

November 2000

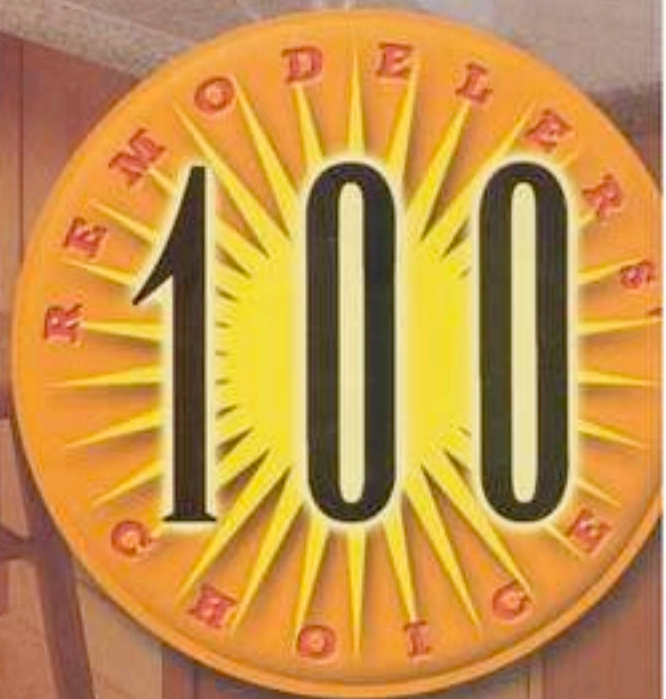
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QR

QUALIFIED REMODELER

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WINNERS**



Don't Miss — Hottest Products of 2000 Inside!



FIRST PLACE

Contractor: BOWA Builders Inc. of America, McLean, VA

Project location: Bethesda, MD

Cost: \$1.1 million

Square footage: Added 2,100 sq. ft.

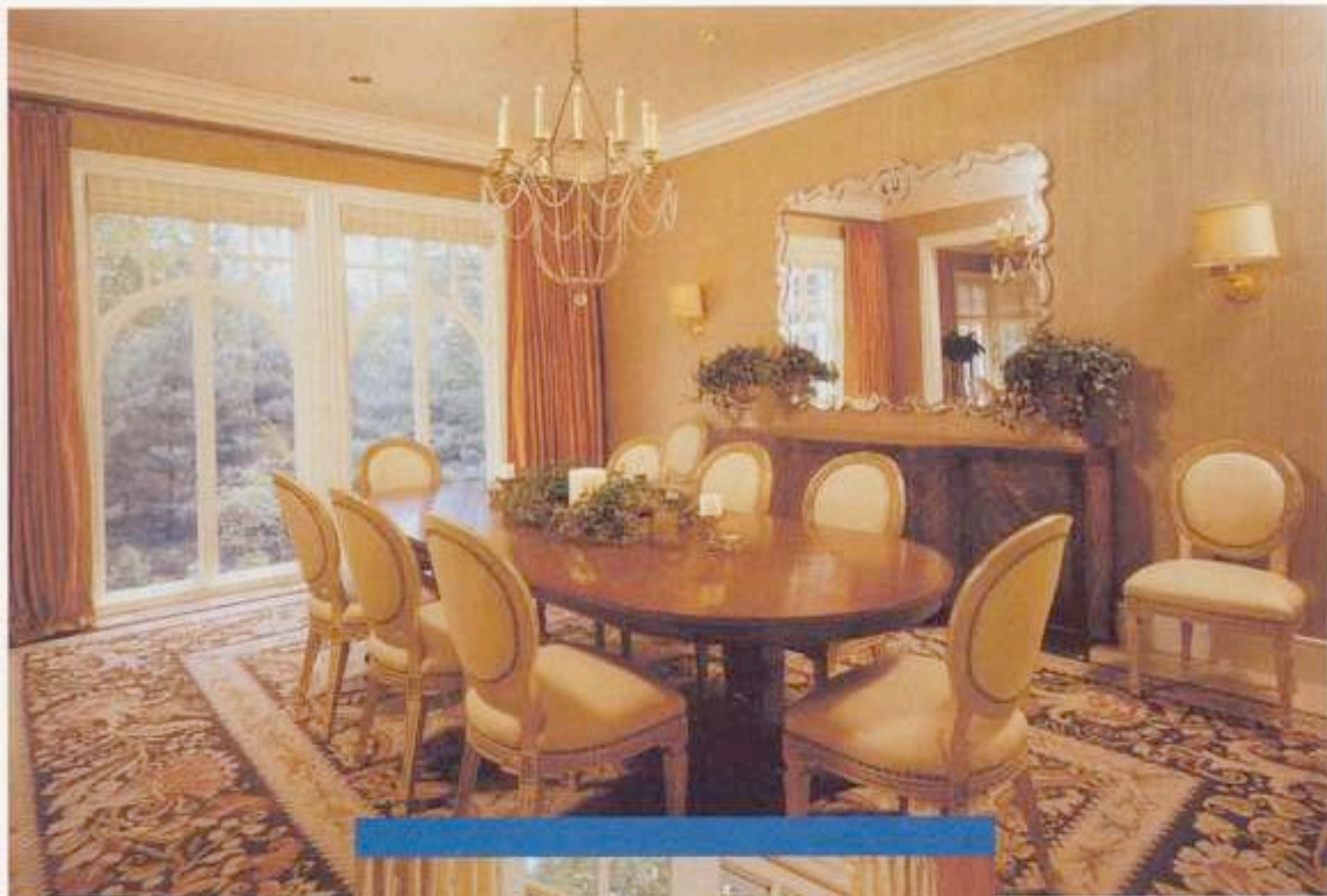
Designer: Weinstein Associates, Washington, D.C.

