



The market shifts into neutral with the modern white kitchen

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Kitchens and bathrooms are the most common rooms in the house that buyers comment on when touring a home,” says Lee Johnson of Sotheby’s International Realty, who reps a 30-unit live/work project in the open-loft creative space market in Venice. “The open, clean look of a new white kitchen can create an inviting appeal to a broader pool of buyers.” Buyers, who want the ability to manipulate or customize the visual theme of a space through color by way of cookware, dinnerware and décor. For them, adds Johnson, “A white kitchen is like a blank canvas.”

The irony of the white of right now, however, is that the color is utterly timeless, outlasting trendy, quick-to-fade shades complementing a variety of home styles. “White is the perfect neutral,” explains Betsy Burnham of LA-based Burnham Design. “It’s clean, crisp, happy and adaptable to all tastes, from New England traditional to updated farmhouse to strictly modern.”

With endurance comes savings, as a classic white kitchen negates the need for costly kitchen remodels, which can run upwards of more than \$50,000. “None of us redo our kitchens very often, and when we do, we want to be sure to make decisions that have longevity,” says Burnham. Helping change the perception of white as a danger-zone of impracticality is the wealth of modern-day materials that have eliminated maintenance costs stemming from issues like staining. White was always doable, but now it’s truly durable.

While Johnson notes that in itself a white kitchen may not be enough to increase a home’s value, the look it creates—gleaming white against the perennially sunny skies and Pacific Ocean vistas that permeate our indoor/outdoor living spaces—helps set a sophisticated tone that resonates with the same class of buyers. White always looks like a million bucks—and, in the right dwelling in a hot market, can help put a similar asking price in point blanc range.