Episode 59: Kitchen Design Essentials

Kitchen Lighting

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Hi everyone and welcome to My Forever Home the Podcast. We are now up to episode 19 in the Kitchen Design Essential Season, which I'm very excited about. It's quite incredible. As I said, last time that, we've got so many episodes just on kitchens. It's just amazing. so there will be 22 episodes in total.

And we're today going to be talking about, I'm going to be talking about lighting, lodging for your kitchen. It's quite a big thing and more often, well, I won't say more often than not, but there is. Frequent times that I see plans for a kitchen. And the lighting plan is basically just showing a whole heap of downlights and it's not until I highlight to the client what the implications are going to be with just using downlights in the kitchen area in particular, let alone through the rest of the house.

But I don't want this to be an entire episode on lighting throughout the home. I'm going to focus solely on the kitchen today, but it's so important. Not to just use downlights in fact, avoid using downlights in your kitchen space. The reason for this, create so much glare, they create so much shadow that the ability for them to perform as really good source of task lighting is minimal.

And so today I'm going to talk about what the alternatives are, how can you use lighting in different ways for your kitchen and how it's so important and why it's so important. You spent all this money on a kitchen Bader renovation or a new build. And the last thing that you want is to be able to move back into that kitchen and the.

The ability for you to cook and the ability for you to do it. Yeah. You need to do there is inhibited by the fact that the lighting is not what it needs to be. How many times have I walked into a kitchen and it is so dark in there that I wonder how they can possibly ever do what they need to do in that space.

And I have clients say to me, yeah, so often as well, when they are looking at renovating all the lighting is so bad in here. The lashing is terrible. And it really affects your mood. It affects what you

want to do in that space. And it actually affects your ability to be able to do what you want to do in that space.

So today I'm going to be talking about lighting. there is nothing worse than a dimly lit kitchen. it makes it dark and dingy visually, but I think more importantly, it inhibits your ability to, have a kitchen that is really functional. The lighting is such a key component to a kitchen being functional.

And of course we've talked already in previous episodes about the design element, not only aesthetically, but the functionality, but they're launching is such a key component to the overall functionality of your space. So one of the key components I'm going to start with is talking around our task lighting and task lighting, is that ability for you to be able to perform your task.

So task lighting is really critical in the kitchen, as it is in a bathroom. So good artificial lighting is required regardless of what the natural light is available. But natural light is something that you really want to focus on in the design aspects. And we have. Talked about that in previous episodes, how you can get really good natural light into your kitchen, in terms of the orientation of the kitchen and, in terms of its its layout, but also the orientation that he's within the home, but also in terms of which orientation it's facing.

So whether it's facing East or North. and there was a whole episode on the orientation and the layout. So that's going to give you really good natural light, which is fantastic when you're, utilizing the kitchen during the day, but you also need to think of artificial lighting and how that can create a really good, source of launch.

when eighties there's nine natural light. So it's in the it's at nighttime. And, you know, obviously we will be utilizing our kitchen at nighttime, particularly in the winter months when the natural light is not so great. So, proper task lighting enables that work surfaces are going to be illuminated.

So for example, your Island bench is not dark and dingy that you can actually use that surface. but also your Reeb benches and so forth so that they are illuminated, particularly when they're under overhead cupboards that can create, areas of, of dark pockets and particularly in corners. you really need to be able to get some really good light in there.

So I'm going to talk about how we can do that. So task lighting is exactly that it enables you to perform a task and obviously in a kitchen, there's lots and lots of different things that we're doing. So we want to make sure that that task lighting is good now to get additional data into your kitchen, you could look at, skylights.

I'm a big fan personally available skylights because they, can be openable. Which means that hot air rises and in hate, and particularly in our Northern States, you can allow that our hot air to be released. And they also auto close when it starts raining. Perfect. When you're out, you don't have to worry about the rain coming in.

So the use of skylights also with tubes are also a really good way to get natural light into your kitchen. And it just makes you feel better when you've got natural light coming in. So it is all about the feeling as well. And these downlights are not going to give it to you. I'll talk about downlights in a little moment in terms of how they can be used.

But the other thing we need to think about in our kitchen, because they're in an open plan space, ETIs task lighting is critical. We need to perform a task. But the other thing we need to think about is ambient lighting, because they are often, kitchens are often placed in an open plan area where it's close to the lounge and it's close to our dining areas and we don't necessarily want it to be.

