

Connecticut COTTAGES & GARDENS

WWW.CTCANDG.COM | OCTOBER 2007

Design Inspirations

Couture Fabrics,
Interiors and Products

Exclusive Excerpt of
Bunny Williams' New Book





KITCHEN IQ

Hoodwinked

by Dina Cheney

KITCHEN HOOD DESIGN DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BORING

Q: My husband and I are remodeling our kitchen completely. We've already decided on a 60,000-BTU, 36-inch-wide gas range, and are wondering what type of range hood to pair with it. Functionality is important to us, but so is design. We'd love something unique. Any recommendations?

A: Hood manufacturers seem to be rallying against the perception that their products are a yawn—the plain grilled chicken breasts of kitchen design. Just a few cases in point: Zephyr recently rolled out a line of designer hoods (Padova) that can be customized with mosaic tiles, ribbed glass, Venetian plaster, brass, copper, zinc and stainless steel. Customers can purchase the metal panels from the company and the plaster, glass or tiles elsewhere, and then follow Zephyr's installation video.

Other ultra-stylish hoods abound in the company's collection, including the delicate Trapeze (which resembles a suspended island), the tubular Menhir and Concave, which pairs vibrant color with natural surfaces. In early 2008, Zephyr will introduce low-profile hoods that extend as little as five inches from the wall. These hoods will feature retractable canopies, touch-sensitive controls and customization with stainless steel, magnesium, colored glass, etched glass and even laminated materials such as wheat and fabric.

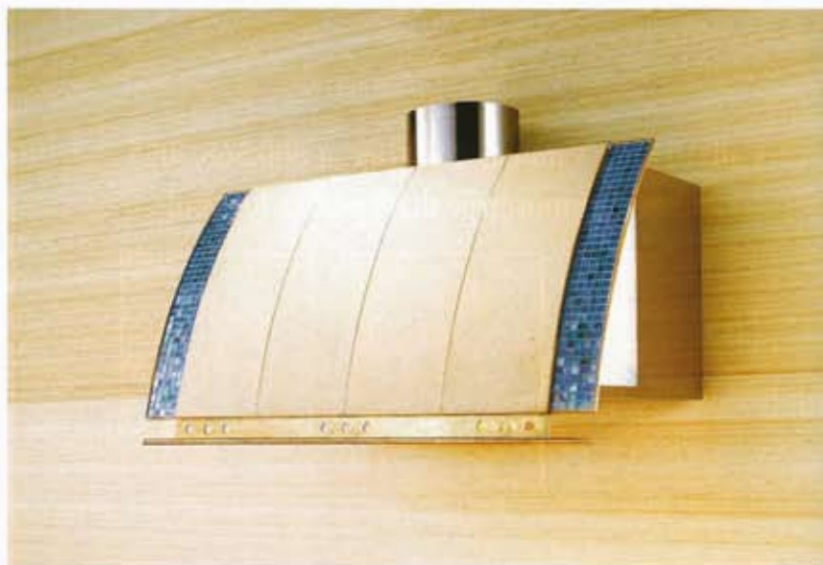
In addition to its more traditional offerings, Best by Broan produces three extremely stylish hoods, including the WC23 (or Waterfall) design. Featuring a curved, tempered green glass canopy and brushed copper or stainless steel external blower, this appliance is modern and gorgeous.

The German company Siemens knows that for many, entertainment trumps adornment. That's why it recently introduced the avantGarde multiMedia Hood, which boasts an integrated 17-inch flat-screen TV, with DVD and CD players. And the 36-inch, chimney-style stainless steel vent hood is attractive and quiet, too. One catch: the product works exclusively with electric or induction cooktops.

Although high-style hoods are easy to come by these days, it's essential to remember the fundamentals. According to Wind Crest Ventilation Hoods, in addition to removing odors, grease and smoke—the latter two of which can cause fires—hoods clear the air of poisonous gases, such as carbon monoxide. Therefore, many experts feel that vent hoods are required for cooktops that use 45,000 or more BTUs.

Of the two main types of vent hoods, updraft and downdraft, the former are much more effective. While updraft hoods are situated above cooktops, downdraft hoods are located directly behind them (most can be lowered into cabinets). In homes without access to an exterior wall, the air is filtered (with a charcoal filter) and then re-circulated. Not surprisingly, this system is the least effective. That's largely because charcoal filters do not remove poisonous gases or smoke, and they also need to be replaced fairly often. In contrast, mesh filters are the most efficient, and louvered filters a fairly close second.

Keep in mind that more powerful cooktops on islands need more powerful, wide, tall and deep hoods; since the air is less restricted



Make it Your Own | An often overlooked appliance, the range hood is now getting its due. The latest hood from renowned designer Fu-Tung Cheng for Zephyr, Padova can be customized with mosaic tiles, ribbed glass or Italian Marmorino plaster. See Resources.

around island cooktops, the blower needs to be super-burly. For this reason, Wind Crest Ventilation Hoods recommends that vent hoods over islands overlap the cooking surface by a minimum of six inches, while wall-mounted products at least equal the width of the cooking surface.

Assets to look for in a vent hood include dishwasher-safe filters, halogen lighting, a 10-minute delay timer (causing the fan to switch off, preventing the removal of too much air once you're done cooking), adjustable ventilation levels, heat lamps for warming food, shelving for herbs, spices and utensils, automated controls, a clean filter indicator—and quietness. Have a question about kitchen design or appliances? E-mail it to KitchenIQ@CTCandG.com. Each month select questions will be answered by professionals.