



## Kitchen design trends explained by kitchen and bath expert John Hall

Julie Washington, The Plain Dealer By Julie Washington, The Plain Dealer

[Email the author](#) | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on April 06, 2015 at 12:00 PM, updated April 06, 2015 at 12:02 PM

What would your dream kitchen and/or bath look like? Share your wish list in the comments.

BEACHWOOD -- Kitchen and bath designer John Hall believes in educating the public, both through

his stage presentations at home and garden

shows, or his day-long seminars on kitchen and

bath renovations. Hall, 56, wants his clients to understand design terms, as well as options and accessories, before renovations start.

Kitchen and bath designer John Hall takes clients to Amish areas to pick out cabinetry.

Julie E. Washington, The Plain Dealer

"My job is to tell you the pros and cons and let you make the decision," Hall said. "I want to educate you about the good and the bad of everything."

His company, the **Hall Design Group**, recently moved from Chagrin Falls to Beachwood's Ohio Design Center. Let's hear Hall's thoughts about don't-miss options for kitchens and hot design trends.

### **Often contractors give the homeowner a budget to spend on kitchen or bathroom fixtures. Are those budgets realistic?**

It never works, because some contractors low-ball the allowances to make it look as if it's affordable for the clients. They'll budget \$50 for a kitchen faucet. You can't get a (nice) kitchen faucet for that. I don't use the word allowance with people but I have to get an idea of (their budget) up front. I'm going to say, why do you need a \$1,000 microwave drawer when we could do a \$130 microwave drawer? Then, when there's a faucet that's \$75 more, this is where I want to use a little bit of that money; you'll use it everyday, you want something that will last.

People have no idea about pricing. I tell them, I'm going to watch your pocketbook closer than you. I'm a firm believer of educating rather than selling. I've written a design guide. This year, I've come up with a budget planner you can put into your computer. It will track the dollars as we're planning the kitchen.

### **What is the average price range of what your clients spend?**

A kitchen renovation can cost from \$30,000 to \$200,000; bathrooms run \$15,000 to \$50,000. Homeowners need to spend the most on kitchen sinks and cabinetry. You don't want a cheap sink. A lot of these granite people, if you buy

granite from them, they'll give you a free stainless steel sink. What they don't tell you is that (often the) sink is from China, it's like a tin can and it's gonna be rusting and scratching up two years into it. And then you've got a real problem, because how do you replace it?

### **What are some kitchen options that homeowners might like but don't know about?**

There's a warming drawer that acts as a warming station for your food and it doesn't dry out your food. It can be anywhere in the kitchen.

There are speed and steam ovens. How about an oven-roasted, baked potato -- restaurant quality -- in about 4-6 minutes? **Speed ovens** combine convection and microwave. It's going to be a little more time than a microwave, but it gives you oven-quality versus microwave quality. **Steam ovens** cook with a combination convection and steam.

### **What are current trends in kitchen design?**

Elegance through simplicity. We're not using a lot of the heavy carvings and moldings, or flutings or double crowns. It's just a simpler look as far as the details on ceilings and cabinets.

White kitchen (cabinets) are coming back and they're very attractive. Stainless steel is still big. Granite countertops will never go away. I think quartz is tapped out; it's going to be 50% of the people putting granite in and 50% of the people putting quartz in.

### **What about trends in baths?**

Heated floors and thermal massage tubs. I tell people to put their money into the shower - a nice shower head, body sprays. Hand sprays. Simple things - create a little niche in your shower - not high for your shampoos, but how about right at knee level, so you ladies can put your leg up and shave your legs?

I tell people to try a comfort height toilet, which is an inch and a half higher. That makes all the difference in the world (for older people).

### **Your space in the Ohio Design Center isn't a traditional showroom.**

I take my clients out to Amish country in Millersburg - I have a cabinet supplier down there run by (non-Amish) businesspeople. I buy my clients a nice Amish lunch, we go and look at cabinetry, and we come back. I don't have the overhead (of a traditional showroom), and the savings goes back to the clients.

But I need a place called home to hang my hat, and that's what this is.

### **How did you get started in this business?**

Born and bred, I'm a Euclid boy. I graduated from Euclid High School in 1976 and I earned a degree in interior design classes at Cuyahoga Community College in the 1980s.

All I know in my life is kitchens and bathrooms. I started when I was in my early 20s. My wife at the time was a pastry chef, and I loved design. I said, pastries and kitchens? How about kitchen designs? I worked for other companies, and started my business in 2006.

I love what I do, and I love helping people. Someone asked me three years ago, what is the most memorable kitchen you did this year? It was for a 95-year-old lady in Garfield Heights that had never had a dishwasher in her life, (living) in a bungalow (where she) raised five kids. I took a cabinet out, I was able to squeeze in an 18-inch dishwasher and I put in Formica countertops that looked like granite. I still remember the lady's tears when she turned on the dishwasher for the first time. That's my most memorable (kitchen) in my entire career.

© 2015 cleveland.com. All rights reserved.