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# KITCHEN Confidence

Home renovation experts **RORY MCCREESH** and **BILOTTA KITCHEN & HOME** share the inside scoop on updating your kitchen.

If the best thing you can say about your kitchen is, "It's functional," it may be time for an update. It's easy to be swept away by home design shows where happy couples go from sledgehammering dated cabinets to a fantasy chef's kitchen filled with stainless steel appliances and a massive island in just 30 minutes. The reality is usually far from the reality television. But, with a little preparation, a pre-determined budget, and a knowledgeable team of experts, it is possible to turn a ho-hum kitchen into a welcoming space for eating and entertaining. Duce Construction Corporation president Rory McCreesh explains what you need to know before you dive into a renovation project.

**What are some of the most common challenges New Yorkers run into when designing a new kitchen?**

Designing around and maintaining access to mechanical, electrical, and plumbing services. Also, space is never enough. New York is an incredibly dense city where every single inch has to be maximized—this is achieved through early collaboration between the design team, construction team, and the client. Often there's additional space hidden behind walls and ceilings, but preplanning is key.

An all-white, modern kitchen by Bilotta Kitchen & Home.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILOTTA KITCHEN & HOME

**How do you best handle telling your clients when something just isn't physically possible?**

We tell them the truth as soon as we find out and we're always ready with a plan b and a plan c.

**What are some small updates you can do to keep a kitchen trendy and new?**

Caulking, oiling, and tightening hinges and hardware, re-grouting stone and tile. You can also change out light fixtures, hardware, or plumbing fixtures, or redo flooring and paint.

**What's one difficult renovation challenge you have faced?**

We had to build an 18-month project within 8-months of onsite access. Months prior to starting, we met with every tradesperson and planned and rehearsed every step of the job. We created graphs, time charts and scripts for every trade to follow. By the time the eight months began, everyone knew exactly what to do and when to do it.

**Once your new kitchen is in, how do you best maintain it?**

Basic maintenance, keep things clean, fix chips and scratches right away before water and dirt make it worse. Grease from cooking attracts dirt and will make maintenance hard. Good exhaust and washable materials are also key to keeping everything clean.

**You've also started a company to help with maintenance management—how is it helping homeowners?**

They don't have to source new staff or companies—they trust us and know our staff. Clients don't even need to think about maintenance; it happens automatically. It also helps if they need any new construction services. They can access our highly trained technicians any time for any job. Having a tried and tested reputation gives them confidence. They know we really have their best interest at heart. **DT**

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**B**ilotta Kitchen & Home recently celebrated its 30th anniversary and Jim, Maria, and Regina Bilotta are still as hands on as their dad was when the firm first started. “An anniversary is a good time to reflect back on who we are and what has made us successful so we can continue to capitalize on our strengths and talents,” says Regina.

A carpenter and builder of suburban homes, Jim Bilotta, Sr. launched the business in Mamaroneck, New York in 1985 and with his family, grew it into an international brand with added locations in New York City and Mount

Kisco. The family says it's their emphasis on the five “P’s”— people, product, projects, partners, and performance—that have made the business stand out from the competition. “Every kitchen tells a different story about who lives in the home and how it is used,” says Regina, who advises clients to “think ‘big’ and imagine everything you want in this kitchen because it will become the heart of your home.”

Inside Bilotta's showrooms, clients can find a wide range of products at every budget, for both single-family residences and multi-

unit developments. The company offers their own eponymous line of cabinetry as well as styles from Arcraft, Rutt, and Wood-Mode. “[We] are all in this together with one common goal: to create something beautiful, timeless, classic, and functional for our clients,” says Regina. “With this group we've gathered, you can't miss!”

In addition, Bilotta offers design and execution services. “Our reputation is built on trust,” says Regina. “Our reward is creating kitchens for three generations of the same families!” **DT**  
[bilotta.com](http://bilotta.com)