We don't necessarily know spaces, want to be flooded with task lighting. Yeah. And so your kitchen is also an opportunity for you to put ambient lighting there. And also because using those spaces as entertainment spaces, as a buffet space, as a place to sit there and use as a breakfast bar, we don't necessarily want to have that area flooded with task lodging.

So the ambient lighting is really important and we can do that with Demers. but there's also different light sources that we can use to be able to create a really nice ambient mood and atmosphere, our kitchen. And the last one is decorative. Yeah. And decorative really decorative lighting really comes into play because it's part of the interior design.

So if you're thinking about pendant lights and the like that is going to create a decorative element, which can also then perform as an ambient light as well. So I'll talk about that a little bit more too. So the key then is you've got a combination of task lighting, a combination w it combined with ambient lighting slash mood lighting, and then decorative lighting.

And if you combine all of those three. Then you had the ability, as I say, quite frequently to dial it up or dial it down. You've got the ability, to be able to, have a combination of light sources and that enables you then to be able to, depending on what's going on in that space, to be able to use it different light sources for whatever your whatever's required at that time.

Now, I always say this around your entire home, that you need to have the combination of all three in any space so that you've got the ability to dial it up. Or dial it down as required. And a DEMA is really important on your light sources, but it's not the only thing that he's going to be able to create that beautiful ambiance when you need it to it's it's not really sufficient.

It's not a design piece per se. So in terms of downlights, so it's not as though, I'm saying get rid of them altogether. I think what I'm saying is don't use them in isolation and you need to get a really good, downlight not all downlights are the same and yes, I hear it a lot all, but I've got some led downlights yes.

There's a lot of things to consider and I'll get to who may be able to help you with this at the end, but, You need to look at the, at the beam. So what's, they've been, spectra, you need to look at their light temperature. There's a whole lot of different things to consider with lighting. So to kick this really simple, it's probably better to get a download that he's, that's racist.

Of course it's led. It's a really good quality. I'm a big advocate for bright grain, but they've got a broad beam, which means that they're going to reach more, you know, reach more in that space and create more of a, A more wide angle, pace of light, rather than it being really focused, which then minimizes the amount of, of, shining you're going to have.

So if you're using downlights in combination with other light sources, that's okay. You just need to be able to yeah. Not rely solely on downlights because they're not going to provide you with sufficient, task lighting in your space. So yeah. Get a good quality downline, make sure it's got a wide. Yeah.

And then make sure that you're using it in combination with other light sources. Now pendant lights are a fantastic, thing to incorporate into your kitchen. Not only do they create another design element to your kitchen, really finish it off. They also, if they're placed over an Island bench in my mind, shave old three task, ambient and decorative lighting.

So they're decorative because they are creating a, they're a light fitting in themselves. They're a decorative element. They can finish a kitchen off. but they also create a mood because if they're on a dimmer, You can put them on a low demand. You've got that decorative element and that's a really beautiful ambiance.

You might just have those decorative pendant lights on over the Island bench. When you're sitting in your lounge room, when you're sitting in your living room, it's a really soft light that can be illuminated into the however, if they're the right sort of pendant light, they can, and also then create really good task lighting over your Island bench.

And this is where you need to be quite conscious about the pendant lights that you're choosing, because they may not all be able to provide a really good task lighting source over the Island bench. But if you choose it correctly, they can do all three. And what a bonus that is. so when you're looking at your pendant lights, you know, make sure that if you are wanting them to provide an additional light source, the bench that they're either open underneath.

Have a look at how much light is being illuminated. If they're quite small and they're encasing something, it means that that light is not going to easy Illumina easily. Aluminate over. Okay. Bench top. So I generally then we'll choose something that is open at the bottom so that the light can get out.

And aluminate the benchtop. So just be mindful of that, make sure that by our own edema so that you can again, dial it up or dial it down and you may have, for example, a two or three. Lots over the Island bench, depending on how big that Island bench, you might have one big, long lineal light, which is really awesome for creating a really good task light over the Island bench.

And again, on a dummy, you can dial that down. Oh, you may choose to have it cluster of lights at one end, and that can look really beautiful and it's, a little bit different than having everything so

symmetrical, but then you need to be mindful then that that's a decorative element at one end. And so you'll need to balance that at the other end of the Island bench with some sort of task lighting.

