



## KITCHEN AND BATHROOM TRENDS THAT MAKE LIFE EASIER

*By Brad Cruickshank*

**A**s the economy continues to recover, more and more people are investing in remodeling their homes. In fact, experts predict that home improvement spending will continue to rise this year as homeowners seek out those small luxuries that make this often hectic life easier. So what trends will we be seeing in today's and tomorrow's kitchen and bathrooms? According to the recently released 2011 kitchen and bath study by the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA), and what we've been seeing in our work here in Atlanta, products and designs geared toward comfort and convenience are big with homeowners.

### **Kitchen Trends**

1. **Open Kitchens** – The heart of the home, an open kitchen space for living and entertaining is always an inviting feature. Not only does an open kitchen encourage interaction, it also allows light to flow through a space and create a larger, more comfortable feel.
2. **Granite and Quartz Countertops** – Granite is still the most popular countertop material, but quartz is slowly gaining a solid footing for its low maintenance and high durability qualities.
3. **Technology** – For those who spend a lot of time in the kitchen, keeping it wired can make all the difference. From simple LED lighting to trash compactors and internet connections, more designers are incorporating helpful features to keep the kitchen buzzing.
4. **Induction Cooktops** – While induction cooktops haven't overtaken gas and electric models in popularity, these energy-efficient appliances are definitely closing the gap.

5. **Refrigeration** – The French door refrigerator continues to reign as the refrigerator style of choice, beating out freezer-bottom and side-by-side models. For those who require less storage space, refrigerator and freezer drawers continue their popularity as well. As for our wine connoisseur clients, here in Atlanta undercounter refrigerators are still in demand, although on the national level they have been on the decline as more opt for unchilled wine storage.

6. **Dark Finishes** – For cabinetry and even floors, dark finishes are in. In our warm Atlanta climate though, medium natural and white painted finishes remain popular, as do light natural and colored painted finishes.

7. **Environmental Responsibility** – As more homeowners become aware of their home's environmental impact, they are becoming more pro-active in choosing the right options. Well versed and experienced in "green remodeling", we can help you understand how building techniques and products can affect your energy efficiency, air quality, and everyday comfort.



# THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ATLANTA

## TOUR OF KITCHENS 2011

On March 19th and 20th, a home remodeled by Cruickshank Remodeling kicked off the Junior League's 14th Annual Tour of Kitchens. While the tour and chef activities focused on the kitchen, almost the entire home had been remodeled by us, providing the home with a new appointed wet bar, powder room, bathroom, living room, and dining room.

During its history, the Tour has raised more than \$1,000,000 to support programs and partnerships for over 90 community agencies that serve the needs of women and children. Cruickshank Remodeling is proud to be a Junior League supporter.



# KITCHEN AND BATHROOM TRENDS, CON'T

## Bathroom Trends

1. Dual Vanities – As convenience continues to be the trend, dual sinks and even separate vanities are on the rise. More space for everyone!
2. Satin Nickel Faucets – Popular for both the bath and kitchen, satin nickel faucets have shot to the top of homeowner's must-have lists. Conversely, brushed nickel faucets have fallen in demand, with less than half of designers calling for them.
3. Calming Green – As trained and experienced green builders, we're all for sustainability, but this time, we mean the color green! Calming and natural, green has taken hold as a highly desired color along with grays and lilacs. Still, whites and beiges are the most common tones used in the bathroom as they lend to a sense of cleanliness and allow colorful accents to pop.
4. Technology – Products such as on-demand water heaters and faucets with water on/off sensors add a convenience factor, optimize performance and reduce consumption, so are drawing more interest.

Now is the perfect time to get your work scheduled at the best price since remodelers are getting busy again and material costs are rising. Our professional in-house design and build services provide you the convenience and reliability of working with one company from start to finish. Of course, we're always happy to work with outside architects and designers with whom you've already established a relationship.

