Episode 57: Kitchen Design Essentials

How to Choose Kitchen Colours

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It's great to be here today back after obviously the fabulous interviews with Rob Sinclair about appliances, and last week I was talking about handles and hardware. Now, today is all about what is regarded as the fun stuff. I find so many parts of designing a kitchen fun. I really love the intricate detail of how it's all going to work and function, as in the the internal elevation stage and how we can really make it look amazing in terms of its layout.

But I suppose today is the one that a lot of people have been asking about, and that is how to choose your kitchen colours. And colours is, can mean so many different things. It's not just about your internal wall colour. We're talking about the colours of your bench tops and your cabinetry and your splashback, and how does that integrate with the floor, and how does it talk to the rest of the home?

And so I'm really excited about today's episode, because I'm going to walk you through lots of different things to think about. Some of the top, combinations of colour types and how you can inject colour into your kitchen without being scared and and a bit worried, and then having something quite clinical.

And so I'm gonna walk through lots of different options today. Now, one thing I'll start with is that your kitchen doesn't necessarily need to match per se the rest of your home. So what I mean by that is just because you've got a particular tile in, in the bathroom, you don't need to bring that across into the kitchen.

I- in fact, please don't. Please don't have the same tile that you've been using in your bathrooms and, have it on in your kitchen as a splashback. That is really a highlight of a, we've got a few tiles left over, so let's just put those in the splashback. So please avoid that.

Make your kitchen a unique space. But it can be, a different material type, and I suppose that's what I'm referring to, that your kitchen doesn't have to be what everything else is in the home. What I'd like you to consider is think about each component but provide an overview of your

I wanna provide an overview of thoughts and ideas that you can actually then take away w- into your kitchen. So you can ha- have your kitchen in a colour way that is, different from the rest of the home. What the really important thing to consider though is the use of tone. And what I mean by that is the warm colour tones which may have yellow.

And I don- I ... Look I get nervous when I say yellow, 'cause then people feel like it's gonna be canary yellow, or there's gonna be this awful, dated, mustard yellow in, in a paint colour. And look, mustard's awesome, don't get me wrong there, but that there's this overpowering yellow tone.

What I mean by warm is that we're working more with beiges and brown colour tone rather than the grays, which is a cool colour base. The really important thing for any home is that colour tone is throughout the home. So you cannot really blend the tones of y- the tones in a home. They need to be following through.

So you've got a warm based home, or you've got a cool based home. And it's very difficult, and you'll feel ... It'll feel jarring. It just won't flow, because you're using different colour tones. So that's the most important thing. So if you've got a warm home, you need to make sure the materials you're choosing for your kitchen are also warm.

Doesn't mean that you can't have colour in there but you need to make sure that continuity and flow is also going through to the rest of your home. Also, when you've got an open plan space, which is becoming more and more prevalent obviously, in the modern-day design of our spaces, is we've got open plan.

So the kitchen is of- often overlooking the dining or the living space. You need to make sure then that whatever the style is of the home, and the style that you're representing then in the spaces that are in the space where the kitchen is, are not conflicting. As an example if you've got a very contemporary home don't go and put in a country style kitchen.

So we often work with clients where they do have a California bungalow, they have a federation style, and they wanna have a nod to the heritage of the home. So we will in- incorporate cabinetry profile doors that reflect the heritage of the home, without it being overly modern, but without it really being daggy and dated.

So you need to make sure that there's continuity in the style as well. And again, we're not talking about colours and so forth. We're talking about the foundation of what the home is representing, that continuity. So the consistency of tone is really critical, and you need to have that, that consistency going throughout the whole home, as well as in the kitchen so often when you're trying to work out what tone your home is, and this can be really difficult for people, and it can be really challenging.

It's quite ... I find it quite difficult to describe. I ... You naturally gravitate to one or the other. So you will naturally gravitate to cool colour tones, or you'll naturally gravitate to warm. And what I really want you to try and do is avoid and think about what is the fashion at the moment.

Gray has been in for quite a while, gray colour tones. And gray is already making its way out. But I really want you to think about what you gravitate to, and often it is colours that you wear. So me personally, I'm a really warm person. I just gravitate to the colours of nature. I gravitate to a warm colour warm colour tones and colour palettes.

And other people, they're just gray. It's just like cool colour tones is really what they gravitate to. So maybe if you're getting a bit stuck, think about what you wear. But if it's not consistent, that tone's not throughout the whole home, it won't feel right. All right. So choosing material and their colours.

