

The Home Front: Adding spark to the hub of the home



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Rendering of an apartment in British Pacific Properties' new development The Peak at Mulgrave Park, which all feature Bulthaup kitchens. *PNG*

Kitchen design is one area of the home people always need help with, but it's the most expensive area to tackle, says Vancouver designer Kendall Ansell, of [Kendall Ansell Interiors](http://kendallansell.com) (<http://kendallansell.com>).

“We’ll go into someone’s home and they’ll have done all the bathrooms, all their floors, their living room and dining room, and the kitchen is kind of this archaic beast that they’ve never touched, and they don’t know what to do.”

Ansell says she doesn’t typically get away with a kitchen renovation under \$40,000, so it’s a big investment.

“Appliance prices are just crazy now,” she says.

However, there are some simple things you can do to refresh your kitchen that don’t require professionals, Ansell says, starting with cleaning up.

“The first thing I speak to people about is just the clutter on the counters,” she says. “I think a lot of people think it’s OK to just let the Cheerios box sit out, and their collection of vitamins, and all those things. Everybody has it, I’m guilty right now of it. I don’t have a big enough pantry, so I keep all my baby’s food out on the counter. Containing those weird items can make a huge difference to the overall zen feel.”

Places like Pier 1, West Elm or HomeSense are great for picking up jars, containers and baskets that allow you to store these items, and put them away easily when guests come over.

When it comes to the types of containers you choose, Ansell’s only recommendation is buy something you like, don’t worry about what’s trending.



Kendall Ansell of Kendall Ansell Interiors says the quickest way to refresh your kitchen is by cleaning up “those little piles of clutter” on the countertops, using containers, jars or baskets that you really like the look of. Photo: Allison Kuhl for The Home Front *JANIS NICOLAY*
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“If you’re up in Osoyoos, I know that Oliver Twist [Estate] Winery has a lot of really great pottery from local artists. It doesn’t need to be what everybody’s buying. I know the pineapples are really popular right now, and I personally do not like pineapples, so it’s all about finding those objects you like.”

Another easy upgrade for the kitchen, says Ansell, is replacing the hardware (knobs and handles) on your cabinets and drawers.

“The biggest thing here is you have to bring your old hardware with you when you go shopping,” she says. “Because not all circles are the same diameter. You don’t want to be changing things too drastically, or you’re putting new holes in your cupboards. Just bring the old ones with you so you make sure the hole size is going to work, nothing worse than coming home with 20 knobs and being like ‘Oh, no.’”

Just like with the containers, Ansell encourages people to think outside of the box when it comes to choosing hardware, so if you like expensive, one-of-a-kind knobs or handles from design boutiques, you can just buy a couple and use them on a few of your cabinets and go with more neutral (budget-friendly) hardware for the rest. Allowing yourself creative licence, she says, will mean you’ll end up with a space that reflects your personality, and that’s what your home should do.

“Rose gold and brassy colours are really trendy right now,” she says. “But that doesn’t necessarily mean that’s what you should be choosing.”

Designing kitchens that reflect homeowners’ personalities is something luxury kitchen design and manufacturing company Bulthaup has been doing since 1949. Known for their meticulous craft — with all their products designed and made in Lower Bavaria, Germany — and their clean, seamless design, they are committed to “re-imagining kitchen architecture,” says Vanessa Chadd, showroom manager for Bulthaup Vancouver. Bulthaup sees the kitchen as an important living space that should blend in seamlessly with the rest of the home, she says.



Caption: Luxury kitchen design and manufacturing company Bulthaup create clean, modern kitchens that blend seamlessly into the home environment Photo: Bulthaup for The Home Front *PNG*

“We call it kitchen architecture because it’s about more than the kitchen space,” says Chadd. “It’s about the environment you’re living in, not just this focused area, so it should be authentic in both materials and function and considered ergonomic design. Many of our daily activities can be made effortless and more pleasurable through elegant minimization.”

British Pacific Properties recently chose Bulthaup to produce all the kitchens for its multi-family residential building, The Peak at Mulgrave Park, in West Vancouver.

“The kitchen has always been a key part of every home we’ve built,” says Geoff Croll, president of British Pacific Properties. “It’s the central hub of living. As we move from stately single-family homes to elegant condominiums, the kitchen becomes an even more important feature in the home.”

For The Peak, they are paying special attention to “kitchen architecture”, says Croll, to enhance and maximize the living space of their residences, “ensuring this room becomes a seamless and multi-functioning part of every home.”

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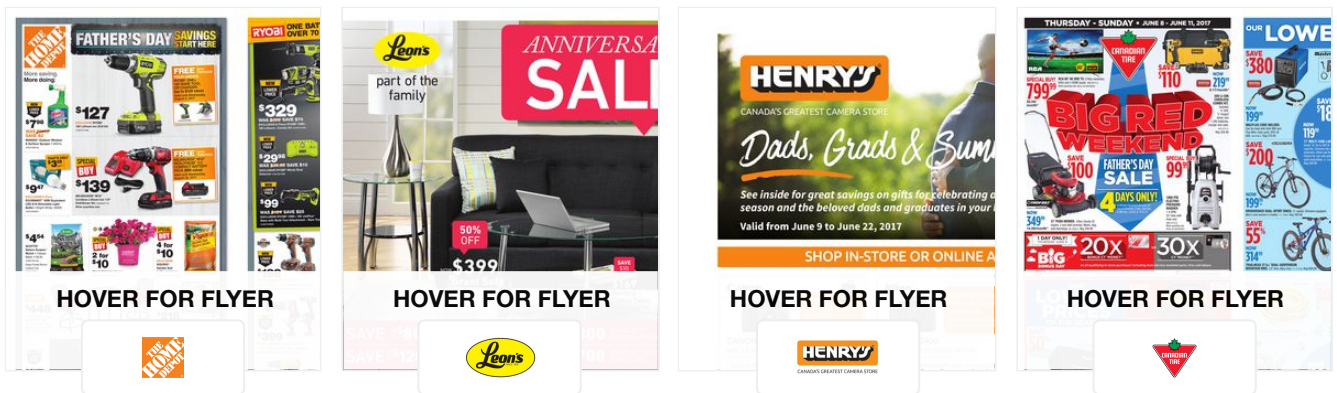
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