



How Do You Use Your Home for the Holidays?

PLAN NOW FOR A REMODEL NEXT YEAR!

By Andrew Shore

THE ANSWER IS PRE-PLANNING. USE THIS HOLIDAY season to pay extra attention to how you entertain. Do you and your guests spend most of your time in the kitchen? Would you prefer the kitchen to have a separate prep space, or be open to the family room allowing everyone to be together? Where exactly in the kitchen do your guests stand? Are you constantly asking guests to move so you can get to the trash can? If you take note of how you and your family behave in your home, you can then design a space that is truly custom to your home and your lifestyle.

Last fall we began designing a remodel for a family in

Coto de Caza and through the process we learned that each year they host 35 friends and family for a barbequed turkey Christmas Eve dinner. Instead of making rushed decisions and flying through the development stage we asked them to observe their guests and answer some of the questions we mentioned above. They couldn't believe it. They didn't realize how much time was spent with guests in the kitchen, and how the flow of traffic affected her food preparation efficiency.

When we sat down with them in the New Year, we completely re-designed her project. In the kitchen we swapped



out the original idea of an island for a peninsula to help keep her energetic grandkids out from the prep area. We also included two dishwashers and relocated the trash can to be out of the main traffic pattern to avoid congestion.

By taking time to pre-determine why you want a kitchen remodel and what will make the most sense for your family, you can craft a space that is not only beautiful, but will allow you to access everything at ease.

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Another great benefit to pre-planning your project is to save money—and who doesn't like saving money! We recently had a couple come to us looking to complete a room addition to increase the size of their kitchen. During one of our meetings, the homeowner mentioned that they never use their dining room. With some creative design and construction investigation we proposed they remove the wall between their dining room and kitchen and expand their kitchen inward instead of out. They were thrilled with the idea and by repurposing unused space they saved money and construction time.

Remodeling is a big investment worth taking the time to properly plan. Be leery of contractors that are willing to immediately begin construction; not planning your project properly is the main cause for unexpected change orders, time delays and stress.

A project thoroughly planned should provide you with an end result that meets your expectations, is completed in a timely manner and is within the budget you agreed upon.