Photos: Bob Narod, Photographer

The homeowners were looking to create several high-volume interior spaces to complement and complete two earlier additions, while providing additional light to the residence. To allow for additional height the addition steps down and has a steeped roof con-

nection. Oversize windows and French doors provide generous natural lighting. Other features included the installation of a dumb waiter, the creation of a "built-in wall" with a hidden door between the dining room and kitchen to avoid a broken-up wall

appearance and a living room TV niche with remote-controlled artwork cover. The slate roof, cedar siding, windows, doors, fireplace and crown moulding and casing treatments were all custom-made to match the addition to the existing home.



Second Place: Case Design/Remodeling Inc., Bethesda, MD

Third Place: Kurt M. Oravec, Architect, Etters, PA

Honorable Mention: Michael K. Blend Inc., Kalispell, MT

Product

Case Design/Remodeling Inc.
 10000 Old Branch Rd.
 Bethesda, MD 20814
 301-229-0044
 www.casedesign.com

Kurt M. Oravec, Architect
 10000 Old Branch Rd.
 Bethesda, MD 20814
 301-229-0044
 www.kmora.com

Michael K. Blend Inc.
 10000 Old Branch Rd.
 Bethesda, MD 20814
 301-229-0044
 www.blendinc.com



PRODUCTS

Bath fixtures: Kohler

Lighting fixtures: Lightolier

Cabinets: Custom

Doors: Custom

Roofing: Slate

Siding: Custom

Windows: Custom

Product

Kohler
 10000 Old Branch Rd.
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Design and details

By Greg Udelhofen

Today's kitchens and baths showcase the importance of design and details consumers want when deciding to remodel these important areas of their homes. Functionality and luxury characterize many of the upgrades homeowners want when transforming their kitchens and baths into personal retreats.

Americans paid an average of \$26,888 for a kitchen remodeling job in 1998, with the typical project including three features — custom cabinetry, a garbage disposal and built-in appliances — according to a recent study

released by the National Kitchen & Bath Association.

NKBA's 1999 Design Trends Survey notes that computer centers, stereo and TV equipment, a butler's pantry and warming drawers also were popular kitchen features among consumers. But the ever-improving microwave oven was the most requested product in kitchen projects.

"With all of the technological advances in microwave and convection cooking, today's consumer can't live without one," says Jeff Burton, 1999 NKBA president.

America's kitchens are also getting bigger, with 69 percent of the kitchens remodeled in 1998 averaging more than 150 sq. ft.

Granite once again gained ground as one of the top counter materials, and was used in 33 percent of all kitchen jobs in 1998. Solid surface material, although still the No. 1 material of choice, slid 11 percent in counter usage.

Other notable kitchen design trends include:

- The popularity of pull-out shelves
- The use of pantry cabinets has dropped
- Wine coolers were used in almost 9 percent of kitchen remodeling jobs
- Freezer/refrigerator drawers were featured in 7 percent of all kitchen projects
- Maple cabinets continue to be the most popular
- Consumers spend approximately 50 percent of their kitchen remodeling budget on new cabinets, 13 percent on countertops, 8 percent on appliances, 3 percent on fixtures (sinks, faucets, etc.) and 2 percent on flooring.

In general, consumers are looking for sophisticated, functional kitchen designs that are increasingly customized and personalized to accommodate expanded activities — cooking, eating, homework, entertaining and family functions. Multicook preparation and cleanup areas characterize many of today's kitchen designs, which are incorporating more natural materials, like granite and concrete countertops, more professional/commercial stainless steel appliances and surfaces, as well as more architectural millwork and free-standing cabinets that look like furniture.