The very first thing, and I've said this in other episodes, is you need to start with your floor. Everything gets built up from the floor. So if you're thinking about the floor for your kitchen and gone are the days where we've got the, the beading around and you've got a different flooring type in your kitchen.

It's generally going to flow throughout. So you've got the dining, the living, and the kitchen is all going to be the same, and often it'll flow into the laundry as well. So you need to think if you've got a timber floor Are you going to then have cabinetry that may be timber as well that is going to blend in?

Or are you going to create a contrast? Now, I personally prefer to create design schemes that have a contrast. It's really then creating a space of, these are the separation. You've got a separation point. But some kitchens are designed per se to be blended into the floor, and that is quite also a Scandinavian, a very simple look.

Think about ply. So you need to think about that. How's the floor, if it's a timber floor, going to work with the kitchen if you are incorporating timber into that kitchen? So the easiest way for me to describe choosing and selecting colours and so forth, and the materials for your kitchen is, we've already talked about material type, so here I'm just gonna be talking about colours and and the contrast and so forth.

So you need to choose your leading piece, and then you select your other materials around this piece. And I know I've talked about this in other decorating episodes as well, not linked to kitchens. So for example, you may have a splashback tile or a colour that you wanna have in your splashback that you think, "That is

I have to have that." And so everything else then is designed around it. And we have it with clients as well. They're like, "Oh, I have just always had my heart set on having chocolate-coloured timber cabinetry." Then that's it. We will then design making sure that we're designing around the chocolate-coloured timber cabinetry.

It may be a splashback tile. You've always wanted a green or you've always wanted this bright orange, or whatever it is. That is then the key piece that we need to then design everything else around. And I think that's the simplest way to start. Start with the leading piece, and then you can design everything else around that.

Choose everything else around it. It may be that you want apple green cabinetry. Everything else gets designed around it. It may be that you have a natural stone that has got a a pink element to it, or it's got a really lots of different variation in the colour of that natural stone.

That is the leading piece, and we will then design everything else around it. If you can imagine a very busy natural piece of stone which is beautiful in its own right, it's going to be it's really going to affect the splashback that you have with that, and this is where tone comes into play. But also, that things don't get too busy.

So don't start with the paint colour. So many people contact us and, "Oh, I've chosen my paint colour." And it's you know what? Let's just forget about the paint colour. There's over 10,000 different paint colours that you can choose from. I'm not worried about the paint colour. We will find a paint colour to match and coordinate back to everything else that we're going to decide.

We may be really limited in a splashback tile that you love. So forget about the paint colour right now. It's right at the end after everything else has been decided, that we work out what the paint colour's going to be. So choose something that you love is what I always say, and it's really something that you need to keep in mind, that all the things that you're choosing are things that you love.

So whether it's a material type, it's a tile that you love, it's a colour or a shape, make sure that you're choosing something that you really love. And this is where it comes into that comment that I hear all the time, "Oh, I wanna make sure that I'm choosing things that are not going to date." You know what?

Everything is going to date eventually. Whether it's going to date in five years, it may last 10, it may last 15, it may even last 20 because you're choosing very neutral colours. But ultimately, things will date, whether it's the shape, the thickness of the bench top, pardon me, the profile of the doors the handles that you've chosen.

Everything will eventually look tired compared to what is going on at that current time. So try and forget about that and just focus on what you love. And so if you're focusing on shapes that you love, designs that you love, patterns that you love, or colours that you love, ultimately, it means that you will not tire of that as quickly, compared to something that you think this won't date."

And it also means, and I go back to the fact that this is your forever home, you're injecting something that's a bit of you, and and then it means that it's got this personality to it, to this kitchen,

that is the centerpiece of your home, and that it's not all about, I need to choose something that's bland and boring and blah because I don't want it to date.

Be a bit braver. And that is often where people will engage interior designer, 'cause they're a bit nervous about incorporating something that they really love and making sure that it is all going to work with everything else. And we can allow you to be a little bit more brave, because we're not gonna l- let you make decisions that are gonna look terrible.

We will allow you to come a little bit out of your comfort zone, to say, yes, that tile that you love is going to work, because we're gonna choose things to coordinate back with it that we know are going to work. Now I'll just give you an example, and some of you have may already heard this. But when I was building my forever home nearly six years ago now, six years in December I chose a tile that I'd been in love with forever and a day, a Patricia Urquiola tile that was just, for me, I just loved it for so many different things.

