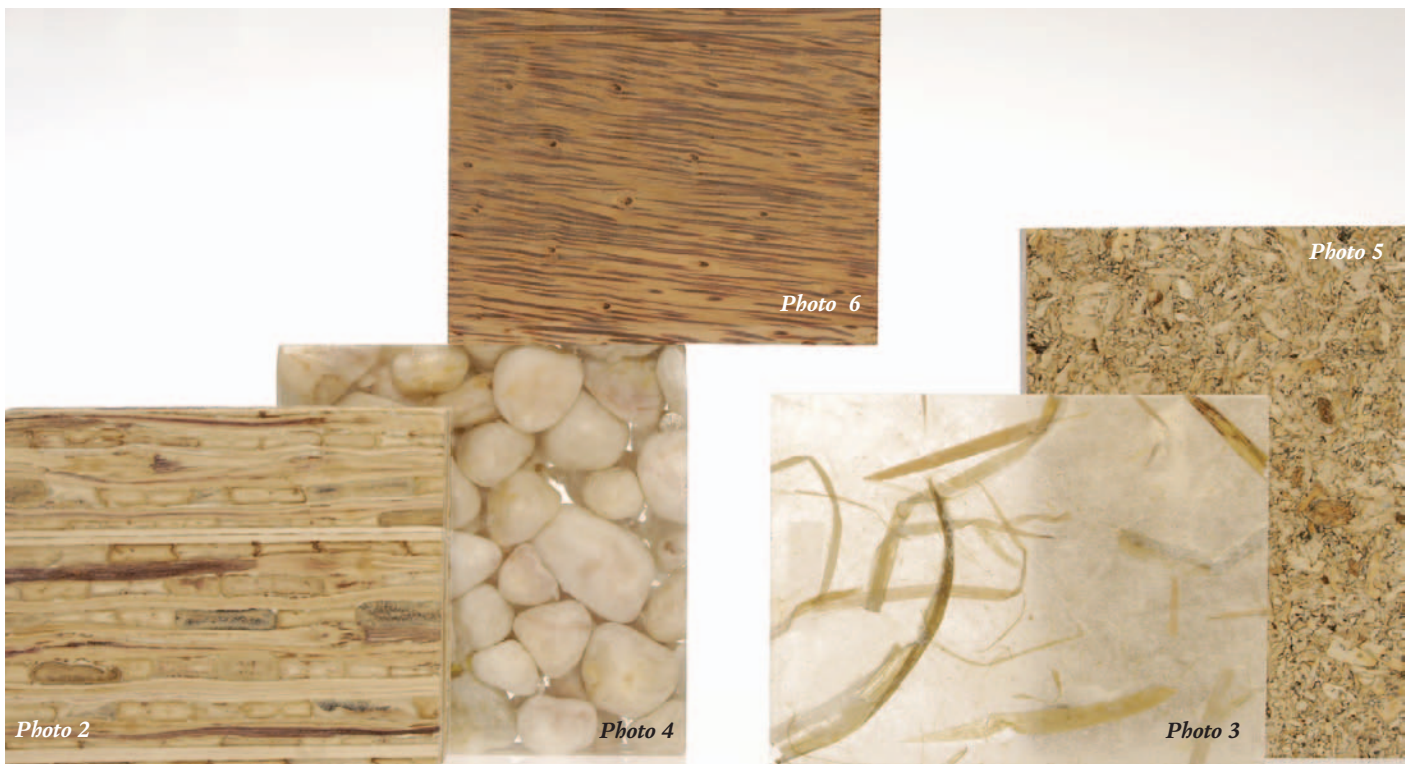
has the capability to create the Awesome Kitchen. If the designer works for a company that does modular boxes, they may not have the capability to create and build the details that you want. Have the designer prepare a complete set of drawings including floor plans, elevations, details and specifications.

- Once you have the design drawings, set out to find a capable contractor who also wants to create your Awesome Kitchen. Some contractors will just want to work with what they know, where as, there are many other contractors who are just waiting to build an Awesome Kitchen! I would suggest that you use the contractor the designer recommends and has worked with before.

Custom detailing uses materials not always found in a standard kitchen and in ways that you might not expect. Chances are, these materials are not found at the local home improvement store either. They are usually sourced & sampled through knowledgeable designers. The key to mixing materials is balance, scale and proportion, the detailing of the meeting points, knowing the capabilities and limitations of the material. Well thought out detail is a thing of beauty! As once quoted by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe... "God is in the 'details.'"

The design world is forever being introduced to new and exciting products. Here are my top new material picks to consider using to create your Awesome Kitchen:

1. **Kirei Board** (photo 2), which is an engineered panel product constructed



from the stalks of the Sorghum plant which is grown around the world for food. The stalks left over after harvest are heat-pressed with a nontoxic adhesive to form lightweight, strong, unique Kirei Board. Some possible uses for this product are the cabinet doors, gable details or bar tops.

2. Floraglass (photo 3), which is an eco-fibre acrylic laminate incorporating various natural fibers and leaves, such as Mulberry, Banana Leaf and Water Hyacinth. This can be used as a door insert (photo 1), backsplash, or divider wall.

3. GlasStone (photo 4) is a product that is manufactured from 100% recycled acrylic and natural stones. It can be used in a variety of applications such as countertops, tabletops and floor tiles. The acrylic is translucent and can be custom coloured.

4. Engineered Composite Panels (photo 5) are made of unique bio-based materials, which exhibit the beauty and elegance of traditional burl wood. The material is created from an agricultural fiber, sunflower hulls or wheat straw, making this a beautiful environmental option to

hardwood.

5. Coconut Palm Plyboard (photo 6) is made from multiple layers of palm, creating both a stable and durable product of great beauty. Usages include millwork details or flooring.

6. Form Art sculptured decorative panels (photo 7) are made from Excel Plus MDF and carved into fabulous textured panels. They would make great accent panels on the backside of the island, door inserts or wall details.

7. Vinyl - Wrapped doors or panels can make a fabulous accent. Vinyl fabrics (photo 8) are available in extremely interesting patterns, textures and colours, from faux distressed leathers to metallic embossed patterns. These can provide the durability needed in a kitchen!

8. Fused Glass panels can be custom sized and coloured and used as a door insert detail or as a backsplash detail. The only limitation is the artist's kiln size.

9. Custom hardware (photo 9) can be made to almost any size you need and can be finished in numerous ways -

gold/copper/silver plated, hand painted or powder-coated. As shown in photo 9, the custom door pulls, along with the inlaid copper details, dress the plain slab door.

10. Exotic Tiles & Veneers made of mother of pearl and abalone shells can be used as a backsplash detail or insert detail in cabinets or counter tops. We have been using mother of pearl and abalone for jewelry for years. It is now available to adorn your kitchen.

11. Stone Coverings by Erth which are lightweight stone panels that can be used for accent walls.

In an Awesome Kitchen, you must think about all the details - how one material meets another, the locations of outlets and lighting, the hardware details and installation/integration of the appliances. All these wonderful details must do more than look good - they must function. The last thing you want is an amazing looking kitchen that doesn't work! So, for your next dinner party...serve the Awesome Kitchen!! 