

# For Cape kitchens:

## What's hot...and what's not!



A Mid-Cape Home Center kitchen designer shares the scoop on designs and materials trending in today's marketplace.

*Photos and kitchen design by Becky Drozell*

Installing a new kitchen—or choosing to remodel an existing one—can be a daunting process when the sheer amount of materials and designs available seems limitless. This is certainly true for individual homeowners—but it is also relevant for architects and builders who may not have the time to keep track of what's trending in today's ever-changing kitchen and bath marketplace.

Mid-Cape Home Centers—serving the Cape and surrounding areas since 1895—has three experienced “contractor kitchen designers” on staff who are providing the area’s professionals with invaluable support services, supplying know-how on the latest and best kitchen designs and materials on the market.

We spoke to Becky Drozell, a lifelong Cape resident, who has worked as a Mid-Cape contractor designer for the last six years. Drozell has a degree in interior design

from Endicott College and completed an internship at the Boston Design Center.

**Cape Cod HOME (CCH):** How can a contractor kitchen designer help with a kitchen project?

**Becky Drozell (BD):** I am one of three Mid-Cape contractor designers on staff. We work closely with area builders, but not on a retail floor. We work directly with the builder, or the architect, and their client. My business is primarily from Provincetown to the Plymouth area. This saves a lot of time for everyone because the builders/architects don't have to go through the design process, which they don't necessarily need to be involved in.

I have found that the architects and the builders are starting to work with us in the early stages of a project—even sending their clients in once the home's initial plans

have been done, which is a really good thing. At the very beginning stages, for instance, windows can be moved in a kitchen design to accommodate sinks, appliances, and cabinets ahead of time.

Mid-Cape's contract designers build up a relationship with different architects and builders and they know how we operate, and we know how they work; it becomes a good back and forth, which really benefits everyone involved in both new construction, or remodeling projects. It is a great benefit for the homeowner in terms of cost and efficiency.

**CCH:** Are the new home and remodeling industries healthy on the Cape right now?

**BD:** We are doing a lot more new homes now than we were the last couple of years, but there is still a lot of remodeling happening too. The housing market on the Cape just seems to be going crazy right now—which is great! This year has been one of my personally busiest years. It's amazing how many more new homes are going up. We are seeing a lot of housing starts and people seem to really be going forward with lots of remodeling jobs they have been holding off on for a couple of years.

**CCH:** Can you share some hot trends in kitchen design?

**BD:** It's interesting because what seems to be trending right now are colors and specific items that you would see in kitchens in the early 1900s. A couple of years ago, the manufacturers started coming out with gray and earth tones for kitchens, simpler more old-fashioned colors as well as kitchen choices like farm sinks, open shelf-cabinetry, and designs that are really classic. In terms of cabinets, at Mid-Cape probably 99 percent of our clientele seems to prefer white, Shaker-style cabinetry that goes well with the Cape's environment. We are seeing some people who are getting a little braver in their cabinetry color choices, but white still seems to be the most popular color for Cape and Islands kitchens.

**CCH:** Tell us about Mid-Cape's cabinetry lines. Do you have custom and semi-custom lines available?

**BD:** Yes, we offer both custom and semi-custom cabinetry lines. For the homeowner who wants a little more reasonably priced cabinetry, we have inset cabinets, which are not fully custom, so you can get that option at a better price. I usually combine both lines for my

customers because you can keep the cost down with the semi-custom, but still have the top quality of a full custom choice. Mid-Cape carries six different cabinetry lines, so we can give our kitchen customers a lot of options.

**CCH:** What countertop choices are trending right now?

**BD:** Well, granite is still holding strong, but the material that has come up to almost that level of popularity is quartz because the different manufacturers have come out with quartz patterns that look like natural stone—especially marble. Marble just isn't practical for kitchens because it is very soft, very porous, and the quartz options can be a great choice. Quartz is technically a man-made slab, it is a poured slab; it is only part quartz and the rest is bonding agents and fillers, so the biggest difference is that it is not porous and is scratch-resistant, stain-resistant, and heat-resistant. We also see a lot of people choosing Corian if they don't like to work on a stone surface and we still do a fair amount of laminate countertops for rental properties.

**CCH:** What are Mid-Cape's customers choosing for kitchen floors?

**BD:** What we are seeing with flooring is that a lot of people are choosing wood throughout their homes, rather than opting for a tile floor in the kitchen. People used to want to differentiate between the kitchen floor and the other rooms in the house because they thought tile was easier to clean. Wood surfaces now are a lot more durable and easier to clean.

**CCH:** What websites are today's customers turning to for kitchen and bath design ideas?

**BD:** I think that Houzz.com is the biggest online kitchen resource at this point. I hear about Houzz almost every day! It is a good thing, though, because instead of someone trying to describe what they want with words, they can actually pick photos from Houzz's thousands of choices—it is a great resource for homeowners. It also helps professionals in the industry because it almost eliminates any homeowner questions. Pinterest is a close second in terms of online choices—the site has a lot of remodeling and new construction choices.

*Mid-Cape Home Centers are in five locations throughout Cape Cod, the South Shore, and Martha's Vineyard. For more information, go to [midcape.net](http://midcape.net).*