



KITCHEN DESIGN PLUS

Leave Nothing to Chance

BY CATHERINE ROBERTS AND BLAKE HUNSLEY PHOTOS BRUCE JOLLMORE

Renovating the room that is so often the heart of the home can be stressful, especially when homeowners try to do everything themselves. At Kitchen Design Plus, owner and kitchen designer Louise O'Haran takes care of every renovation detail from floor to ceiling, working with clients and KDP's certified drafter and carpenter, Bonnita Mitchell, to plan out every step from start to finish. They consider every element of the kitchen

renovation process well in advance, reducing the stress on homeowners by leaving nothing to chance.

"Starting a renovation, we're really aware of your state of mind," says O'Haran. "It's like preparing to have your first child. You want everything to be perfect and that can be stressful, especially when the unexpected comes up." Fortunately for O'Haran's clients, it's her job to expect the unexpected.

According to Mitchell, professional handling of the complex array of renovation details is just part of the service KDP provides. Another important component is being available as a source of advice and support. "We're accessible," says Mitchell. "We spend the time it takes with a client to answer their questions and concerns with a positive attitude." Taking the time may help clients feel reassured, but it also makes Mitchell's job much

ABOVE Louise O'Haran, owner



easier. "I'd rather be with you one day getting it right, than spend a week fixing something that didn't have to go wrong."

O'Haran and Mitchell have been transforming intricate renovation plans into beautiful finished kitchens since KDP opened in 2009. O'Haran arrived in Halifax after having studied interior design at the International Academy of Design in Toronto and training for seven years with the National Kitchen and Bath Association. Shortly after opening KDP, O'Haran met Mitchell and realized her personality and expertise would be an excellent fit for her fledgling company. Mitchell herself has spent more than a dozen years in the building industry, and brings to KDP an intense knowledge of National Building Code standards and specialized training in 'Aging in Place' design techniques. While their technical skills and design aesthetics may mesh perfectly, it is the interplay between their warm, sunny personalities that makes for an especially warm welcome for first time KDP clients.



O'Haran, an Irish immigrant who arrived in Canada at age 19, bears little trace of an accent but radiates the inviting charm so characteristic of her home country. Having made herself a success in her adopted home, O'Haran now commits herself to helping others overcome adversity. Most recently, KDP celebrated the holidays with a Christmas party that brought in more than \$400 and over 80 kilograms of food donations for Feed Nova Scotia.



Since moving her business from Quinpool Road to Dresden Row, O'Haran has become a fierce ally of her neighbours at the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre. KDP raised almost \$6,500 by hosting a Women of Influence wine and cheese silent auction event, and has added a further \$2,000 in donations to Avalon by offering a \$100 reduction off the price of renovation projects in return for a tax deductible donation to the centre.

Another of O'Haran's impressive efforts in supporting local women in the community has been her founding

of the Women in Trades scholarship, which helped Denise Morgan start her career as an electrician. Morgan, who now hopes to become Nova Scotia's first female electrical inspector, represents a success story that O'Haran is proud to share, and one she is eager to help other women emulate in the future. As a design firm with a high-tech approach to their work, technical expertise is valued highly at KDP. O'Haran believes that ensuring more women are learning these skills can only benefit her business, as well as the community at large.

KDP's employment of state-of-the-art technology includes using a cutting edge software program, 2020, to produce 3-D colour renderings that can provide exact details of a client's project, showing lighting plans, electrical components, tile and cabinetry in incredible detail. The best techniques deserve to be employed using the best materials, which is why KDP works with two of the most renowned quality cabinetry manufacturers in the Maritimes, Glenwood Kitchens and KitchenCraft. Granite and quartz countertops are provided by Cambria, Caesarstone and Hanstone. O'Haran chose these lines in part because they are natural, environmentally friendly and sealed with formaldehyde-free products.

Whether working with a \$5,000 budget or a \$50,000 budget, KDP brings everything a client could need to the project, including the expertise, professionalism, personality, and for the time being even the literal kitchen sink, as all new countertop installations currently include a beautiful Bristol sink free of charge. Learn more about KDP by reading the glowing testimonials on their website, or by dropping in to their 1526 Dresden Row location for a warm and gracious KDP welcome. ■

Kitchen Design Plus
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ABOVE L-R Bonnie Mitchell, architectural drafter; and Louise O'Haran, owner of Kitchen Design Plus during the "Women of Influence" event in support of the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre

PHOTOS on this page by Randall Tomada

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Bonnie Mitchell

