

Being Neighborly

We hope everyone is enjoying the warm sunshine and much needed break from the rain. We recently listed a home and naturally during the first open house many neighbors come to check it out. They are curious about the floor plan, updates and how their home compares. We love it when neighbors come to visit homes we hold open. Neighbors show potential buyers that this is a neighborhood where people take pride in ownership and care about their real estate investment.

Neighbors are invested in the sale as it provides a data point for how much their home is worth. For some, it is important because it provides a basis to determine the equity they have in their home or if it is a good time to sell. The condition, fixtures, square footage, lot size of recent sold homes helps realtors, appraisers and buyers determine a home's value.

Buyers are investing in a neighborhood and not just a home so there are some important things you can do to help your neighbor in selling their home and ultimately yourself. The most important thing you can do is help ensure your neighborhood shines as bright as possible. Keep your yard tidy and pull garbage bins off the street. If you have animals be conscious of open house times and schedules and keep animals inside. Sellers have an obligation to disclose a loud barking dog or a failing fence. Neighbors just need to seem well, neighborly. It might even provide you with a good excuse to trim back your hedge or tidy your yard up a bit. The bottom line is a successful sale benefits everyone and lifts all neighborhood home values.



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Top design picks from Kitchen and Bath Industry Show



By Johanne Poulin

Described as the place to see the latest designs and products from over 600 leading brands, the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show is North America's largest trade show dedicated to all aspects of kitchen and bath design. It's a must for designers who want to offer their clients the latest in kitchen and bath design, and a great way to get behind the scenes with some of our favorite vendors.

While it's always a challenge to narrow down to a few favorites, here are our top

picks for this year:

Smart efficiency. We've seen a huge increase in 'touchless' and 'connected' products in the home, and that trend is continuing. Many of us already have 'smart' thermostats and home monitoring devices, but a growing number of kitchen appliances and bathroom fixtures are also starting to get smarter. We're seeing app-enabled ovens, refrigerators, washers, bathtubs trashcans and even kitchen scales, doing everything from simply turning remotely to monitoring and re-ordering your groceries. Smart sensor integration in faucets, showers, lighting and showers offer not just convenience, but also California building code compliant energy and water efficiency, ease of use for anyone with limited mobility.

Bold colors and patterns. Our love affair with the crisp white kitchen shows no signs of fading, but the white subway tile is giving way to a resurgence of bold patterned tile in showers, floors and backsplashes. There were stunning options on display – everything from handcrafted glass and ceramic in bold colors and textures and traditional large scale patterns that draw the eye, to intricate mosaics in every shape, material and combination.

It wasn't just the tile that was bringing out the color – cabinet manufacturers are offering some bold color options that work wonderfully in California kitchens and bathrooms. Navy and gray featured in many displays, often in combination with white or wood, their more dramatic tones drawing the eye and providing a warmth and drama to every space.

Johanne Poulin is a former OB/Gyn who has grown Project Guru Design from its early days offering interior decor and staging services to an award winning full service design firm offering detailed 3D renders and walk through technology. She combines a lifetime's passion for creative work with the precision and attention to detail developed from over 20 years in medicine. She strives to understand the client's unique style and present them with personalized design 'prescription', helping them to achieve thoughtful, livable and functional spaces that will serve them for years to come.

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