



Kim Jones designed this retrofit of an '80s-style kitchen, reworking the entire space with new floors, architectural drop downs to add light, and a Caesarstone countertop. PHOTOS COURTESY KIM JONES

Thinking inside the condo

CONDO TRENDS

Achieve form and function with high-tech engineering

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For Metro Canada



Today's condo interiors are a radical departure from the days of plain white drywall and broadloom. New high-tech engineered materials create a sharp contemporary look as well as being practical and durable.

Toronto interior designer Kim Jones has her finger on the pulse of the latest condo trends. She has created model suites all over Toronto, including one at the Trump Residences and the Absolute Towers in Mississauga.

Flooring

Your condo floors can make a big impression, especially with the new products made from exotic materials like cork and bamboo. Solid strip floors

come in a wide assortment of woods like birch, cherry, hickory, maple, oak and walnut. They can be finished in a high, medium or low gloss and the wider planks, five inches in width and up, are all the rage.

Laminate flooring has the look and feel of hardwood but at a fraction of the cost. The layered construction makes laminates very durable, and some even have an embossed grain texture to make it more realistic.

Next on the list of flooring is engineered wood. It has a hard coating over the top that keeps it from scratching, more so than a natural wood, explains Jones. The new products no longer have that hollow feel to them. "It feels like it's a natural wood that you're walking on."

Another product popular with do-it-yourselfers is click lock glueless flooring. The edges of the planks have milled channels that snap together without nails, staples or adhes-

ives, creating a floating floor.

Countertops

When it comes to countertops, engineered stone made from granite and quartz is pretty much standard. The popular Caesarstone brand of composite quartz has become increasingly popular in condos. It comes in a variety of colours and is durable and scratch resistant.

"It's the best product for countertops because it is virtually impenetrable, but granite is still being used in some areas," says Jones.

Tile

All condos today are finished with some kind of tile. The range of materials, colours and textures is enormous, and can give your kitchen or bathroom that major wow factor.

"It's not unusual to use the same material on the walls as on the floor, but maybe in a different size. A 12-by-24-inch tile is very popular, instead of the 12-by-12-inch," says Jones.

With any condo upgrades or renovations, be sure to check with your condo board before starting. There are strict guidelines as to what you can and can't do to your suite.



A kitchen designed by Jones at the Absolute condos in Mississauga, featuring a high-gloss stacked cabinet and Caesarstone countertops. Miele appliances and coffee maker are built-in.