

DESIGN



WHEN WHITE ISN'T JUST ALL-WHITE

White has long been the go-to for a crisp, clean and fresh-looking kitchen

IT'S not only ideal for contemporary as well as traditional styles, but it's also so easy to customise a snowy-white backdrop with black accents or a splash of colour.

Or you can simply opt to continue a white-on-white theme into everything from dinnerware to the latest handy-dandy kitchen gadgets.

"White continues to be a perennial favourite in the kitchen for good reason," says Oswald Homes interior designer Danielle Ellery.

"Not only is it fresh, clean and easy to personalise, it adapts easily to different design styles, from uber-sleek and minimalist in a contemporary home, to classically handsome in a Hamptons or French Provincial residence."

"You don't have to just think in terms of all-white either.

"White kitchens are heading in a couple of different style directions, with timber and black fast becoming best friends with white kitchens."

Here are three ideas and some top tips from Oswald Homes if you're planning a high-impact white kitchen:

WHITER SHADE OF PALE

The biggest challenge with a white kitchen is making sure it doesn't start to look sterile and the vibe becomes more 'hospital' than heart-of-the-home hospitality.

A good tip is to include a metallic kickboard. It won't shout out, but it will deliver a gentle sheen while blending with a white-on-white scheme.

Another idea is to design an island bench as a piece of furniture to add contrast and introduce colour.

An island bench also becomes a fabulous focal point when you use a feature benchtop, such as the new Caesarstone marble range, which blends white tones with swirls and feathering.

Textured white splashback tiles add interest to white kitchens, and are also perfect for showing off natural stone floors or a glowing timber floor.

If you want to make a statement with your cooker, consider an amazing freestanding range in shiny black.

Or you might be drawn to a bold bright colour, such as red or green.

A sculptural rangehood set over a cooktop in an island bench is another way to make a statement in a white kitchen, helping to break up the whiter-than-white purity.

You can use your choice of accents to give your white kitchen personality, whether it's a casual beachy look or an edgy industrial look.

If you're going minimalist and uncluttered, your accents might be as simple as a row of

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sculptural stools at the breakfast bar. White kitchens stand back and let other pieces sing, or they can be heroes in their own right.

If you're going for a streamlined look, opting for recessed finger-pulls in lieu of cabinet handles will keep the look silky-smooth and uninterrupted.

WHITE WITH A WOOD TWIST

The combination of timber and white is a beautiful thing. Any colour and any grain contrasts amazingly well with crisp white and it doesn't matter where you use the timber or, indeed, how much timber you use.

Pick out the fascia of an island bench, add overhead cupboards in warm timber tones or create a bespoke centrepiece for contemporary style.

Timber – whether veneer or solid – will add interest and help warm a predominantly white kitchen, ensuring it will never look sterile or unwelcoming.

When you put 'stuff' on your kitchen benchtops, whether it's the latest cookbook or the kids' lunchboxes, the overall presentation can lose some of its minimalism.

Balancing the white with some timber can make it feel a little more homely, so it stands up to scrutiny a little better and doesn't have to look pristine 24/7.

You don't have to keep it quite so clutter-free if you're not naturally inclined to do so.

IS BLACK THE NEW WHITE?

At the other end of the scale, arguably a million miles away from a snowy-white kitchen, is the inky-black kitchen.

Admittedly they're not for the feint-hearted, but they are gaining traction in some design circles.

Dark and moody, a black kitchen can be very 'Manhattan apartment' – great if you have the confidence and aren't instinctively drawn to crisp white.

It's handy to note that a black kitchen is usually tempered with plenty of contrast – usually in the form of white or timber.

In fact, there seems to be a love affair blossoming with white, black and honey tones. Yes, a black kitchen can be pretty full on, but it can work well in an industrial-style home, for example.

A lot depends on the kitchen's location within the home and its access to natural light, as well as the way you pull all the different elements together.



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