## WATER WORRIES AND SOLUTIONS

With the ongoing controversy of Atlanta's access to Lake Lanier's water supply, water consumption is a topic that hits close to home. The EPA recently released figures on residential water usage (based on a benchmark family of three):

Existing homes in general population:	190 gallons/day
"Standard" homes built since 1999:	130 gallons/day
High efficiency homes:	110 gallons/day

The biggest indoor water hogs are toilets and clothes washers. Water consumption for both of these devices can be cut by approximately 1/3 with the use of high efficiency models instead of standard models. While 1.6 gallon per flush toilets have become standard, toilets that use .8 gallons per flush are now on the market. These toilets are "dual flush" with two buttons – one for liquid waste (.8 gal) and another for solid waste (1.6 gal). Brad installed a dual flush toilet in his recent home renovation project and has been very happy with it. Owners of older homes need be careful, however, before installing low flush toilets on old waste piping systems. Plumb Works, a local plumbing service, has reported problems in some older homes where the pipes do not have sufficient slope to evacuate the waste with the reduced volume of water.

# VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY

As an avid fisherman, Brad Cruickshank volunteers his time to serve on the Board of the Upper Chattahoochee Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU). As chairman of the Conservation and Advocacy Committee, he's involved in two major programs on the chapter's namesake river—Sweep the Hooch and the Brown Trout population study.

All of the metro Atlanta TU chapters, the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, and the National Park Service partnered for the first annual "Sweep the Hooch" on April 16.

## Over 350 volunteers collected 3.55 tons of trash and recyclables!

- Trash = 2.76 TONS
- Recyclables = 1,588 lbs
- Plastic = 140.2 lbs
- Glass = 717.0 lbs
- Metal = 439.5 lbs
- Tires = 292.5 lbs



Another activity in which Brad is active is TU's partnership with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and others, in a year and a half long study of the naturally reproducing brown trout population in the Chattahoochee/Lake Lanier tailwater. The state stopped stocking browns years ago, yet the brown trout population continues to grow. Several times per month the state boat goes out on the upper river and shocks the river. Stunned fish float to the top and both brown trout and rainbow trout are netted and placed in a holding tank. From there, the rainbows are counted and released. The browns are counted, weighed, measured, tagged and released. Brad's been a volunteer in two of these sessions so far.



## FUN WITH CHICKEN!

Tim Joyce, Cruickshank Remodeling Production Manager, and his family are members of Starrsville United Methodist Church where Tim serves on the Board and is Chairman of the Building Committee. A frequent volunteer at church activities, Tim recently helped cook 2500 chicken halves over a wood fire at the church's annual cookout. That's a lot of chicken!



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## 2011 Projects Since January

Water damage	2
Design/consulting	4
Cabinetry	2
Window replacement	3
Chimney relining	1
Exteriors (residing, trim, decks)	4
Interior repairs, trim electrical	6
Fencing	2
Roofing and gutters	2
Bathroom/bathroom repairs	2
Additions	1
Garden pavilion/landscape	1
Masonry	4
Roofing and gutters	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>



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*Founded in 1980*

## ATLANTANS ARE ON THE MOVE AGAIN



*Brad Cruickshank, Founder*

When I compare notes with several of my friends and other remodeling company owners around the country of how the economy has affected business, it seems as though Atlanta was hit harder than other regions, and harder than in previous recessions. With fewer people remodeling, for about two years now, we've occupied ourselves largely with repairs, maintenance work and insurance claims. But now, thankfully, the economy is looking up and homes are selling again.

Cruickshank Remodeling is currently working with several families either on improvements to their new homes, or on fixing up their existing houses to market them. In addition, several realtors have called me to consult with prospective buyers on homes they are considering. One of these realtors lately told me that the Buckhead re-sale inventory is down 30% from the first of the year—that's a good sign that people are more confident in the economy and buying homes again.

Still, as a businessman I've learned to do more with less, just as I think many have. We'll do this a bit longer, but Tim, Denise and I are talking about who to hire and when. I think many businesses are in the same situation. And as that hiring phase begins, peoples' lives will improve and the economy with further strengthen.