

SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

Home *Guide*



Heart of the Home

Kitchens take the spotlight this summer.

WRITTEN BY HEIDI BETHEL

Whether it's inside a renovated dwelling, an amazing outdoor space, or a new place with access to restaurant options, wherever folks come together to dine is the heart of a space. In this guide, local experts weigh in on the importance of the kitchen and other elements inside and outside the home.





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Kitchen Rehab ROI

"Kitchens and bathrooms are what sell homes," explains Sam Olson, team lead/owner of The Olson Group of RE/MAX Gold in Reno. Olson goes on to say that investing in a kitchen remodel pays off in the long run, with sellers getting 60 to 80 percent return on investment. He says the bare minimum for a kitchen to see a real ROI will include granite countertops, updated cupboards, and gas appliances.

Karen Walker Hill, residential specialist for Ferrari-Lund Real Estate in Reno, concurs with Olson and says there's a benefit to creating your ideal kitchen before putting it on the market.

"Looking at it from a real estate point of view, if you're waiting to update your kitchen because you're going to sell it in five years, do it now and enjoy it because you will get the money back," she says.

Considering a New Space

With booming interest in relocating in the Reno-Tahoe area, Shane Branimburg, mortgage consultant with Big Valley Mortgage in Reno, urges those thinking about buying new homes to get on it now.



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"At this point, sellers are seeing multiple offers on every property," he explains. "It's not even a housing market; it's like a cake auction. The most immediate action is to reach out to a local lender or a local real estate adviser. They can help you understand your capital situation, what you want to spend on a monthly payment, and what you're willing to spend."

When it comes to finding a new home, the right kitchen speaks volumes. Betsy Caron, realtor with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Drysdale Properties in Sparks, recalls, "When my boyfriend and I were looking for our house, it needed to be in a specific area, and we needed a bigger kitchen so I could cook. Now I have this beautiful kitchen that's in the middle of our house. It's the heart of the home. When I have people over, everyone can see what's going on."



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Caron recalls, pre-COVID-19, hosting a Christmas Eve meal when two guests turned into 35 people who all congregated in the kitchen. "I put homemade tomato soup on the stove, we all gathered around the counter, and it made for a truly memorable party."

Speaking of the layout, Charlotte Michaels, owner and founder of Transcend Interiors in Reno, emphasizes the functionality and design of a kitchen.

"It's nice to have a super-stylish kitchen, but if it doesn't work for the people who live there, it's not worth it," she says. "With newly built homes, in the design centers, they tend to push the latest and greatest backsplashes and countertops. We work with our homeowners and with what they're bringing into the new home. We accompany them to the design center to find the right fit."

Convection Steam Ovens

When it comes to the latest and greatest in appliances, it's all about convection steam ovens, explains Steve Gunderson, kitchen designer for Czyz's Appliance in Reno. He urges folks to check out the Wolf Convection Steam Oven, which allows home chefs to cook with steam in a climate-controlled environment unlike others.

"It aids in baking breads because you get a hint of steam at just the right time in the cycle," Gunderson notes. "You can poach a salmon or steam vegetables nicely. You get food that looks and tastes like it was prepared in areas much more humid than ours."

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Rickey Hayes, marketing manager for Sierra Air in Reno, reminds you to make sure the air conditioner is running properly to keep everyone comfortable in the kitchen. He suggests running the system before mid-summer temperatures soar.

"Turn on the AC and make sure it's working like it should," Hayes says. "If not, give us a call. It's really important to get annual maintenance once a year, and a tune-up is ideal before heavy use. Be sure to get ahead of the game before it gets really toasty out."




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All About Organizing

With entertaining at home continuing to be all the rage, Dan Du Mond, design manager for California Closets in Reno, has an easy way to keep the cook of the house happy: an organized kitchen.

"The benefit of any organized system is everything is in its place and there's a place for everything," he says. "Plus, people tend to save money this way because they only buy items once, since they're neatly displayed on a shelf or tucked in a storage bin. It's OK to have pantry or wine bar envy, just be sure to do something about your space, too."





"We'd highly recommend The Olson Group to anyone looking to purchase a home, and we'll definitely be reaching out to them again when we want to purchase our next home."

-Karim H & Sam W



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In addition to your home's interior, a tidy garage also has big benefits. Devin Farnsworth, owner/operator of Good Garage in San Diego, Calif., and launching in Reno in May, explains that installing extra storage results in a cleaner garage and better use of the area.

"Making the most use of your space is more important than ever," Farnsworth says. "Smart, effective storage makes the best use of otherwise unusable space."

Getting Outside

Rob McCalla, president of Reliance Grounds Management Landscape & Maintenance in Reno, encourages readers to get outside and enjoy a meal outdoors with friends and family members.

"It is patio season, and everyone loves an outdoor escape," he notes. Whether planning for the backyard or a restaurant dining area, McCalla says, there are several ways to bring personality to the space.



"Fire pits are great gathering areas; pavers work well for aesthetics in entertainment areas. Water features create a wonderful ambience with their background noise," McCalla adds. "You can put your pizzazz on it and put yourself in a beautiful setting. Create an ambience that allows guests to interact in a unique atmosphere that is unlike what their day-to-day surroundings are."



For those looking for a new home with many options for nearby restaurants and activities within walking distance, consider a townhome in the center of The Biggest Little City — 14 on Cashill in Reno is a brand-new development with units available for purchase now.

"In addition to a great contemporary living space, folks have delicious restaurant options a quick stroll away," explains J.P. Menante, realtor with Dickson Realty in Reno who represents the project.

Home cooks, outdoor loungers, and restaurant goers all agree that Reno-Tahoe is the place to be. Contact these local experts today to make your dining experience and home setting ideally you.

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