

RISQUÉ BUSINESS

Bold and dramatic with a touch of class, this dark and moody style has us rethinking the classic white kitchen and coming over to the dark side.

Arguably the most important room in the home, the kitchen can often feel like a subway platform at rush hour, with guests and regulars passing through on their way to various destinations. It's where the best conversations, the best arguments and the most ambitious experiments (and messes) happen. It's also overwhelmingly the room where decor risk is avoided.

Perhaps we all carry around some post-traumatic stress of our parents' outdated kitchens. Memories of clunky wood cabinets with even clunkier metal ware, yellowing white appliances and horrible floral backsplashes float through our subconscious and manifest in a collective reluctance to try something bold in a room where renos can get expensive quickly.

Which is why Andrew Pike's jet-black, Hollywood Glamour style kitchen is nothing short of breathtaking. We so rarely walk into a kitchen that isn't glaringly white and pristine that our eyes took a moment to adjust. "Ensuring your kitchen will withstand the test of time doesn't mean it has to be boring

and sterile," says Andrew, who designed this home in the Empire Riverland community. After all, even the whitest of backsplashes will get tedious after you've wiped it clean half a billion times. When examined with a designer's eye, this chic kitchen no longer feels as hard to achieve as we first imagined; matte grey micro tiles make up the backsplash and the minimalist lines are sleek and modern.

"For most of us the kitchen is the heart of the home, and it deserves a lot of our design attention," says Andrew. "I started with a very neutral base of grey and black but then accented everything with hints of gold, giving it a really dramatic and powerful appearance."

Powerful is an accurate description, a little art-deco with a monochromatic undertone, the effect is rich and luxurious. "I've gone with a flat-panel-slab oak door stained an ebony black and very minimal black handles, which gives the entire kitchen a very contemporary feel. If you wanted to make the look more traditional, you could add some statement hardware, or paneled doors," Andrew says.



KEEP THE INSPIRATION FLOWING

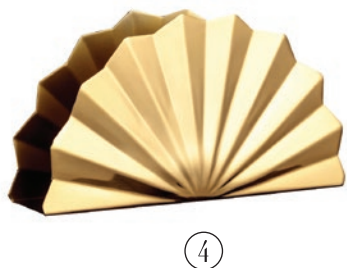
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The dark undertones of the kitchen provide the versatility of that perfect pair of black pants; the core piece in a variety of different looks. "Red accent pieces would look fantastic against the dark backdrop when the gold becomes dated, and a high-shine light fixture would change the feel significantly." Always mindful that design shouldn't disrupt usability, especially in the kitchen, Andrew

explains how to find harmony between the look and practicality of your layout. "Where your space allows, consider extending your cabinets right into your breakfast or dining area, or try a floor-to-ceiling pantry which gives you a huge amount of storage." Small adjustments can make a significant impact, and planning a kitchen requires an in-depth analysis of how you live and use the space. "In

another recently designed home, I added a bank of pot and pan drawers, but instead of going for a 4-5 drawer bank I opted for 3 drawers, which means the bottom two were extra deep and perfect for storing large pots or even small appliances," Andrew says. "This was such a small detail, but it will help to keep countertops clear and the whole kitchen from becoming cluttered."

GET THE LOOK



1. Flint Gold Bar Stools by CB2, \$299, www.CB2.com. 2. Copper 1-Light Matte Black Ceiling Pendant by ZUO, \$200, www.homedepot.ca. 3. Orleans Square Gold Wine Glass by Kate Spade New York, \$38, www.bedbathandbeyond.com. 4. Metal Napkin Holder by H&M Home, \$13, www.hm.com. 5. 20-Piece Rush Gold Flatware Set by CB2, \$119, www.CB2.com. 6. Aluminum Small Gold Tray by CB2, \$55, www.CB2.com.