

DESIGNERS CORNER

How to Create a Modern Country Kitchen

The classic design style gets a modern upgrade

BY CLAIRE CARPONEN | ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 28, 2018 | [MANSION GLOBAL](#)



Each week Mansion Global tackles a design topic with an elite group of designers from around the world who work on luxury properties. This week we look at how to design a cozy, but chic country kitchen .

Made with natural materials that have an intrinsic warmth and featuring charming farmhouse-style cookers and sinks, country kitchens exude an inviting ambiance, while conjuring up images of idyllic rural living.

Country kitchens have broad appeal, but they have grown in popularity recently, as tastes in décor have shifted from cool minimalism to a cozier, more rustic aesthetic.

In the past, folksy depictions of farm animals and decorative timber moldings were fashionable. Now the look is more streamlined and less fussy, with an emphasis on high-quality joinery, a muted color palette and good lighting.

When thinking about creating a modern country kitchen, pare down the design of classic details such as the chimney breast, mantelpieces, range cookers, butler sink and shaker-style cupboards, said Mark Taylor of British-based kitchen design company Mark Taylor Design.

To create a rural-style kitchen with a modern twist, follow the tips from the design experts below:

Think Natural Materials

"One of our design principles is creating restorative environments. We include natural fibers, textures and materials, such as wood, stone, wax and plants—elements that were once abundant in our lives and are now scarce. They connect us to the earth and ground us to the natural environment.

"We work with wood, chalk paint, natural stone to bring natural elements into this kind of project. Our botanical stylist would plant-scape the design which would bring a biophilic element into the scheme.

-Louisa Grey, founder of London-based design studio of House of Grey



Vintage lighting, flush metal door handles and contemporary wooden cabinets give this Phillip Thomas Inc.-designed kitchen a modern twist.

Michael Mundy

Pare Back the Decoration

"One of the things we are doing at the moment is integrating kitchens into the rest of the house. This is achieved by taking inspiration from colors, themes and decorating materials, such as wallpaper, paint and light fittings which are present in the rest of the house.

"Modern country kitchens may feature shelving which references traditional storage furniture, such as a Welsh dresser, but it will be used to house stylish cookery books rather than drip drying plates. The idea is that the kitchen should look like the rest of the house and having plates drying on show is not part of everyday living.

"Shaker-style cupboards are still a popular feature, but decoration on cabinets is kept to a minimum. So, for example, you will see plain posts between cupboards instead of ones featuring carvings.

"People are more adventurous with color these days and are less afraid to use it in wallpaper, paint and fabrics for curtains and blinds. Muted and darker tones are in vogue, as they work well in colder climates with cooler light. Rather than trying to make a room look lighter by adding neutral colors, the darkness is embraced by adding dark tones and ambient lighting to make the space feel intimate and cozy.

"Good lighting is essential in kitchens. We would opt for task lighting, such as downlighters for cooking and preparing food, pendant lighting for during the day and uplighters on the floor and wall, which reflect the light upwards to the ceiling and back into the room for relaxed, ambient lighting in the evening."

-Mark Taylor of U.K.-based kitchen design company Mark Taylor Design

Bring in a Feeling of Warmth

"Timbers, stones and metals that are rich in character in themselves without the addition of traditional ornament, are those items that help to create the warmth, character and approachability of the modern country kitchen. They are both appreciated by the eye and by the touch.

"Gray continues to dominate the contemporary color palette for interiors these days. While gray can often be considered cold, it actually can have quite a warmth to it when you select the right hue. Gray washed oak, for example, can be warm and contemporary all at once."



Rustic features add warmth to this kitchen by Phillip Thomas Inc., while contemporary fittings make it suitable for modern living.
Aydin Arjomand

-Phillip Thomas, founder of New York-based interior design company Phillip Thomas Inc.

Keep Things Simple

"Country kitchens are surprisingly well suited to urban spaces and people's appreciation for craftsmanship is growing and growing. Many of our clients simply desire well-crafted and honest cupboards that can be updated over time with fresh paint or new ironmongery and will last a lifetime.

"I always like the idea of a simple design, such as a run of kitchen cupboards and a lovely farmhouse table that doubles up as additional worktop space to prepare food. A worktop made from natural materials will be unique to your kitchen and bring so much joy as you roll out pastry or wipe it clean at the end of an evening.

"Handcrafted shaker cupboards and natural worktops work particularly well. The materiality of a country kitchen is deeply woven into its fabric and plays a strong role. Flooring often relates to the rest of the home, so try and keep it natural, either using big flagstone tiles, slate or timber floorboards. Take the time to choose your paint color: take a lead from other elements in the room including your flooring and worktops to bring harmony between them."



Dark-green cabinets and a black range cooker make this British Standard kitchen feel both cozy and dramatic.
British Standard

-Neil Stafferton, design manager of the British-based kitchen cupboard maker British Standard