



S&S Custom Kitchens Reports Shift from Open-Concept Kitchen Trend as Homeowners Seek Zoned Layouts

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S&S Custom Kitchens, a kitchen remodeling company with more than 30 years of experience in Central Massachusetts, is addressing growing homeowner questions about open-concept kitchen design in light of a documented national shift toward more defined, zoned kitchen layouts in 2026. Frank Similia, owner and 30-year veteran of kitchen design in the region, is sharing insights on what this evolution means for homeowners considering renovations in older New England homes.

Industry data from the National Kitchen & Bath Association and Houzz reveals that fully open-concept kitchens, which have dominated residential design for two decades, are giving way to layouts that balance openness with purposeful zoning. Homeowners and designers cite noise control, storage limitations, and the constant visibility of kitchen clutter as primary reasons for reconsidering completely open floor plans.

The trend toward "zoned open" layouts preserves visual connection between rooms while incorporating

strategic separations through partial walls, peninsula counters, or architectural elements that define spaces without fully enclosing them. This design evolution reflects changing lifestyle needs as more people work from home and seek flexibility in their living spaces.

In Central Massachusetts, this national trend carries additional complexity due to the region's housing stock. Many homes built between the 1950s and 1990s feature load-bearing walls where homeowners envision open spaces, making structural assessment critical before any renovation decisions. Understanding both the architectural limitations and design possibilities requires expertise specific to New England construction methods.

"Homeowners are increasingly asking about alternatives to fully open kitchens, particularly those who have lived with open layouts and experienced the drawbacks firsthand," said Frank Similia, owner of S&S Custom Kitchens. "In our region, where many homes have structural walls that cannot simply be removed, we help clients explore creative solutions that achieve the feeling of openness while maintaining necessary support structures and adding back some of the storage and privacy they miss." The cost to remodel a kitchen with these considerations varies significantly based on structural requirements and design choices.

Similia, who began his career as a cabinet installer before establishing his design business, brings hands-on knowledge of how older homes were constructed and what modifications are feasible. His experience working inside hundreds of regional homes provides practical perspective on achieving modern functionality within existing structural constraints.

"The key is understanding what aspects of openness matter most to each family," Similia explained. "Some clients want visual connection for supervising children, while others prioritize natural light flow or easier entertaining. By identifying these priorities, we can create designs that deliver the benefits of open layouts without sacrificing the defined spaces that make kitchens functional."

Homeowners researching renovation options can find detailed project examples and planning resources through S&S Custom Kitchen videos that demonstrate various layout transformations in actual Central Massachusetts homes.

https://youtube.com/shorts/I7Ok_PL6wKM?si=-qAT3sxDLEj3C_nx

S&S Custom Kitchens has operated in Central Massachusetts for over three decades, specializing in custom kitchen and bathroom design and remodeling. The company provides comprehensive renovation services including kitchen design, custom cabinetry, countertop installation, and complete kitchen transformations for homeowners throughout the region.

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S&S Custom Kitchens

S&S Custom Kitchens brings hands-on experience from years of installing, remodeling, and even building cabinets into every design. With a Frank the Kitchen guy, a designer who knows the craft from the ground up.

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