

NEW HOME, NEW CHOICES

Selecting the right upgrades upfront helps avoid a cookie-cutter look

EUGENIA TRIANDOS AND KORINA KHAMIS

When it comes to a newly built home, a lot of new home buyers will follow the builder's suggestions regardless of whether or not making modifications is a choice.

This may be because new homeowners can feel overwhelmed with all of the decisions that need to be made when purchasing new. It may also be because they just don't know any better.

You would be surprised by how much you can actually change if you simply ask for it. Some builders have hefty surcharges for extras and upgrades. Others will only charge you whatever the difference in price is between the item you selected and

what was included. Either way, it's nice for you to know your options and asking the right questions will get you the answers you need.

What's our trick? Go simple, go bright and ask the right questions. In this competitive real estate market, it's advantageous for your new home build purchase to stand out. Making changes to the standard finishes is a great way of making your unit unique.

SOME QUESTIONS CAN BE:

■ Are the tile, countertop and plumbing options presented the only options? Or can we shop in store at a specific supplier and select different options?

■ What are the cabinet finish options?

■ What are the pros and cons of each available finish?

■ Will I be presented with cabinetry design drawings to adjust and approve?

■ Will mirrors be included in the bathrooms and if so, what do they look like? We often opt to omit the builder's mirrors and just buy our own. It's good to tell them this in advance since they usually glue them to the wall and removing it can be quite messy.

■ Are there any wall sconces? If so, what height will they be mounted at? Heights vary based on the fixtures which most people only purchase after they move in. This is something worth shopping before the electrical for your unit is completed.



Consider going without the builder's mirrors and choosing from another supplier.

■ Is heated flooring an option?

■ What kind of recessed lighting will be installed? Will it be a warm light or cool light?

■ If you're thinking of motorized window coverings, can the electrical be ran in advance by the builders?

■ How can I make my modern new build feel warm?

When in doubt, opt for white. White is timeless, fresh, and creates the perfect backdrop for most aesthetics. The good news is that every developer will have some white options. The biggest mistake is going bold with fixed finishes that you aren't crazy about and will later regret.

A white cabinet works in both a classic setting and a modern one. It looks good on flat panel doors and on shaker profiles. It can be dressed up with decorative hardware or can blend in with concealed cabinet pulls. White also works for countertops and backsplashes.

Be open to different ideas. Going in with a fixed idea of what you want may get frustrating once you see your builder's options. We sometimes have to work with what we have and that might mean changing your mind on one element to find another that works with it. For example, you might be dead set on a specific type of backsplash but can't find a counter option available that works with it. It may just be easier to opt for a different backsplash in this case.



It's worth considering changing up your tile, countertop and backsplash options.

When it's all done, if you opt for clean and simple on your fixed finishes, you can start having fun with your décor. A simple, bright white kitchen can be the perfect backdrop to an edgy set of stools or a show-stopper pendant light over the island, and those are easier to change. Custom window coverings and wallpaper also add a lot to what would otherwise be a cookie-cutter space.

Eugenia Triandos and Korina Khamis are designers and co-founders of Hibou Design & Co., serving Montreal, Ottawa and area by creating designs that transform a house, condo or loft into your dream home. Visit hiboudesignco.com.



When in doubt, opt for white. White is timeless, fresh, and creates the perfect backdrop for most aesthetics.

RE OPENING TO THE PUBLIC MARCH 2!

While we are eager to be of service to you again, we continue to work hard to ensure the safety of our customers & staff. Policies being enforced include social distancing, and sanitizing of high touch surfaces. We can also assist with curb-side pick up as requested.

Looking forward to seeing you all again soon!



1412 STARTOP ROAD 613-747-8555

Sunday & Monday-CLOSED, Tuesday & Wednesday-8am-4pm, Thursday & Friday-8am-5pm, Saturday-9am-3pm