



## 15 MINUTES WITH: EUROPEAN KITCHEN DESIGN

*CH+D* PUBLISHER TOM HARTLE VISITS DEGANIT AND HAIM ALBALAK OF PALO ALTO'S EUROPEAN KITCHEN DESIGN, THE EXCLUSIVE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DEALER OF ALNO.

**TH: What changes have you seen in the kitchen industry?**

**DA:** We have seen the kitchen move from casework to furniture. And we've seen the wall come down between the kitchen and the living areas of the home, which has changed the very nature and function of the kitchen. Today's kitchen is designed to encourage all—family, friends and guests—to participate in the preparation and enjoy gathering together.

**TH: How have consumers changed?**

**DA:** Today's consumer has greater access to information than in the past, because of the Internet and television. Clients are more sophisticated, well educated and know what they want when they walk in the door. The biggest change is the need for personalization. They want more choices to reflect the way they live, cook and entertain. Consumer taste is changing from traditional to modern and sophisticated. It's about creating an environment that allows us to experience new ideas and rediscover aspects of our lives that have been lost in the daily rush.

**TH: What factors will impede change in the industry?**

**DA:** The inability to listen to the marketplace and an unwillingness to make an investment in the future. We are very lucky to work with a company such as Alno—it is very forward-thinking and understands fashion. It's one of the few companies pushing the boundaries of the kitchen through design and technology.

**TH: What makes European Kitchen Design so successful?**

**DA:** First and foremost, it's the products and companies that we work with, which are only the best of the best. Second is our commitment to service, excellence and attention to detail.

**TH: What three things would you like to hear from a client?**

**DA:** One: They love their kitchen. Two: They enjoyed the experience they had putting it together. Three: They're going to tell their friends the first two things. ■

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