It was it had lots of different patterns in there that I loved. There was a lot of variety in it. And it was pretty loud. We ... You could get it in a colourway that was lots of multicolours, but I decided to choose a paired back, because I thought those colours I could actually tire of. So I will stick with the n- the grays.

And I don't normally gravitate to grays, as you h- heard me say earlier. It was charcoals, and light grays and like an off-white. Loved the tile. And I always knew when I built my forever home, boy, I was going to have that splashback as my that tile as my splashback. And so the rest of the kitchen was designed around the splashback.

That was the leading piece. And so I needed to make sure that my bench tops coordinated back with that tile, which means I've got charcoal bench tops. Also not my nav- natural gravitation. But I knew they were gonna still work with everything else that I loved. And I also knew that I wanted it quite light, so I still have the white cabinets, but I'm breaking it up with a really solid charcoal bench top and then also I've got this tile, which is really loud and busy.

I couldn't then go and incorporate all these other things, but because it was just gonna be really over the top, and that I thought I was gonna tire of. So because I love that tile, and the tilers, "Oh, we hate this tile. It's too busy," and, "Are you crazy?" Or whatever. Yeah, that's great. It's not your house.

And, and I say to people, "You're either gonna love it or you're not." And I don't really care, because it's my house and I love it. My partner wasn't that super keen on it, but that's okay. He said, "Oh, you're the designer, so you can have..." I was pretty lucky. He let me do what I wanted to do. So my point is, if you love it, and I knew I'd always gravitated to that tile, I wasn't fussed.

I knew that, And six years later, I still love that tile. I'd loved it for 10 years before then anyway, so I knew it wasn't gonna be an issue. So don't worry about that too much. If you love it, a colour, shape,

whatever it is, you won't tire of it. I can completely guarantee you that So start with the leading piece.

Then you, I suppose you need to decide, and the, the leading piece may actually determine this or not, is whether you have a preference for dark or light cabinetry. That's quite a big decision. A lot of people will say to us, "We want a really light and bright kitchen. We don't want it dark and dingy."

We're obviously not gonna then come back with dark cabinetry. Others will say to us, "We really like the dark timber." That's fine. We know that you're going to have then dark cabinetry. So an all-white kitchen, which sometimes f- people feel is safe, can also feel really clinical, unless you're going to brighten it up with something else.

And maybe it's going to be how you accessorize, maybe it's you're going to have accent colours in there, maybe it's you're going to have a splashback that's gonna break it up. And you could still have a very neutral splashback, so we call this monochromatic, but maybe you're going to add then gloss, or you're going to have a shape, or you're going to have a pattern that is going to break away from this completely somber, or not somber I should say, but clinical kitchen.

So clinical would be all white cabinetry and a glass splashback. Oh my goodness me, please don't do that. It's just gonna be so boring, so clinical, so it's just got nothing to it. There's no personality. So it may be safe, and this is where you need some guidance to steer you into something that is still going to look quite light and bright, but i- is going to have some interest to it.

And the, the- there's nothing wrong with having it all one colour, but you need to have something that's going to layer and texture, layer what's going on with the monochromatic scheme It could be that you could choose an off-white or a warm gray something that is just going to allow it not to be a- as strikingly clinical as a really bright white kitchen.

We have our go-to wa- I ca- I call it a warm gray, 'cause it's not quite a gray and it's not a, a beige, so it's a, a greige. It is our absolute go-to because it just goes with everything. So for people that are really cool, they love it. For people that are really warm, they love it. It is just a beautiful cabinetry colour that is just

I- it- it's not, and it's also not too white, so it doesn't feel too clinical, and it works with wa- warm and cool interiors. It's an absolute gem. But then, as I was saying, you can add your texture and your shape and so forth in your splashback, but you can also then use a benchtop that's got movement in it.

So again, it's, it, there's something going on that is creating movement and something else, in something that is very light and spatious, and light and airy. I'm a big fan of creating contrast and maybe that's with your benchtop or your cabinetry or maybe it's with your splashback. You might have a light cabinetry and a dark benchtop.

You may have dark benchtops and light cabinetry. Did I say that with the white ryo band? Yes, I'm gonna get myself into a tongue twist. Or it may be that you want something that is really sleek and sophisticated, and in that instance, less is more. In fact, less is more as a key overall particularly when I'm seeing exterior homes, and they've got, like, six different colours going on, and this material and that material.

