

Charlotte

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L I T T L E



THE TREND DILEMMA

During my days as a superintendent for a Charlotte homebuilder in the late 1990s, nearly every home we built featured kitchens with natural stained maple cabinetry, black appliances and synthetic countertops. Bathrooms were covered with white ceramic tile and polished brass faucets or tan-brown travertine with oil-rubbed bronze faucets. Now, as a design/build remodeler, I routinely rip out those same styles of kitchens and bathrooms installed ten to fifteen years ago. Flip through the pages of this magazine, and you'll see what is fashionable today is certainly not what was "in style" then.

Trends change. Kitchens and bathrooms have become a fashion industry in homebuilding, and the number of choices of fixtures, materials and finishes continues to expand. A

wider selection with a significant increase in choices can be both good and bad. With the aid of someone who has an eye for style and color, each project can be as unique and personalized as the individual for which it is being designed. But for someone with no direction or particular inspiration, the number of choices can be downright overwhelming.

Having completed many projects for folks who are part of the boomer generation like my parents, I have seen many scarred by once having owned homes that featured avocado and brown colored appliances or orange shag carpet. Similarly, my generation endured the colonial revival of the 1980s complete with floral wallpaper and





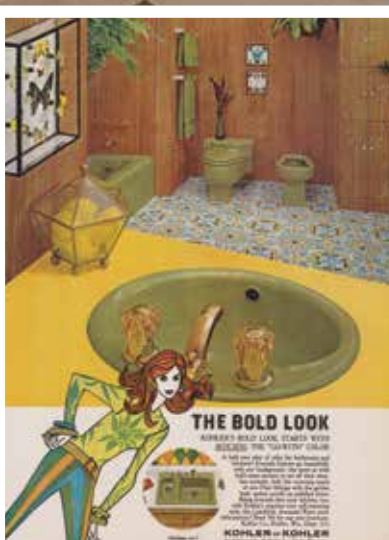
Williamsburg blue laminate countertops. Those memories sometimes get in the way of making decisions when it comes to remodeling a home today.

The Trend Dilemma, as I like to call it, happens when a client becomes paralyzed by the fear that their home will look dated in just a few short years upon investing thousands of dollars in it. Worse yet, they're afraid they'll install something that hinders the sale of their home five, ten or fifteen years down the road.

Are stainless steel appliances going to remain popular? What about white cabinets? Marble countertops? Open floor plans? Painted brick? Barn doors? Wood grain porcelain tile? After twenty years in this business, I can assure you of this: things change. Here are three tips to get you past the Trend Dilemma:

Trust a Professional

You don't have to go it alone. If you feel overwhelmed by all of the choices, put down the magazine, get off the Internet and call someone who does this every day. With just a few consultations, a design professional can observe your tastes, understand your budget, and set your project goals to help you curate a narrowed selection of materials to get the job done.



Trust the Classics

While there may be cabinetry, plumbing or tile finishes that will soon go out of style, a design professional will help you identify colors and materials that have stood the test of time and will provide a long-lasting, classic foundation.

Live in the Present

As in other areas of our lives, we must balance the need to be prudent and cautious with the need to live for today. If you've always wanted a pink island in your kitchen or a hand-painted sink in your powder room, then do it! At the end of the day, it is your home, and you should make design decisions that inspire and comfort you, regardless of what's "in style." ♦

Brad Little is the President of Case Design/Remodeling of Charlotte and part of a leadership team made up of seasoned remodeling and design professionals with over 220 years of combined experience. Contact them to discover how they can help you with your home remodeling or repair needs. For more information, visit www.casecharlotte.com or call 704-759-3920.