

# Is GRAY Here to Stay?

home & garden

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As with many industries, customer satisfaction is often predicated upon the ability to predict the future. What is the next trend? Will it last? 'And for how long? All legitimate questions that are no less relevant to the design field and, in many cases, even more so. My clients' expectations are no different. And how can I blame them? Who wouldn't want to know whether their kitchen design ideas will fashion a space still desirable in 20 years or that they will not have to paint their walls again next year to keep up with the current trends. The internet and social media aren't helping matters much either. While we have benefited from seemingly unlimited design ideas, trends are coming and going faster than ever before. Identifying the lasting trends has become increasingly challenging.

So what's all this talk over the color gray? Or is it grey? Turn on any HGTV or DIY program and see for yourself. Gray is simply everywhere: furniture, lighting fixtures, carpeting, wallpaper, tile and cabinetry to name a few places. Honestly, I have even seen gray toilets! In my opinion, gray has quickly become the new beige. Do I think it will last forever? No. But I do think it has proven to be the "it" color for the past several years. I think there are great ways to incorporate it into your home without having to gamble on the color's timelessness. Choose a backsplash with gray elements in it or opt for countertops that incorporate shades of gray. Both are less expensive finishes that won't sting your pocket book should you decide to adopt a new "it" color in the future.

If you just can't get enough gray and plan on incorporating all gray kitchen cabinets, maybe sleep on it...over a weekend! I have seen some amazing gray-heavy kitchens over the years. It can be done, but before you take that leap try asking your cabinet designer to draw an alternative plan with gray cabinets utilized more as an accent, such as in the island. You may find electing the lone gray island is enough to satisfy your gray fix. Plus, it will likely extend the longevity of your kitchen's look as well.

When it comes to paint colors, I have to admit I often recommend something from the gray family. When a gray just won't work, I move down the color wheel to colors with gray undertones. Two of my favorite colors that are not true grays are Benjamin Moore's Revere Pewter and Edgecomb Gray. Both colors have an ability to pick up gray tones from accents in the room while pairing better with lighter wood tones present in the home.

So how far along are we in this gray era? For those of you who have already reached gray overload, be prepared for a long road ahead. My magic 8-ball says that while the gray trend won't last forever; its immense popularity and widespread impact on today's design trends lend to a slow fade into the trend archives. In the meantime, try to enjoy the design variations gray has to offer. Remember, it could be worse. The color green seems to be gaining ground in the design community. Anybody interested in a green kitchen?