It's like, "Oh my goodness me, what's going on here?" Often, the best schemes are when it less is more. So if you want it really sleek and sophisticated, maybe it, that you're going to have dark cabinetry with a benchtop and a splashback a, a lighter benchtop. And then you may have a splashback that's going to be the same as the benchtop, and some really dark cabinetry.

That's really sleek and sophisticated. What I would say, if you're having, if you're aiming for slight, sleek and sophisticated, is no more than three materials. No more than three colours. You might have a, all the cabinetry the same, the benchtop is different, and then you may have the splashback of the benchtop blend in as the splashback, or it may be that you choose a very simple splashback.

It may be that you have dark overhead and then light underneath, and then the same splashback as the benchtop. So less is more if you're going for sleek and sophisticated. All right. Timber in a kitchen. How do we deal with timber in a kitchen? You could have ... So I'm just gonna run through a whole lot of different options here.

And because this is a podcast, I can't really show you things. But there are ways that you can create- Lots of different ways that you can incorporate timber in a kitchen. One of the classic things I also get asked is it going to date? Timber is really big at the moment. It was huge in the '70s, as we know, where we had our timber lined ceilings, we had our timber cabinetry everywhere, we had timber floors.

It was just an overload of timber. And a lot of people are now going to paint all that timber, which can be a little bit disappointing because there are ways that you can incorporate it. So what I would say is Timber is making a really big resurgence for a lot of big renaissance, I should say, for probably quite a few reasons.

One, it's a sustainable material, and that is something that's really big and front of mind with a lot of people. And there is this real consciousness also around the chemicals that are being emitted into our homes because of the formaldehyde and other bonding agents that are used for laminate products.

And there is a big improvement in the chemicals that are being used and the way these materials are being manufactured and recycled. But timber, there is also, there's this organic feeling with a natural timber that y- it's difficult to replace. Now, there are some incredible products out there that are not necessarily natural timber.

Natural timber is going to come with a premium price. And a veneer is, incredibly w- it's a premium ... Pardon me. It's a premium product. But the other thing to consider is when you're using a veneer or natural product, the natural timber is it may not be as durable as what you need it to be.

Lots of things to consider, and I talked about that in the materials episode of the podcast. So go back to that one if you missed it, and you can listen to me talk about using veneers and so forth, and timbers in your kitchen. So what I'm gonna talk about here is just a timber look, whether you're using natural timber or whether you're using a timber look there's always ways you can incorporate it that it's not an overload, it's more accents, which really gives you that ver- lovely earthy feel anyway.

So it could be that you have a timber cabinetry overhead. That could be a choice because you've got a really a, a timber floor, and you don't wanna have a contrast. So it may be the safest way then is to have the timber cabinetry overhead, and you've still got your timber floor. They're not going to clash.

They're not going to compete with each other. And then you'd have maybe a plain cabinetry underneath or vice versa. You need to be mindful, though, that whatever that timber underneath is, it needs to work with the timber floor. So you need to really get that right, the contrast right, or the tones right for, for that to work.

It may be that you've got an all-timber finish. And it could be with a light or dark timber, and then you need to make sure that benchtop is gonna coordinate back to this all-timber kitchen. You may have a timber benchtop and plain cabinetry. Or you may have a timber benchtop, and timber, as we know, goes with everything.

So you may have a timber benchtop and then coloured cabinetry. Envisage timber benchtop and then, a really soft green cabinetry colour. Beautiful. You may have timber handles as an accent. I know we've been working on a client with that as well. Really beautiful. Really gets you back to nature.

Feels really organic. So timber goes with everything. But you need to make sure that timber on timber, those tones need to work. It may be that you use timber in the kitchen as an accent. So you may have timber handles, you may have timber floating shelves, just on maybe the side of the kitchen, they could be a little corner and that's where you can actually create then timber accents.

You may have a white kitchen or whatever it is, a coloured kitchen, a green kitchen, and then you've got these, timber shelves. That's a really nice way to incorporate timber as well. Avoid gray-based timbers. They're artificial. We don't have a gray timber. Yes, timber can gray off, but the artificial grays that they're producing in, that are being produced in timber floors and timber cabinetry, it, it doesn't look real. It will never look real. So they're not the colours of nature, and they are the sorts of timber colours that will date because they're not natural colours. So if you're avoiding that gray-based timber I think you're gonna be in an, in a much better position that's less likely to date.

