



*Great Ideas
Come in
Small Packages*

New Finishes For Old Kitchen Cabinets

Scuffed twenty year old oak or white melamine cabinets can be the impetus for a kitchen makeover. However, you may be hesitant to endure a complete destruction of the central gathering spot in your house for two or three months while the renovation is underway. You may also not want to spend over \$40,000 for new cabinetry. Re-facing your cabinets can be completed in a shorter period of time, but the cost will still be between \$20,000-25,000.

If your cabinets are solid wood and in good shape with working hardware and functioning drawer slides, the best investment for transforming the kitchen may be to apply a glaze to the cabinetry at a cost of about \$8,000 *less* than re-facing. Glazing creates an old world patina, giving a sense of history to the space. There are a variety of Old World cabinet finishes that can be achieved with glazing techniques. The finishes can be stenciled with fruit to mimic an Italian villa's kitchen. Or with the addition of some mouldings and gilded decorative trim pieces, the cabinets can have an elegant Louis the 16th effect. Colored glazes applied to an ordinary oak door give the appearance of other woods such as a lustrous red mahogany. Maple or fir cabinets which have a less pronounced wood grain can be transformed into any decorating style by utilizing creative faux painting techniques. White Melamine cabinets can be updated with similar techniques to resemble painted wood cabinets or natural wood cabinets at a fraction of the cost of replacing the cabinets.

The glazing compounds are water based and non- toxic. For glazing, the cabinets do not have to be stripped before the process begins, but a thorough prepping is necessary. The cabinets are first washed with TSP to remove grease, then they are lightly sanded to create an adhesive surface for the primer. (The cabinet doors can be moved off site or into the garage for glazing while their frames are glazed in situ.) After prepping, the cabinets receive a solid base coat of color. Then two or more colors are layered on. This surface is distressed before the glazing compounds are applied. The glazes are transparent colors that allow layers of color to show through beneath the top coat. Another color can be rubbed or brushed on top of the glaze to increase the depth of color. Once the cabinets are sealed with clear coat they will have a durable finish that will last through years of door banging and water splashes.

Written by Jean Cary of Jean Cary Interiors, 650-593-9622