

## Choosing for Taste

*From countertops  
to flooring to lighting,  
what was once old  
is new again.*





TGM this year is renovating 2,000 apartment homes spread over several communities at a pace of three to six residences per day.



TGM chooses its interior appointments based on local and regional preferences.

It may be hard to believe, but Formica (not the seemingly highly sought-after granite) is once again trendy for apartment kitchen countertops.

Prospective residents desiring quality appointments—and ostensibly allergic to certain brands that historically have been viewed as second-rate—will no doubt be impressed by the recent evolution in fixtures and materials, now comparable in appearance to their higher-end counterparts and allowing for even more options in renovations.

Countertops, along with flooring and lighting, can produce strong impressions for prospective residents who are comparing available apartment communities.

Staying fashionable in these appointments—from demographic, local and regional perspectives—is critical for TGM, an investment advisory firm that focuses on multifamily communities.

TGM, which holds 32 assets spread across 15 states, is currently undergoing a renovation project of approximately 2,000 units over several communities to be completed in less than a year, performing at a pace of three to six apartment homes per day.

### Believable Replicas

“The greater use of highly advanced replicas of more expensive materials will give an apartment home a more luxurious feel,” Zachary Goldman, TGM Partner & Director of Operations, says. “It can give residents the ‘HGTV’ remodel experience.”

Goldman says the product evolution of Formica “has come a real long way where the word ‘faux’ is no longer needed, because it is granite-like. It’s not faux—you could easily mistake it for granite,” Goldman says.

He says that flooring has evolved substantially with vinyl products. “You really have to get down on your hands and knees to figure



*"I think cabinet hardware has come back in vogue a little bit."*

—Zachary Goldman, TGM



out if it's a grout line in the vinyl or if it's really tile."

Cabinet hardware is another area where trends come and go—only to reappear based on demographic appeal and practicality.

"Removing hardware from cabinets to create a more streamlined look was a popular trend, and then people started getting away from that," Goldman says. "I think cabinet hardware has come back in vogue a little bit. There are all different shapes

and sizes of hardware now that people are interested in looking at."

Goldman says TGM gives strong consideration to its resident demographic and its tastes and living habits.

"When looking at pendant lights over a pass-through kitchen, you have to ask, 'Is this a clientele that is a little bit more classical and still believes in having a decent-sized dining room table?'" Goldman says.

"That pass-through may not be as important to them as it may be to a younger generation that no longer eats at a traditional kitchen table and sits at bar-height stools, where the pendant lights are great for providing architectural interest and functional for eating or doing homework."

Goldman uses RenovationsPlus, a division of Wilmar, as a leading product supplier, finding its vast line of choices improves cost and efficiency to the renovation process.

"You need to have a vendor partner that is capable of keeping up with your supply chain needs," Goldman says. "The last thing an operator wants to do is enter a residence more than once." —P.B.

### **Kitchen Remodeling Trends to Avoid**

Don't want to look outdated? Zillow offers kitchen redesign trends to avoid:

**Farmhouse sinks.** In 2011 and 2012, apron-front kitchen sinks were the rage. Not so much anymore.

**Four-inch backsplash.** In ceramic, porcelain or glass tile, have them reach to the bottom of upper cabinets.

**Appliance garages.** Keeping small appliances behind closed doors was a notion that gained a lot of fans in the 1980s and '90s. This takes up too much space. Consumers today tend to keep oft-used appliances right on the counter. Pull-out drawers help, too.

**Trash compactors.** No need for the smells these might bring.

**Pot racks as focal points.** These dominated from 2009 to 2010, but now detract from open-concept kitchens.

**Colorful appliances.** Stainless is still the king. It fits in with both contemporary and traditional decor. It's today's "neutral!"

— *Forbes*