So there are so many different pendant lights to choose. And I think that that is rarely where you can add a little bit of your own personality and choose a light that works. that you really love, but you need to make sure that it's coordinated back to the cabinetry. So if you've got a lot of timber going on in your cabinetry, you need to be really mindful.

If you are then going to choose a timber, a team back sand or some sort of timber, pendant light. Eight could clash. It could be timber overload. So just be really mindful. They do need to coordinate back with everything else. It needs to be regarded as a material that's being used in the kitchen. So, think about that too, but look, I'm a big fan of pendants.

I think that they add so much, and I just know in my own kitchen, I've had so many comments comment on our pendant lights. And funnily enough, I chose the pendants before I'd finished designing that kitchen because I just love them so much. and look, I'll never tire of them. You can't get them anymore, even though I've had so many people reach out, to what them themselves.

And so I just made sure that they were going to be able to work within the kitchen to probably not, how I would traditionally suggest you would do it. but you know, I knew that I was going to be able to, make them work. Alright. So what are some of the Kennedy's two downlights. Now you've got so many different choices and the other great thing is there are so many amazing manufacturers in Australia.

and for those of you who know me know that I'm really big on supporting local manufacturers, things that are made in Australia. And of course, when I lived in the UK, I was also then big on supporting, local UK designers and manufacturers. So yeah. I think local whoever's local to you, be that in your state, in your city or even in your country.

But, you know, it's always good to support local. So from an Australian perspective, we have some inquiries, incredible producers of light fitting. So. Decorative lights. you know, but then also, other sorts of lights as well. So let's look at some of the alternatives that you can put into your kitchen.

So there's directional spots, so they will sit in the ceiling, just like a downlight will, but they've actually then got a pace. That comes out and you can move it all around. The great thing about that is yeah, they pivot so that you can turn them around and you can, and some of them even bend so that you can actually then get the light exactly where you need it.

So as long as you've got enough of those around, once you move in, you can see. Yep. I need light there. I need it pointing here. I need it pointing there. Fantastic. Then you've got track lighting and that can be surface mounted on the ceiling. And you might have then a whole lot of spots or a whole lot of other different lights that are sitting off that track.

Again, you can turn them, you can point them where you need them to be. I suppose the difference with those is again, you've still got, directional lights on either the track, but the pivot light, directional spots are going to be actually sitting in the ceiling. So it's just a different look. Led strip lighting.

So you've got led strips, clotting that can seat under your bench, which is really just a decorative element. It's not going to perform any sort of light source. It's more that ambient light. It's really nice. Actually, if you are sitting in an open plan area and you've just got that light, that strip of light underneath your Island bench, that's a really nice, soft light to have on as an ambient light.

In that space, it's not going to do anything else. It purely is an ambient light. It may also, aluminate some sort of feature that you may have on the front of your Island bench. It can also then go under overhead cabinetry. So it's making sure that you've got light under your, overhead cupboards.

That's sitting on that the that's illuminating the bench and it's a new avoid, dark corners. You may have it on the top of the cabinetry pointing up to the ceiling so that you've then got like, A reflecting off the ceiling. That's another way that looks really quite beautiful. but other led strip lighting may be that it's an led strip.

That's actually encased in a casing and that would actually, rather than it being on a tape and that would then be surface mounted or flush-mounted with the, with the ceiling. And that gives you a really beautiful architectural, strip of light. And it, it. Really pushes out a phenomenal amount of light so that you're not in the dark and it, because it's not splaying out anywhere, it just feels like a great light source.

It really illuminates very, very well. So you could just have a combination of those. The other one is uplights. I'm a big, big fan of uplights. I love their simplicity. I love that they create some sort of decorative element and there are another one that I feel, almost sit in that panic category in terms of providing awesome task lighting, really good ambient lighting because it's on a DEMA and it can really, you know, Mike show that that's an ambient light source and it's also sort of decorative it's quite streamlined.

you can get them in different styles. and particularly in homes with a really high ceiling of say three meters, they sit our 600 millimeters down from the ceiling, but push light up, bounce it off the ceiling and then display that into the space. Just beautiful. I have them and I really that's all well, I use in the kitchen, I just saw so good.

