

The look of kitchen elegance

Kitchen: Refacing cabinets brings affordable luxury

By Jim Walker Escape Editor jwalker@the-signal.com 661-259-1234 x524 November 27, 2010

You've scrubbed, scoured, painted and polished and yet something still seems amiss in your kitchen. Even with everything all shiny and clean and all the clutter safely hidden behind the cupboard doors, there is just a sort of melancholy hanging in the air. And then one day, when you are channel surfing and land on "The Brady Bunch," you figure it out: Your kitchen cabinets look more suited to 1970 (resembling the Brady's kitchen) than 2010.



But what to do? Replacing your kitchen cabinets is well out of your budget.

But maybe refacing them isn't.

"For those who can't afford a remodel in this economy, refacing is the answer to their dilemma," said Harry Fischer, owner of Homecraft Kitchen Cabinet & Refacing in Saugus.

Why so?

Save money

Completely replacing kitchen cabinets is expensive and time-consuming because not only are the cabinets involved, but the countertops, backsplash, flooring, plumbing, fixtures and even electrical wiring could be involved as well. With refacing, there is no need alter these other items. The job takes less time, and you can even use your kitchen, to a limited extent, while the job is being completed.

Homecraft has been refacing and restyling kitchen cabinets for 37 years, and Fischer said the process goes like this:

All cabinet doors, drawers and moldings are removed, leaving the cabinet boxes and sides exposed.

The outside surfaces are totally re-covered.

Strips and panels are installed horizontally and vertically on the cabinet fronts, sides and underneath to simulate new cabinetry. This process not only offers the look of new cabinetry, it also strengthens the cabinets.

The Santa Clarita Valley Signal

November 26, 2010

In addition to saving you money, there is less mess and inconvenience with refacing, as opposed to remodeling (the process is usually completed in three to five days), and the process is more environmentally friendly. Refacing uses fewer materials than remodeling, saving energy and natural resources, and puts less waste in landfills.

As you might expect, the cost of a cabinet reface varies according to the type of wood, style of doors, etc. But Fischer said his customers get a custom quote that includes all materials, installation, labor, crown molding and any accessories and upgrades desired.

"There is a very large cost savings compared to kitchen remodels — as much as 30 to 70 percent," he said.

Choices

A wide variety of materials are available for cabinet refacing.

"The most popular trends in the Santa Clarita Valley include natural finish cherry, followed by stained cherry, followed by natural maple. And traditional natural and stained oaks are always in style," Fischer said. He added that "white-laminate refacing is available upon request."

Fischer said indoor choices include flat panels and traditional raised panels. "We always include new drawers with our refacing — if a client has a drawer box with the plastic slide and a wooden runner."

Accessories

In addition to a complete exterior refacing of existing kitchen cabinets, Fischer said you can have new drawers installed with side-mounted rollers. "We can do some cabinet modification and alteration. We can install rollout trays and pot-andpan drawers. We can do pantry accessories, such as racks and trays. We can alter the base cabinets for a specific client's needs — space permitting — and we can add additional cabinetry as needed."

One of the latest upgrades in cabinetry is the soft-close dampener. "These keep your cabinet doors from slamming shut," Fischer said. "Now you can go into your cabinets in the middle of the night, and no one will ever know you were there," he said.

Contractors

Fischer said that when it comes to selecting someone to reface your cabinets, "In my opinion, you need to choose a licensed specialty (C-6 Cabinet) contractor who is sensitive to your needs, rather than a general contractor." And he said, "It is always better to shop local, as a local contractor understands your needs because he lives in your community, and he is also more accessible and available."

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"Consider the contractor's longevity (in the business) and his credentials," he added.

"Remember," said Fischer, "if you've replaced your countertops and kept all the old cabinets — and are frustrated because the old cabinets look even older now, and want them to look new — refacing is the answer." And he noted that when he does a reface, he personally shows each customer how to take care of the cabinets and ensure the finish looks good for a long time.

Homecraft Kitchen Cabinet & Refacing is located at 26502 Ruether Ave., #109, Saugus, CA 91350. The phone number is (661) 252-9663. Visit www.homecraftcabinets.com. (Showroom appointments are recommended as Harry Fischer can normally be found out working on a reface in the community.)

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