Combine your cool tones with other materials, not the actual timber colour. So what I mean by that is you may really like the grays. So rather than going for a gray-coloured timber, so that artificial gray timber go for a t- natural timber colour, and then incorporate a gray cabinetry colour, or you may have a gray element in your splashback.

So there's other ways that you can incorporate that cool element without it being a artificial gray timber colour. And don't forget what I was saying before, less is more. So don't mix different types of timbers all over the place. It's just gonna become too busy. Stick with one. Prefer to contrast your timber floor with the timber cabinetry, as I was saying.

And if in doubt, then have the timber overhead so that you know that there's not going to be this, they're touching each other, and that's when you'll ... It'll be an obvious, "Oh, that really doesn't look great." And maximum four different materials overall. So this is now moving on from the timber.

So you've got your benchtop material, you've got your cabinetry material, and your splashback, and you may then have an accent material. So as I was saying before, you might have y- the accent material could be floating shelves, or it could be in the handles. Or you would have a second cabinetry colour.

So you might have, so as an example, your benchtop may be charcoal. Then you may have your cabinetry white, and then you may have a different colour splashback. That's enough, but then you may have a little accent with floating shelves in timber. Or you'd have a secondary cabinetry colour. So you may have timber overhead, a light colour underneath, your splashba- sorry, your splashback colour, and then a your benchtop colour may be charcoal.

There's your four colours. That's all you need. You ... Otherwise, if you start incorporating more than that, it just gets all too busy. So how do we bring in colour to a kitchen? And there's lots and lots of different ways to make, an ordinary looking kitchen look really quite special and add a lot of pizzazz, which is using colour.

So the really obvious and easy one is in your splashback. So it may be a colour, it may be a shape, it may be texture. It could be all three that are going to add something but particularly a colour, into your kitchen. Now, what I will say is please use a colour that you have always loved. Don't go for what's in fashion at the moment.

Don't go for some crazy thing that you've seen in a magazine or in a or on a TV show. If you haven't loved it for a long time, it is likely that you'll get sick of it. So this is always my, I suppose it's my sanity check with my clients. I can just put something in front of them, and I can see instantly Whether that is a, an, "Oh my goodness me, I'm totally in love with that," or a, "I like it, I really like it."

Not good enough. You have to be in love with it. So if you stick with a colour that you've always gravitated to, for me, it's teal and green. My whole life I've been a greel- green and teal person. I

know I'm not gonna get sick of it. If it's just a colour of the day, just stay away from it. It's just not going to last the distance.

The good thing, though, with a splashback is it's relatively easy to replace. You can either put something over the top of it, or you can chip away at it. It's going to be a lot easier. I'm not saying it's super easy, but it's going to be a lot easier than choosing to rip out all your cabinetry or take away your benchtop.

So it is probably the, the safest place to add colour, knowing that down the line, if you really get sick of it, you can change it. A cabinetry. Now, that is also a really great way to bring in a colour that you love, a colour, again, that you've always loved. So it may be, a beautiful sage green.

Greens are really getting airplay at the moment, and I'm so happy about it because these organic greens... I've got a client, she says, I want my kitchen to be a eucalyptus green. I want it to be the, the, the green of this leaf that I picked up one day that I just absolutely love." Music to my ears. So these soft colours in kitchens, rather than a bright red or a bright orange that we saw in the '90s, using softer colours, it's not as jarring and you don't get sick of it as easy- easily either.

So muted co- muted tones, really soft blues, and soft pinks even. But I know apricot's making a comeback, and it does make me think about the '80s. But, again, choose a colour that you love, and if you pare it down a little bit, you're less likely to get sick of it as well. The benchtop is also a way that you can incorporate colour.

I know that, when I'm doing my master class on kitchens, there's an amazing bench top that I show f- which is, it's concrete, and it is pink. And this lady said, "I've always loved it. That's what I've always wanted." Good on her. And, if you, a- again, if it's a colour that you've always loved, you're never gonna get sick of it.

But she was brave enough to just go with what she loved. So natural stone, there might be an onyx or, a green emerald or ... I keep talking about green, don't I? I'm a little bit biased on my green. But there may be some amazing colour lapis bright blue or something that you just really gravitate to, and that's a way to inject colour into your kitchen with your bench top.

