

How to Use Metallic Accents to Warm Up All Those Stainless Steel Appliances in Your Kitchen

They're a smart way to elevate the look of the room.



BY JENNIFER FERNANDEZ SEP 25, 2019



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If the cold look of stainless steel has you swearing off metallic accents in your kitchen—no matter how hot they are right now—think again. There are plenty of creative ways to incorporate metals to temper stainless steel's sleekness. Just ask California interior designer Alison Pickart.

"Since metals are inherent to kitchens naturally, adding warmer metal accents is a way to celebrate the element and elevate the look," says Pickart. "It adds an element of thoughtfulness that feels very custom, even if the metal is used only sparingly." In her own family-friendly kitchen, she opted for decorative metallic mesh for the cabinetry panel inserts instead of the usual Shaker-inspired doors to offset the luster of a marble countertop, chrome hardware, and a stainless steel range. The best part: "Now that a lot of refrigerators are non-magnetized, the metal mesh does double duty, allowing us to post up messages or important pieces of kid art."



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That's not the only unexpected choice when it comes to using metallic accents in your cabinetry. "I also love using metal as a 'foot' detail," says Pickart. "It makes a pop of glitz in an otherwise technical space." She also notes the increasing popularity of metal backsplashes and countertops, from zinc to copper. "A brass backsplash is a super-sexy alternative to tile in small areas like a bar or butler's pantry, and the patina makes it feel like a real 'living finish.'"



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Chicago designer Cari Giannoulis agrees. "Metal can be very sterile looking, but it all depends on the application and finish of it," she says. She often chooses patina-rich unlacquered or brushed versions of the material to warm up chrome or nickel, which she notes for its own warm undertones. "Brass is really big at the moment, but it's going to trend out quickly unless you go for a slightly aged look," she says.

What she's loving right now? "I think it's really chic when you inset metal into a stone countertop. It's this great detail that adds contrast but still feels very organic."

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