You need to get a good quality one. then there's wool washes. They also sit in the ceiling like a downlight will, but instead of splaying locked down, they actually point it to the wall. And then that light bounces off the wall and it almost creates a dome. So they're actually beautiful for highlighting artwork, but again, they can work really well in the kitchen, depending on the design and where the ability is to bounce light off the wall.

You don't want it bouncing off the cabinetry, then you've got Cove lighting, and that can actually sit above your cabinetry. And again, that's going to create a strip of light that then pushes light down into the space and it just sits above the cap and it can be built into the bulkhead really, really lovely and sophisticated.

On the cabinetry lighting. So if you're not going to have this led, you can get smaller lights, circular or square, that seat actually in the cabinetry or the overhead cabinetry. And then they can put, you know, pin lights or little spots that sit in their little tiny, tiny little cabinetry lines that then push light out onto the, bench tops.

If you didn't want to use, led under your, overhead cabinetry. There's also, don't forget the light that you're getting from your range hood. They generally are really good light source. And they're obviously going to then aluminate your stove top, which is fantastic. And you won't actually then need any additional light source over that range area.

And then of course you've got pendant. So if you just picking two or three of these out of that least, I've given you, and you may not even need to use any downloads, which would be ideal. Don't forget that puckering is ceiling as well. So if you've got other things that are a little bit more streamlined, it means that your ceiling is less busy too.

So there's lots and lots of different alternatives. I think people get a bit stuck sometimes. It's like, well, I just know downlights. The draft deal, the architecture is putting down lights, you know, what are the choices do I have? I think that if you're in doubt and you, like I was saying earlier, you want to make sure that this area is going to work super hard for you and you don't want to, you know, do this renovation spent, you know, all these, all these thousands of dollars.

And then getting in the lighting bad. It drives you crazy. So it's worth investing in, in getting your lighting design for your kitchen. I would say the whole house. So you either you engage a lighting designer or you engage an interior designer that is able to do a lighting plan for you. Not all interior designers do that.

We do that. We do offer that as a service or you can engage a lighting designer and just make sure then that, that space is designed for you with a really good selection of different light sources so that you know, it's going to perform for you. And again, you've got task lighting. You've got your decorative element.

And then you've also got that ambient and mood. thinking that, thinking about that you may actually have as an example, just your pendant on when you're watching the TV and that's, if these spaces are all interlinked, or you might just have the streetlight under the Island bench on when you're watching TV.

So that's really creating that ambient launching, but invest in getting the LA lighting properly designed. It's only when you leave with a really poor, light. That you understand the value of having

really good light, but also that it adds to the overall feeling of your home. It adds to that overall design aspect of your home by having, you know, alternative light sources than just downlights.

It is an absolute game changer in how your house feels, how your house performs and how your house looks. And I've, I've actually had quite a few clients that were not convinced that a lighting design is what they needed. And it's only when the house was finished. They said, Oh my goodness, may what a difference it makes.

And I think you need to live in an experience that, to know the value. so I suppose at this point, you'll have to take my word for it unless you're living in really poor lighting, you said I have to deal with this. So deal with it, investing good lighting, please avoid spending thousands of dollars doing this renovation, and then ending up with really poor lighting because it's going to be difficult to retrofit and there'll be compromises.

So I hope that that today I trust you. Today. I need to stop saying hope. I need to say trust that that happens. you know, really giving you some yeah. Sought into the alternatives that there are other things that you can use. Other light fittings and sources that you can use apart from downlights.

It'll absolutely finish your kitchen off beautifully, and it'll enable you to be able to work in there. Absolutely fabulously. So, as always check in with us, we've got the kitchen design, I'm sorry, the beautiful kitchen design Mae easy kitchen online course, that's available for $99. refer to the website@whitepebbleinteriors.com.edu.

We've also got the kitchen design sanity check. If you're after a little bit of assistance, one another professional set of eyes to go okay. Of your kitchen design. we can do that for you. Of course. And then our materials selections, to just make your kitchen, your kitchen. Absolutely. Exactly. As you want it, we can help you with that too.

lots and lots of resources on the website in terms of articles about internal elevations and you know, how your kitchen design needs to be a reflection of you. Lots of resources on the website. So you don't forget to go there too under the tab resources. all right. Oh, we'll see he next week, where I'll be talking about all important budget and how do you budget and keep yourself on track for you, for budgeting for your kitchen, as allies obey he next week, next Thursday.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

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