Tonal changes. So this is another way that you can avoid having all white, but you might have a slight tonal change, and that would be in the texture can make a difference. It may be that you're adding a gloss. But they're just these tonal changes can also add a little bit of point of difference. Rather than it being all white, you may have then a couple of tones darker in the cabinetry, or it might be a couple of tones darker in your splashback or your bench top.

You could have coloured appliances, and this is getting into the decorating thing that I'll touch on later. But coloured appliances the loud and garish Dolce & Gabbana fridge which is just, my goodness me, just full of pattern and texture, or not texture, but, colour and design in your fridge.

That's not for everyone. But it could be you might have a coloured fridge. Smeg are doing coloured fridges, and there's other brands that are now doing coloured fridges as well, and it's coming out into some of the appliances. White appliances are coming back. So if you are having, a white kitchen, all your appliances can blend in.

So white fridges are coming back white ovens as well. And I know I touched on that with Rob in the appliances episode a couple of weeks ago. But you could also inject colour into your kitchen by just having the counter appliances. So for example, your coffee machine, your toaster, your kettle, your Mixmaster, your blender.

All of that could be in colour. So for example, KitchenAid do a myriad of different colours for their KitchenAid mixes. And so you may then coordinate those and have colour injected into your kitchen by having the desktop, listen to me, your kitchen top appliances i- in a colour. But I will refer back to decorating in a little bit later because that is also a way that you can inject colour and, really enhance the look of your kitchen.

So consider your appliance colours as well when you are choosing your design scheme. So do you know that your appliances are going to be stainless steel, or are they going to be black, which is now available? Or are you going to have them white, or are they going to be integrated where they are gonna be the colour of the cabinetry anyway?

You want them to recede, really, and blend in, or you're okay to have them contrast. So for example, if they are stainless steel and you've got a white kitchen, that's a big contrast. I think we've got used to that look. The c- the the stainless steel being in our dishwashers and our fridges.

But it may be that you really want them to, all your appliances to recede. And so if you've got really dark cabinetry for your kitchen, you may wanna choose black appliances so that they don't stand out as much. So have that as a consideration as well when you are choosing your colours. Make sure that when you are dealing with your fridge area, particularly if you've got an integrated fridge which is going to be the same colour as the cabinetry, as well as your oven, they are together.

That you've got this your floor to ceiling or your high cabinetry is all blocked together, and that is chosen then in one particular material type. And it may be that you, for example, let's just say you've got a dark cabinetry, so that fridge and oven and built-in oven area is all dark, and then across the top, you may run that across the top as well, or you may have a contrast there.

So you need to think about how is that block going to be dealt with. And it may look great in the elevations that, yes, I can see it all, but when you start then choosing the materials, that's all gotta coordinate in, and how does it run then at the bottom? So you need to think about that, too, if you are having a tower, a wall oven, and you're having your wall tower, and then you've got your integrated fridge area as well.

How it's going to work with the overhead cupboards, and then how it's going to work with the under cabinet cupboards when it's, y- it's all got to flow, basically. So what are some popular combination

choices? I wanted to, I've got quite a few here to, to run through, but I just wanted to talk through what are some of the combinations that we know work again, making sure that you're working back with your tones.

So timber and plain coloured cabinetry, really popular at the moment, and because timber goes with everything, it means that you're open to your colours, you're open to your tonal as well, whether they're warm or cool. You can choose your timber, if it's a natural shade of timber, so your walnuts, your oaks, and your plies, and your birch, and so forth.

And then you can have that really coordinated back with any coloured cabinetry. So you could have timber and plain, whether it's white, light, dark th- they generally work well. Timber with a light-coloured cabinetry works really particularly beautiful. Then you can have dark timber cabinetry only with a lighter coloured benchtop and a splashback.

Dark overhead cabinetry and light underneath. So for example, you may have a dark timber overhead and then light underneath also with a light benchtop. You could also have that in reverse, dark cabinetry, light, and then a dark benchtop, 'cause that's going to contrast really beautifully with the light cabinetry underneath.

You may have dark benchtop with light cabinetry above or below, or both. And really this is then going to, what I was talking about before, about the leading piece. Some people are quite set. They know that they want a dark benchtop or they want a light benchtop. And if you know then that you're going to be working with a light or dark, then you can start working with, okay, so what are the cab- cabinetry colours that are going to then start working back with that?

You may have all light cabinetry, so a light bench top, a light light cabinetry both above and below, and then a coloured splashback. And that makes that splashback really pop, and that really is the colour injection or the shape or texture injection with the colour in that kitchen. You may have light cabinetry with a dark bench top and a coloured splashback.

