

GIVE YOUR KITCHEN A FACE LIFT –

ADVICE FROM INTERIOR DESIGN EXPERT JOHN AUTARD



John Autard, interior designer, retired head of the Cape chapter of the Institute of Interior Designers and editor of the successful e-publication Interior Placements was asked by the KSA for his thoughts on giving your kitchen a face lift:

If your kitchen is looking tired and dated it is possible to give it a new lease on life without breaking the bank.

The first priority is to ascertain exactly what your space and storage requirements are. Reorganise – you will be amazed at how changing how your cupboards and drawers are used, can change the dynamic of your kitchen. Do a full inventory of everything that you currently have in your kitchen. Reorganise your storage so that you group related items together i.e. crockery, cutlery, glassware, table linen, food storage items, pots and pans, groceries, electrical appliances, cleaning equipment etc.

Next assess the actual space, does it fit your needs, do you have enough working surfaces and storage space? These are probably the most important aspects of any kitchen. Try and keep your work surfaces clear by storing items not in everyday use on shelves or in cupboards. There are many different storage containers, dividers, hooks, rails that are fairly inexpensive that will help you create an organised and functional kitchen.

If you do require additional storage space you need to be careful to try and incorporate

the new units into the existing style of your kitchen. There are several suppliers who can assist you with KSA approved DIY cupboard units. Depending on the space you have available you could introduce free standing units that compliment the room. Very often mismatched furniture can be unified through a simple coat of paint.

Next look at your cupboards and work surfaces. Cupboard doors can easily be replaced. Avoid specialist paint techniques on your cupboards unless they are well sealed as everyday kitchen cleaning fluids contain ammonia which will break down the paint and it is extremely difficult to patch up. If your cupboards are wood and you want to add to them remember that it is not easy to match and may require an expert to do the staining. The simple act of changing your cupboard door handles will make an amazing difference.

Tops can be replaced too if necessary. If you are wanting to upgrade to stone or solid surfacing tops there are many reputable fabricators who can assist.

Final tips – Don't forget what a difference a simple coat of paint can make. Add some new lighting. Choose good general lighting that doesn't cast shadows over your preparation and cooking areas. Accent under-counter lighting can also make a huge difference. Finally, the addition of new kitchen appliances, both large and small, will be the perfect last touch.