Bath trends

As for bathrooms, dual shower heads, body sprays and whirlpool tubs continue to be frequently asked-for luxuries.

According to the survey, the average price of a bathroom remodel in 1998 was \$11,605. More than 15 percent of the jobs included dual shower heads, while 28 percent had shower systems. Stereo/TV centers were used in just more than 7 percent of all bath remodels that year.

"Bathrooms today are personal retreats from everyday life," notes Burton.

Consumers have adopted an attitude of "Why not include everything you need to relax and enjoy the small amount of personal time you have for yourself?"

Bathrooms also continue to grow in size. The number of bathrooms remodeled that were less than 65 sq. ft. dropped from

about 43 percent in 1996 to 38 percent in 1998. Sixty-one percent of all bathrooms remodeled used an existing space, while 1.5 percent added a bump-out or addition.

Consumers spent on average almost 31 percent of their budget on cabinets, and nearly 25 percent on installation or labor for the job. Fixtures and fittings cost just more than 15 percent, countertops 11 percent, and flooring 6 percent.

The Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association predicts continued sales growth for its members.

According to surveys and analysis performed by F.W. Dodge/McGraw Hill, total cabinet demand for 1998 increased 1.8 percent from 78.3 million units in 1997 to 79.7 million units in 1998. Cabinet demand in remodeling remained strong in 1998 at 58 million units. This construction sector is projected to increase to 58.6 million units in 1999 and 59.2 million units in 2000. The repair and remodeling market now accounts for 75 percent of the U.S. cabinet market.

"Continued low inflation, historic low employment and a record-setting economy continue to fuel strong demand in both the new housing and remodeling and repair markets. Higher interest rates appear to have cooled the hot economy sufficiently to allay fears of inflation," says Dick Titus, KCMA executive vice president.

Cabinet manufacturers along with other employers are experiencing difficulty in finding skilled workers and responding to the competitive challenges of increasing productivity and adding value.

"New technology has made it possible for the industry to satisfy consumer demands for improved products with many value-added features," notes KCMA President Ralph Lackner. "Many companies are adding new plants or enlarging existing facilities. Overall, the industry remains positive and upbeat."

Design key to success

With the money homeowners are spending and willing to spend on creating their dream kitchen and/or bath (approximately \$46.6 billion annually, according to *Kitchen & Bath Design News*), it's easy for a remodeler to develop a false sense of

security in thinking a kitchen or bath project is an easy sale. Talk to remodeling trainers and you'll quickly discover how important design and implementing the details of the design are to securing a kitchen or bath project.

Robert Oxley of Robert Oxley Training and Consulting in Denver put it best by saying, "Design is the difference between working for wages and making big bucks."

While design is taking on increasing importance in all aspects of remodeling, kitchen and bathrooms are particularly sensitive to the design details.

"Consumers have become very knowledgeable and sophisticated in what can be done to create their own little retreat," Oxley notes. "They have the money and they're looking for someone who can make it happen. They're busy and they don't want to worry about the details. They're looking for the remodeling contractor who can do it all."

What's unique about kitchen and bath projects today is they go well beyond the functional aspects many consumers were satisfied to achieve in past projects. Function is important, but the overall environment is as equally important today.

"The kitchen and bath of today is a symbol of who we are and a retreat from the hectic lifestyle we live in order to become who we are," Oxley says. "People want a place to relax, but they also want a place to entertain, a place that lets their guests know that they've made it, that they're successful."

While Oxley doesn't point to any new product or materials as significant trends in kitchen and bath remodeling projects, he does see the overall design as the brand identification consumers are looking to achieve.

"For the most part, cabinets are cabinets," he says. "What the remodeling contractor is able to do in designing how the cabinets are used is what's important in creating the personalized project the cus-





Homeowners are asking for more high-quality products, like stainless steel appliances, in their kitchen remodeling projects.

Homeowner wants. Having a designer or architect available is what separates the remodeler who's working out of the back of his truck from the true design/build remodeler. You can take an \$8,000 kitchen and make it look 'Wow' by simply putting together the right design."

Pete Schor, another remodeling educator/trainer and owner of Dynamic Results in Portland, OR, adds that as homeowners retrofit their homes to fit their changing lifestyle needs, remodelers need to become more aware of the latest technology designed to accommodate those changing lifestyle needs.

"After the kids leave, many homeowners are deciding it's a perfect time to remodel kitchens and baths to accommodate their needs and desires," Schor says. "They have the money and in many cases they now have additional space (empty bedrooms) that can be converted to a larger bath or separate room (exercise or spa). Remodelers who are aware of different product options can take advantage of that situation by recommending adding a steam room or sauna to the remodeling project."