Also works really beautifully. You may have monochromatic, and monochromatic is where you're basically using different tones from the same colour family. So for example, if you've got monochromatic, you may be using grays and elements of black and white, 'cause they're all ... They're all the same tone or very light colours of gray.

So you might have grays. You may have dark gray, light gray, and white. You may, using the charcoal and then a a light gray cabinetry and elements of white. Or ... So there's lots of different ways that you can create a monochromatic kitchen. All I'll say with that is, like I said earlier, make sure that the splashback is not glass preferably.

You know my views on glass, if you've been listening to me for a while. But you could have a tile that is in one of those same sorts of colours. But because it's a tile, it's got a different texture, it can still blend into the cabinetry, and there's your monochromatic. All right. So that is, whoo, choosing all

the colours, and what are the colour combinations, and what do you have to be mindful of with regards to choosing these different materials for the kitchen.

The next thing I wanted to just talk about was decorating. How do you decorate your kitchen? It sounds crazy, doesn't it? Can I really decorate my kitchen? Yeah, you can. And you'll know that when you're seeing houses that are for sale, their kitchens are looking really lovely. It may be that you have a really beautiful Le Creuset pot on your stove that sits there permanently.

That can look really beautiful, especially if it's a colour. My Le Creuset is a light blue. I loved it at the time. You can't get it anymore, as happens with a lot of their colours. They're limited release. And just having that there can look really beautiful. It looks like ... it just ma- Has that homey feel.

It may be ... The other thing that I used to use was my Alessi kettle. That was my little feature piece in my kitchen. So that you could have these little special things. I bring him out, and then I pack him away again because I don't really use a desktop. What am I saying? A stovetop kettle anymore.

Pardon me. So decorating and bringing things into your kitchen can make something that's quite bland something be- feel lived in and special. The key is, again- Don't go and overdo it. Don't go and clutter your bench tops with so much stuff and, "Oh, I've got this and I've got that." And I suppose that's the same through the house as well.

But there's lots of ways that you can just integrate things that you also use on a daily basis that then form part of the, the decorating animal. But element. But don't do too much. A few things is all you need. It just makes it feel lived in and used and personable and homey. So what are some of the best things to display that you can use as well?

So timber boards, so chopping boards. Timber chopping boards, they can look really lovely up against the side. You can have them layered, and they can look really lovely, particularly if it's a piece of timber that's an organic shape or it's, a piece of ... Some of it, at some of the markets you can get super beautiful boards.

Stunning piece of timber that's been oiled, they look absolutely gorgeous. And it may be that you've got a, a cheese board or something like that. They can look lovely as well. So you can layer your chopping boards. Salt and pepper shakers. You may have a really beautiful set of salt and pepper shakers or even a salt dish.

We use a salt dish. And then you can have different sized ones if you like. I know for me personally I've got the really oversized one and then I have a little one, and it depends on the grind and then I've got a beautiful little salt dish. And I have that all next to my stove top on a little on a tray effectively.

So it looks really nice. And then you can mix that with an oil canister. So it may be that you do have a little tray. I personally use a slice of timber because it's, I'm really into my timber, and then I just

layer everything on there, but everything's there to be used and I can just lift that up and wipe everything around there.

So oil canisters, a salt dish, salt and pepper shakers they can all just be clustered together on a little tray or a board or some- even a board would work really beautifully. You use it every day, but it just sort of dresses that part of the kitchen, too. Oil canisters. So they might be stainless steel, they might be ceramic, but you can transfer your oil and you might have a very special oil that you use for salads or a special oil that you use for cooking.

And they can also be part of this cluster of things that you use. Work in odds. Odds generally work better than using equals. So working in three, fives and sevens rather than two, fours and sixes. You may have floating shelves. And, having floating shelves around feature window, picture windows is really beautiful.

It means that not everything is cluttered. That you've got full living sorry full built, all this built-in cabinetry that is then going to, push this window in. You can just have some floating shelves. And on these floating shelves, what a beautiful opportunity to decorate with trailing plants.

Devil's ivy the little pearls bees, Oh, it's just slipped my mind, the other one I'm thinking of. But a re- a, a beautiful trailing plant would look lovely. Cookbooks, you can have them standing up, you can have them down. How awesome that they are just there for you to just take really quickly so that you can refer back to them.

