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Kitchen Lighting:

What You Need to Consider When Designing Your Kitchen

by: Kate Davidson

When designing any kitchen, lighting is an important factor and needs to be carefully considered. We put so much thought now into the cabinetry, appliances and countertops. Don't forget about how important it is that your kitchen be properly lit to not only make it functional but also to show off all of its great design features.

As a designer, I have learned that it is most important to illuminate a kitchen on three different levels. The first being the overall – by using pot lights. The second being function – by adding under cabinetry lighting as well as lighting above the sink and stove. And lastly being accent – such as pendants over your island or highlighting other feature areas.

To create an overall glow and brighten the kitchen without natural light, use pot lights as they give off a crisp light, which will make everything sparkle. Put your pot lights on dimmers and highlight different areas with separate switches. Pot lights are now available in so many varieties, shapes, colours and sizes. LED pot lights are

definitely worth the expense as they have a longer life and are available to give off a warmer light.

Under cabinet lights are concealed and are typically an inexpensive fluorescent. We recommend a warm fluorescent bulb or LED rope lighting in a warm tone so you can nicely feature the items on your counters.

For accent lighting, this is where you can have fun. I always say - the lighting and cabinet hardware are the jewelry for your kitchen. Lighting will define the look you are trying to achieve, whether it's traditional or rustic, or even to add some whimsy.



One of my great Toronto lighting go-to resources is Royal Lighting. They provide a vast array of the latest product selections available that you need for creating a stylish and functional kitchen space.

Also keep in mind that if you are purchasing kitchen appliances, consider what type of lighting they come with as this may affect your overall lighting plan and make adjustments accordingly. When I design clients' kitchens, I love incorporating floating shelves into the kitchen; hidden lighting with puck or LED rope lights can be added underneath these shelves to create a practical, yet custom look.


If you have interesting ceiling details, like a cove or tray ceiling in your kitchen, enhance the ambiance by uplighting it with LED rope systems. This can add a true wow factor when entertaining.

Most importantly, remember to map out your lighting effectively and efficiently to maximize both the look and practicality of your kitchen lighting. Consider hiring a design firm like ours from the beginning of the process to ensure that your kitchen is the most functional it can be

Important Designer Tip:

Dimmers are an essential kitchen lighting element, as they can make a drastic difference in how your kitchen functions. Depending on the natural light and the various entertaining and cooking uses of your kitchen, the ability to adjust your lighting at different times of the day will create different moods and help you save on your energy bill!



Accredited designer, Kate Davidson, is the Principal of Kate Davidson Design inc. The firm is a multi-disciplinary interior design firm. It provides complete design, renovating and decorating services for residential and commercial clients throughout the Greater Toronto Area. The firm focuses on creating stylish livable spaces as unique as their clients.
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