



Kitchen designed by Melanie Sa'u Design Studio. Photography © John Williams

A GOOD DESIGNER MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Rachael Kwok, Executive Officer of National Kitchen & Bathroom Association NZ (NKBA), on designing the best kitchen for you.

When building or renovating, one of the biggest expenses is the kitchen. It's easy to see why, with gorgeous materials and finishes, alongside time and labour, a new kitchen is most definitely an investment in your home and lifestyle.

However, any investment needs to be well thought out to ensure it's a good decision and not a costly one. Here's how:

- Select a designer of NKBA who will give you the confidence that every detail is backed by experience, expertise and industry-approved standards.
- Start with quality. Select finishes and details that will stand the test of time. That extra dollar at install will help to avoid replacement or repair later.
- A kitchen that doesn't function is a bad investment. Poor design choices don't just look bad; they cost you time, money and frustration. Whether it's awkward layouts, poor spatial flow or inefficient storage, the wrong design can set you back thousands. Ensure your kitchen design is well planned out to provide plenty of storage, eliminate clutter, and create efficiency when you're cooking up a storm.
- Consider trends carefully before going all in on a bold colour or theme. I get it! Those curves and sage greens are oh so in, but will they still be in favour in two years' time? A kitchen tends to be replaced once every decade, so choose

timeless over trending. Our 2025 NKBA trends survey showed warm timbers and soft neutrals were the most popular choice with homeowners.

- Consider your future needs. Are you planning a family? Is your home a short- or long-term abode? Do you need accessible spaces? All these decisions should impact your kitchen design. Is porcelain the best choice for your family because it's nonporous, durable and easily maintained? Do you need your bench at an accessible height or soft touch cabinet hinges? Does your kitchen need to be more marketable to ensure saleability is higher? Work out your needs and future needs to ensure your kitchen goes the distance.
- Set yourself a budget and make sure you have enough not to cut corners. Our 2025 NKBA trends survey showed that most kitchens cost somewhere between \$20,000 and \$50,000, excluding appliances.

These questions are complex with many options available to meet your needs and your budget. A good designer easily interprets your brief and finds solutions that meet your wants and needs. Choosing a professional Designer of NKBA is the smart choice to ensure you install a kitchen you will love, for the long haul.

nkba.org.nz/find-a-designer



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