They're basically on-hand. You may have a jug there, a really beautiful jug. You may have a special cup and saucer or a teapot or a coffee pot or something like that, something that really means something to you or that you love. Again, you can get access to those easily, but they look really beautiful on some shelves.

So I really encourage you to have some open shelves that are purely used for decorative purposes, and it breaks up the cabinetry, and it just makes it look really nice. It just makes it look lived in. Other things that you can have are herb pots. Not only are they super functional, but they look beautiful.

You've got greeny in the kitchen, and they're really easy to access. Access your herbs as you're cooking. So you could have them on the sill. You could have them again, on a, a board or on a tray clustered together. Make sure that they've got new light. Another way is to inject colour or a bit of design or whatever is some amazing coloured tea towels or hand towels.

There's some beautiful ones available, really crisp linen. They're a really nice way to inject something else into your kitchen. Artwork. Generally speaking, there is a bare wall somewhere that a really beautiful piece of artwork can be utilized. Again, choose something that you love. It may be that you're going a wallpaper wall that's butting up to the kitchen.

That's another way to inject something else. Large decorative clock, not only useful, but looks really beautiful. Works particularly well in a Hamptons style kitchen too, or a more classic style kitchen. Having a really old style clock can look lovely. And then, of course, there's a centerpiece.

If you've got a really big island bench, it's really nice at one end to have something decorative there. So it could be a bunch of flowers that you may replace on a regular basis. It could be that you get a really beautiful set of artificial flowers in an acrylic in a vase with acrylic water at the bottom.

They look great. The vogue at the moment is obviously the dried flowers. So I personally have a really big Robert Gordon pot that I then fill with whatever's going on in the garden at the time. Sometimes I let that dry out. Sometimes I'll replace it. So it's really good when you've got such a big, long bench to have something at one end.

It just breaks it up a little bit, and it makes it look a bit more lived in. You could have a really big, beautiful pot plant there, something that flowers or something that doesn't. I generally mix it up. You may have a big bowl of fruit, a tiered platter of fruit. You may have a decorative bowl that doesn't have to have anything in there.

So a tray with a cluster of a few items can work really well too. You just need to make sure that the proportion's right, that it's the right scale for the length of the bench. And if you've got a dining table that is really close to the the kitchen, that's another spot that you can have a decorative element that breaks it up.

Now, it doesn't have to be centered. You can always have it at one end or the other. You may have a a tray or a decorative dish, a decorative platter something that, means something to you. But don't feel that everything has to be centered. You can have it on one end or another rather than it always being in the middle.

It's a personal preference. But try it out. Have it at one end and then have it in the middle and see what you prefer. I find particularly on a bench or an island, sorry, or a dining table, if it is at one end, you're not having to move that every time the family is sitting down to have dinner.

Whoa. That is decorating and choosing colours for your kitchen. I hope that you've I trust that you've got lots and lots of information from that, and I certainly hope it's given you some direction on how you can pull your colours together for your kitchen. And also how you can just finish your kitchen off with a few decorating things and experiment.

Things that you're using on a regular basis, maybe you'll have those out. But it's always really nice to have your own things in your kitchen, 'cause it makes such a big difference to it being lived in and used and without it feeling cluttered at the same time. So we've still got a few episodes left.

Got four episodes left of Kitchen Design Essentials. I'm gonna be talking about outdoor kitchens, I'm gonna be talking about lighting, and I'm also still going to be talking about I know there's lighting

budgeting, which is also a big one. So still plenty to come and but we are nearing the end, and I can't believe we're gonna have 22 episodes.

So it's gonna be fantastic that, there's just this amazing resource for people that are doing their kitchens. Don't forget, if you're a bit stuck on yours, we've got the Kitchen Design Sanity Check available on the website. Book it online, available all over Australia, all over the world. We can review your kitchen in detail to see that it's going to work, that the flow's not broken up, and that everything's where it needs to be to your kitch- kitchen to work in its optimal way.

We can also help you with material selections if you get stuck, and we can obviously also help you with your internal elevations. The blog is pluv- proving really popular when there's so much confusion around what's the difference between kitchen cabinetry versus kitchen elevation design. So head to the blog section of the website to make sure that you're accessing that article around really what the difference is.

It's been sent out to so many different people now that have requested it that may not have been aware it was there. Tap into that. Wanna book a chat with me? Always available. Direct access to my diary. I hope to hear from you soon re whatever kitchen dilemma you may be facing, or where you need just some help or a sounding board.

I will see you here next week.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

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