

Golden? Honey? Is it cereal or kitchen cabinets



JANE LOCKHART
DESIGN
CONFIDENTIAL

I get asked a lot of design and décor questions, usually through Facebook. I love that people are passionate about making their homes beautiful and the questions never stop.

To better manage the requests, I decided that once a month I'll take to the internet for #AskJane. It's a perfect, low-tech solution.

We go "live" on Facebook, usually on a Saturday morning and answer questions that have been submitted with pictures and in real-time, too.

Recently I received several identical questions. What can be done about dated, oak kitchen cabinets?

You can call them, "honey" or "golden", but those cabinets are anything but sweet or perfect. They're solid wood, they were expensive in the '80's and '90's, but they look too yellow, or orange. They're the bossy, colour element in the space and it's difficult to know how to tone them down.

Real wood is a natural, product. If you take off the bark off a light-coloured tree, it will darken, a dark wood without its bark will lighten. It's the natural oxidation process.

The urethane seal on the cabinets is light sensitive and will change colour in the light and darken. The result, over time is something you may want to address.

I have a few solutions. The first can be a DIY project if you're confident and have a steady hand. Sand and paint all the cabinetry. The wood will take to the paint beautifully, it will last and it's not an expensive solution.

What most people can't see when someone suggests painting wood, is that while it's attractive to some, it creates contrast in a room.

When wood trim stands out it's no longer an accent, it's a focal point, and wood over time can look so far off colour that it dominates a colour scheme.

Painting wood neutralizes the colour but still accentuates the profile, the craftsmanship of the wood. The results can be quite beautiful.

Another option I suggest is to tame colour with colour. Paint the walls behind the cabinets in a colour that settles the wood colour down. There are two directions I suggest.

The first is Benjamin Moore's Kendall Charcoal. Lighter colours may not be as effective, this is a great, dark, smoky grey. I'd use accent pieces in pewters, blacks, golds, yellows and a little white.

Chocolate browns are still popular — anything with chocolate in it will never die. I suggest Benjamin Moore's Marshland, Willow or Chocolate Fondue, put that on the walls and it will instantly change the effect. Adding darker colour offers a sharp contrast and cleans up the space.

The last option is replacement. Maybe this is the time to do an upgrade. Take the time to address all the quirky things that make working in your kitchen difficult. Do doors open into each other? Can you open the dishwasher door and the cabinet beside it at the same time?

Use a kitchen designer to



Not sure what to do with those honey-coloured cabinets? Consider sanding and painting all the cabinetry, the wood will take to the paint beautifully.

help you see areas you can improve and don't be afraid of a new layout. You may have purchased the house with the kitchen as it is, but it doesn't mean you're obligated to keep it in that same configuration. Maybe it's time to take the doors right up to the ceiling

and get rid of an empty bulkhead?

Whatever you decide, find a way to repurpose those cabinets. They're probably still in good shape and here's a secret...golden oak is on its way back in style if you want to just wait to be back on

trend! My Facebook page is www.facebook.com/janelockhartinteriordesign.

— Jane Lockhart is an award-winning designer, TV personality and leading expert in the world of design. Visit www.janelockhart.com.

Scott McGillivray shares money-making, energy-saving tips



NATALIE DEANE
DECOR
AND MORE

Your home is the biggest investment you will probably make in your lifetime so you want to make sure you get the best value for it.

There are many upgrades you can do to get the most out of your home. We all know about the kitchen and bathroom but there is more. Scott McGillivray, TV Host of Income property, real estate investor and contractor has some tips to get you there.

First impressions

As the saying goes, you only have one chance to make a good first impression. McGillivray's advice: "Since the front door is the first thing people see when approaching your home, it should be inviting

and reflect your style."

- Create a visual focal point by painting your door a colour that compliments the rest of your home;
- Upgrade your light fixture with something brighter for esthetics and safety; and,
- Landscape your front, cut back overgrown plants.

Basement bucks

If you have watched Scott McGillivray on TV you know his biggest tip has always been about using your property to make extra income. "If you have the extra cash, renovate your basement to include a rental apartment," shares McGillivray. "You will pay yourself back quickly and make money while living in your home."

Energy efficiency

Making your home more green means you will use less energy therefore reducing costs around your home.

"Not only is Canada committed to drastically reducing our carbon output, but hydro costs are an increasing concern for citizens," McGillivray tells us. "A house that not only conserves energy but also produces its own, is a great selling feature."

Installing energy-efficient windows in your home can help to reduce energy costs while changing the look and feel of any room. Especially in older homes a lot of energy is lost through cracks and old panes.

If it is financially a burden to fully upgrade your windows, consider some energy efficient improvements to the existing windows, like caulking and weather-stripping, and/or window coverings can help.

Install solar panels, they support the health of the environment and reduce your carbon footprint; they protect



TV host Scott McGillivray has a lot of tips for adding value and reducing energy costs while changing the look and feel of your home.

your roof, extending its life in the face of harsh weather. Solar panels can actually help you gain revenue!

Solar panels absorb the sunlight and convert it to DC electricity that runs through an inverter (just like your car cell phone charger), which then converts it to AC power.

The power is then sent out to a meter that keeps a record

of how much electricity your system produces and your hydro company will send you a revenue cheque for your contribution.

"Getting solar on your roof is a lot simpler than a lot of people think," suggests McGillivray. "A company like Grasshopper Solar takes care of everything — inspection, design, installation and connecting

the system to the grid."

With these tips from Scott McGillivray you can definitely get more out of your home with cost-savings and income earning steps.

— Natalie Deane is a lifestyle connoisseur who shares tips for everyday living through decor, entertaining and household trends.