

# Hot List: WHAT'S TRENDING IN HOME INTERIORS

Two local pros offer their expertise.

BY LAUREN SIEBEN

If you've spent time perusing real estate listings or binge watching "Fixer Upper," you know that hardwood floors and kitchen islands are here to stay. But before you take the plunge on bold ceramic tile or whimsical wallpaper, we checked in with Milwaukee area design experts to see which trends are on the rise and which are due for retirement.



## IN THE KITCHEN:

— Durable, man-made **quartz countertops** come in a variety of colors, and quartz is a popular surface with staying power, according to Mike Slawnikowski, president of M Design Build Inc. in Mequon. "Quartz is a more uniform approach if you don't plan on staying in the home for more than five years," he says.

— **Microwave drawers and device charging stations** are both functional and fashionable, keeping appliances and extension cords concealed and organized for a clean look.

## IN THE BATHROOM:

— Today's bathrooms are high tech: **heated floors, heated towel bars and multifunction showers** featuring sound and lights add value to your bathroom (and help keep toes toasty during Wisconsin winters).

## INTERIOR DESIGN:

— Ubiquitous **gray is here to stay**, according to Emily Ebben, director of design at Warren Barnett Interiors. "It is a perfect neutral that can tend toward warm or cool tones, and acts as a lovely backdrop for exuberant prints, bold colors and textured metallics," Ebben says.

— **Mixed metals, textures and shapes** can make a space more inviting. Ebben suggests adding a pop of color or a pattern to a single wall, the back of a bookcase, the ceiling or an entire room to create a space that's both cozy and chic.

— **Wallpaper** is making a comeback, especially on accent walls and in small spaces. Afraid of commitment? Try a removable peel-and-stick wallpaper that you can easily swap out when you're ready for a fresh look.

## FUNCTIONALITY AND TECH:

— **Smart home systems** that owners can manage from their mobile devices — from thermostats to security systems — are increasingly common in modern homes.

— **Mudrooms** for laundry have moved up on many homeowners' wish lists. "If clients do not currently have a mudroom, they are looking for ways to incorporate one," Slawnikowski adds.



## TRENDS ON THE DECLINE:

— While **bold colors** are having a moment on Pinterest and Houzz, they're not always the best choice for homeowners who might be selling soon. "You're trying to appeal to the masses," Ebben says. "Even though you may love your grassy green paint in the dining room, you may want to consider a neutral."

— **Tile**, especially patterned porcelain and cement tile, has emerged as a popular flooring and countertop material, but Slawnikowski warns that it may look dated in a few years. "Tile and solid surface countertops can be items that will either help or hinder a future sale of a home," he says. "These tend to be very personal choices."

## THE BOTTOM LINE:

— Before you jump on a new trend, remember that each choice is an investment. Do your research, and while it's important to keep resale in mind if you plan to sell your home in the next few years, **stay true to what you love**. "Don't always react to what's popular," Slawnikowski notes. "Go with what works for you." **MKE**