

Clearing the decks

While we want to avoid talking ourselves down into spiralling financial gloom, word of tough economic times ahead does make one a little cautious when it comes to considering major expenditure around the home.

But recession or not, that doesn't stop us from occasionally feeling fed up with existing design features around our home and wanting change - fast.



Take the kitchen for example. Because we're in them so much and technology evolves so quickly, their capabilities frequently come under the microscope and an old kitchen with outdated design concepts and poor layout sure can be a frustrating place to be.

If a new kitchen isn't feasible in the short term, you may have to work with what you've got, but by making a few clever changes the results could surprise.

Taking the first step - clearing the clutter - won't cost a cent and it'll make you feel a whole lot better too. While falling out of love with your current kitchen, you probably fell into some bad habits - stuffing papers and junk into drawers and hurling pots, pans and bowls deep inside cavernous cupboards.

Time to rectify that. If it isn't useful, out

it goes, then with valuable storage space cleared and kitchen equipment pared back, it will be easier to see where positive changes can be made.

Next stop is the Plastic Box or similar homewares stores for cupboard and drawer liners. These give surfaces a fresh appearance and drawer trays will help keep utensils in order. And see if those sticky drawers can be coaxed into opening and closing more easily. Who knows? They may just need a sanding and function perfectly well until the highly-coveted, easy-glide, soft-close componentry comes along.

Visit kitchen showrooms and home ideas centres too. Analyse the latest design innovations and try incorporating those you like into your existing set up, using famous Kiwi ingenuity.

What characterises great kitchens is well thought out storage and plenty of it. Bev Lambermon from Pridex Kitchens in East Tamaki says accessories such as kitchen componentry can make a huge difference to an existing kitchen.

"A new kitchen isn't necessary to enjoy the benefits of superb storage options and in most cases, what is installed in an existing kitchen can be re-used in a new one at a later date."

Slider-out pantries and storage baskets installed inside cupboards make working in a kitchen so much easier. Try placing a small recycling bin alongside your kitchen rubbish container, which will minimise numerous treks to the main bin. While this isn't terribly exciting, it's an economical improvement until the real thing arrives.

Bev says Portero, a new range of under-sink storage units, is proving popular with consumers. "There's a lockable cupboard

Clutter-free kitchens look more contemporary.

Images supplied by Hafeleg

for dangerous cleaning agents - essential if you have small children. Storage units for cleaning products have drip trays and there's a detachable cleaning unit too. This holds about five products and can be carried to other rooms in the house."

Exciting designs aren't just about practicalities. Adding some shimmer and shine can work wonders in a kitchen that's going to be around for a few years yet. So, why not add a splashback or how about an on-bench pantry with glass shelves and backlighting? Decorative pieces on glass display shelves look fantastic too, and will gleam under delicate spotlights.

Hopefully these small acts of creativity will cheer you up and keep the kitchen blues at bay until salvation arrives. As the saying goes, every little bit helps!

Jesma Magill
Our Homes Today
features writer,
jesma@times.co.nz



Summer of Sculpture

Expose yourself to Sculpture on the Gulf, on Waiheke Island.

Experience an unforgettable journey of large scale contemporary sculpture as you walk along Waiheke's magnificent two-kilometre coastal walkway.

Discover sculpture in the landscape, floating on the ocean, transforming the horizon of sea and sky, and ambushing the unsuspecting on the walk. The exhibition runs until February 15 and entry is free.

Combine with a visit to the Waiheke Community Art Gallery in Oneroa and explore the Island's village, cafes, vineyards and stunning beaches.

Take the Fullers passenger ferry from downtown Auckland or Waiheke Shipping's car ferry from Half Moon Bay to the Island. Buses connect to and from the passenger ferry.

www.sculptureonthegulf.co.nz