Other products, like floor warming systems, can be an easy luxury add-on for remodelers when designing a kitchen or bath remodel.

David Newton of David Newton & Associates, a Tennessee-based remodeling trainer, agrees that many kitchen and bath remodels are ripe for additional luxury upgrades.

"There are so many homeowners who've decided to stay in their existing homes and want to make improvements to fit their needs and also create a luxurious environment," Newton says. "We see people converting two-person tubs to two-person showers. We not only see a continued use of high-end products like granite and marble, but also a trend toward using cabinets and other architectural

millwork that look more like furniture. Homeowners want to create kitchens designed around furniture from their past. They want display areas to hold some of their treasured possessions and other items that remind them of their past."

Quality products in demand

Callier & Thompson Kitchens & Baths, a \$6 million St. Louis remodeler, is designing and building \$25,000 to \$28,000 kitchens and \$12,000 bathrooms.

"We're installing a lot of granite and solid surface counters, and we're also installing more glazed finished cabinets," notes Thompson Price, company president. "Customers have more in the way of product selection and it's easier for them to come up with the money (financing) to get what they really want."

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Cabinets continue to be an important part of the kitchen remodel — consumers spend about 50 percent of their budget on them.

The kitchen/bath remodeling specialist is also installing more stainless and commercial-looking appliances. As Price put it, "customers are going for the look."

"We're also installing more wood floors," Price says. "Design and details are everything to the customer today."

Mike Backus, president of Greensburg, PA-based Manor House Kitchens Inc., echoes similar sentiments on upgrades he sees in the market.

"We're seeing the availability of better products that a more educated consumer wants when remodeling a kitchen or bath. Our customers not only want better counters and appliances, they also want upgraded plumbing fixtures and cabinets."

While 60 percent of Manor House's kitchens are replacement jobs and 40 percent complete gut and replace, Backus says most customers don't compromise in the finished details. They want fancy cabinet finishes and fancy moldings. "They normally aren't working within a specific budget. They look at what's affordable," Backus says. "Once they see what can be accomplished, they just want it done, and they don't want to be bothered with all the little details."

Murray Gross, president of \$32 million U.S. Remodelers Inc., says that with the average price of the kitchen remodels his company installs running \$6,500, cus-

tomers are willing to spend a little extra to get a few luxury features.

"We provide an economical way to update a kitchen with new cabinet fronts, a few extra cabinets and sometimes the addition of a center island," Gross says. "We continue to see more customers deciding to spend a little more in order to upgrade counters and other features."

DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen by Worldwide, a \$17 million kitchen and bath franchise operation based in Waco, TX, continues to see the price of kitchen projects increase as customers look for ways to improve the functional and aesthetic aspects of their kitchens.

"People want to brighten up their kitchens and they also want to open up their kitchens to other areas of their home," says Doug Dwyer, president of the franchise operation. "Consumers are more educated about value. If they're not ready for a complete gut and replace, they still want some of the features and accessories that are typical of a new kitchen."

Whether working with customers who plan to gut and replace their kitchens or baths, or customers who are simply looking to spruce up their kitchens or baths, customers want to work with remodelers who will take care of all the details required. **QR**

Suppliers' perspective

"Kitchens are either being enlarged or united with family rooms and great rooms to allow family members and friends to gather together. Because of this unification, homeowners want quiet, effective ventilation to control and eliminate cooking odors, moisture and heat from permeating throughout the open area. Proper ventilation of quiet bathroom exhaust fans that remove moisture and heat from the bathroom is also an important trend."

*Karen Collins
Broan-NuTone*

"As the Baby Boomer generation ages, safety becomes an even greater concern, lending itself to why more Boomers are converting their tubs into showers. And because their lives are busier than ever, they just aren't finding the time to soak in the tub."

*Davis Glassberg
Luxury Bath Systems*

"Homeowners today are looking for convenience and personalized style in their kitchens, such as stainless steel undermount sinks that offer good looks and easier kitchen cleanup because there is no rim to get in the way when wiping water and food scraps from the countertop into the sink."

*Alan Danenberg
Elkay*

"We continue to see more customers opting to use a mix of surfacing materials when remodeling their kitchens and baths. Corian continues to enjoy tremendous growth as consumers look for more design flexibility and performance from surfaces."

*Dean Murray
DuPont Corian*

"Brushed finishes with a matte like appearance are becoming much more popular. Consumers are asking for options and the ability to customize the look of their bath or kitchen. We're also seeing more consumers looking for a customizable spa-like experience in their shower that includes body sprays, hand showers and multiple shower heads."

*David Lingafelter
Moen*