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SERVING UP STYLE

**DESIGNER DVIRA OVADIA
DISHES ON CONTEMPORARY
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Serving Up Style

Designer Dvira Ovadia, principal at Dvira Interiors, dishes on kitchens.

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A contemporary kitchen suited for a modern family was designed in a fresh white colour and enhanced with many levels of detail. The waterfall island with its statuario stone acts as a great entertaining piece, while the same stone border wraps around the cooking zone, creating a frame that becomes this kitchen's focal point.

Regardless of design aesthetic — from cool modern lines to warm and rustic contemporary country — there seems to be a new trend towards a fusion of styles, almost an “anything goes” approach, in today’s kitchens.

“Kitchens really are the hub of the home,” says award-winning designer Dvira Ovadia. “They are a place where family and friends gather over food and drinks. Where we connect over our days and plan our weeks.” No longer the hidden away, boxed-off room where the cook was relegated to prepare and clean up the family’s meals, today’s kitchens reflect the family and the space they’re in, playing an integral role in the overall style and functionality of the family home.

“Increasingly, we’re seeing kitchens become a hive of activity — the space in the house that everyone gravitates to,” Ovadia continues. “From doing homework to meal preparation, and from family time to entertaining, we’re all using our kitchens for more things, spending more time there throughout our days and weeks.”

While many homeowners have heard that the best bang for the renovation buck is kitchens and bathrooms, Ovadia stresses that the return on investment in a kitchen upgrade is reaped almost immediately, so long as the design is strong.

“At the start of every kitchen design project, I always ask my clients for their five-year plan,” she explains. “If they’re planning on living there in five years then we completely tailor the design to that family. If this is a flip, or the family is looking to move within that time frame, I address the immediate concerns but lean towards a design that appeals to 90 percent of the people, 90 percent of the time.”

We spend a lot of time in our kitchens — regardless of if you’re a hobby chef or relying on takeout — and so it’s important to ensure

it’s not a space we’re dreading going into.

“Families are increasingly busy, and that’s why it’s so important to focus on the kitchen. A well-designed kitchen allows you to multi-task and connect as a family,” Ovadia explains. “When you’re in a space that you’re happy about — that’s well thought-out and well-designed and makes it easy for everyday living — then it makes life less frustrating and daily activities run smoother. I like helping people move from a space that isn’t pretty, is miss-styled or is non-functional, into a space that transforms their lives because they’re surrounded by functional beauty.”

While Ovadia’s designs extend beyond the kitchen, her work in this ever-important room underscores her functional beauty design philosophy. In each of her kitchen redesigns, she focuses on refreshing the space and breathing new life not only into the kitchen, but throughout the entire home. Even if clients are only working on a kitchen, she ensures the space flows and works with the living spaces it is connected to. And while each kitchen has the same building blocks — appliances, sinks, cupboards and eating spaces — each family moves about their spaces uniquely.

“When I’m working on a kitchen design, I really try to understand my clients’ everyday use of the space,” Ovadia explains. “How many people live in the house? How does the kitchen function now — what’s good and what’s bad? I break down all the elements and nitty-gritty daily functions of how each client uses their kitchen and then I start to piece the puzzle together.

“The challenges of a kitchen design is fitting all of the clients’ needs in a certain amount of space,” she continues. “A lot of times they want a double oven, double dishwasher and pantry — but in talking to them, we learn that’s not what would serve them. It’s my job to match their vision and inspirations with the functionality they need to be truly happy.”

Working with her clients, Ovadia looks at the minute details to build the overall gathering space. “It’s important that there’s a space for everything — and that each space makes sense for how the items are used,” Ovadia explains.

For example, a foodie family needs to have spices and utensils at arm’s reach when cooking. A large family may need two dishwashers. “I work with my clients to really think through the design and understand where everything should go to achieve functionality.” Once this is done, Ovadia and her clients move onto the aesthetics.

“Bringing style out in a kitchen comes out in the details,” says Ovadia. Once she and her client have decided on the basics — a sleek and contemporary kitchen or a warm wood traditional space — she works to match the style of the space to the feel of the home.

“From the profile of a cupboard door to the kitchen hardware, from the cabinetry feet to lighting, from flooring to the backsplash, there is so much depth you can add to these pieces.

“I love interior design — and kitchen designs especially — because it gives me the opportunity to really help transform someone’s life,” says Ovadia. “Being in a space that’s uninspiring and dated, or simply not functional, can have a negative impact on someone’s emotions.”



The dark island with its exotic natural stone anchors this kitchen and the custom range hood with its contrasting bands of stainless steel creates a wow factor. The glass cabinets flanking the hood complement the classic white exteriors and add character and depth.



Award-winning designer Dvira Ovadia, principal of Dvira Interiors, is known for her many appearances and design work on several HGTV shows, including *Income Property*. For more than a decade, her firm, servicing clientele throughout Ontario and the GTHA, has been known for meticulous design that’s smart and sophisticated, and for approachable spaces that balance beauty and comfort. dvira.com @DVIRAdesigner

Top Right & Top Left This arts & crafts style kitchen embodies many modern elements, utilizing timeless contemporary finishes like walnut cabinets juxtaposed with tailored soft grey cabinets that create a sleek and warm feel. This is a kitchen for a busy family of five that wanted an oversized island and a large fridge. Concealing the fridge behind a custom armoire cabinet (below, left), tucks the bulkiness of the appliances away and reveals the beauty of this kitchen.

Bottom Left Elegant and classic is the true definition of this kitchen, wide open to its adjacent spaces yet containing ample storage and attractive details, from the soft curves on the doors, the custom hood, and the high-end stone backsplash. The white perimeter is contrasted by a medium grey kitchen island that complements the exotic calacatta stone.

Bottom Right Flanking the stove are a pair of beautiful display cabinets that go down to the countertop — done for the purpose of concealing a vertical bulkhead. This turned a problem into a solution that ultimately created an attractive design detail.

