


NEW HOMES & CONDOS


Creamy kitchen cabinets are augmented with a fire engine red island with a zinc top made from the roof of an old French church.

To paint or not to paint the kitchen cabinets



WILLIAM MACDONALD
GO DESIGN IT

At the moment I'm arguing with clients, well, let's call it having a heated debate, over whether to paint or not to paint the kitchen cabinets in their new home.

We are performing quite an extensive renovation in absolutely every other part of the 1920s north Toronto house but the kitchen is in fairly good shape so we decided to just do a little 'cosmetic job.'

By cosmetic I mean fresh coats of paint, new light fixtures and curtains, or so I thought. When I showed my clients the colour I had planned for the cabinets a very beautiful French dove gray the colour of the chairs at Dior, they said: "Wait, what, we're painting the cabinets?"

In an effort to save cash

my clients thought that we'd leave the cabinets alone and just do the walls as they believe the cabinets are "fine" and "very good quality."

True the cabinets are very good quality but in my opinion a little dated colour wise and I, as a designer, don't do "fine". I do wow!

I explained to my clients that in my experience having worked quite literally on a ton of kitchens that the quickest way to update at very low cost is through paint.

Painting your cabinets can completely transform the space and won't cost a fortune. A few things to consider when painting your cupboards are:

Colour is your friend. When I design a kitchen, I like it to be approachable functional and a little playful. Gone are

the days of just all brown or all white cabinets (although all white does work in very contemporary kitchens).

I often like to paint the majority of the cabinetry in one colour then use an accent colour on an island, a pantry door, counter stools or the interior of the cabinets. Recently I painted a client's cupboards and island all the same striking shade of blue and accented with great art and counter stools covered in vintage orange leather. Stylish, with a "trad-temp" mix, for a very chic result.

Another project took a completely different direction with creamy cabinets and a fire engine red island with a zinc top made from the roof of an old French church. The result was a very relaxed "country-luxe."

For a very large and light-filled family kitchen, I used a silvery grey colour on the bulk of the cabinets and a very strong bright white on the island and range hood. The contrast provides great interest — and when mixed with Carrera marble counters and backsplash — it becomes extremely elegant.

When thinking about

updating your kitchen, you don't always have to reach for the hammer. Try the paintbrush first. Adding colour to your cabinetry and a few other bits and pieces can completely enliven a tired kitchen and give it that wow that makes all the difference.

— *William MacDonald is a Toronto-based designer and Principal of WillMac Designs, a firm known for creating stylish spaces that evoke a simple timeless elegance. For more information, visit www.willmacdesign.ca.*

TIPS

- Use the right product, paint and appropriate primer.
- Change out your hardware for an added update.
- Call in professionals as it can be a messy process and factory spray finish is always best.



Painting your cabinets can completely transform the space and won't cost a fortune.



A client's cupboards and island are painted all the same striking shade of blue, accented with counter stools covered in vintage orange leather.