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KEEP YOUR KITCHEN LOOKING FRESH

Wilmette, IL – Looking for a way to freshen up an existing kitchen? Mick De Giulio recommends the following:

1. **Go Clean.** Today's design has moved on from frills and contrived details to an aesthetic that is more simple and clean. Remove ruffled window valances and fussy hanging rods. Change hardware to something more minimal and unadorned in a sleek finish such as polished stainless steel or polished nickel.
2. **Light.** One of the most important aspects of a kitchen is light and lighting – natural, task, ambient, and accent. Position seating near the best views and light. Kitchens by nature are sculptural and have a lot of opportunities for accent lighting. Consider under cabinet and above cabinet lighting whenever possible. Replace older surface fixtures with something more clean and modern.
3. **Mix.** Don't be afraid to mix materials like hardware, finishes or woods. Mix modern and traditional to create an updated collected look. Find an out of context piece like an armoire or an antique wall hanging to integrate into your existing space. Everything doesn't need to match in a kitchen and this mix makes for a much more interesting design. Don't be afraid to break the rules; if you like it, go for it.
4. **Paint.** Painting walls and trim can go a long way in giving a space a fresh look. But, think twice before repainting your cabinets. It's a big job that can be expensive...and often, the outcome is not worth the expense.
5. **The Big 'Don't'.** Don't replace just the floor or countertops – especially without carefully ascertaining the condition of the cabinets. Redoing just the floor or countertops can make the cabinets look tired and often locks them in, making it more difficult and more expensive to replace them at a later date.
6. **Plan. Plan. Plan.** One of the most important things you can do with any kitchen project is to plan the space with a qualified kitchen designer (CKD). Develop a long term plan for your kitchen. Updating a kitchen is expensive at any level. And, no

matter the size of your project, the most expensive line item can be regret because of a missed opportunity or not doing things properly. Even if this means waiting to do it right rather than doing it halfway. Dream big, and then if you need to trim the budget, prioritize. Every move needs to be well thought out with a list of alternatives. Don't settle for second best.

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Mick De Giulio founded de Giulio kitchen design in 1984. With completed residential and commercial projects throughout the world, his company has two Chicago area showrooms, including one at LuxeHome in Chicago's Merchandise Mart. de Giulio specializes in a unique blend of interior architecture and product design for kitchens, managing projects from initial concept through final installation.