

# The Evolution of an Indian Kitchen



**Sarbjit**, revered by peers, and representing Fabinteriors, is dedicated to advancing design with unwavering commitment. His innovative approach leaves a lasting impression on each project, showcased in prestigious hotels and celebrity residences, cementing his legacy as visionary designers.

by SARBJIT

Indian kitchens have woven a narrative of evolution from primitive amenities such as outdoor cooking on the floor with coal and wood-fired “Chulha” (a small clay oven) with the family gathered around to dine, to the contemporary era marked by cutting-edge gas and electrical appliances seamlessly integrated into standing counters within the luxury of air-conditioned interiors, where meals are enjoyed at dining tables.

Kitchens in India have undergone a remarkable evolution, adapting to changing lifestyles across different stages. The journey spans from the traditional Clay Chulha to the one in Iron and clay, further to the contemporary era with gas, electrical hobs, and induction plates. Utensils have transformed from clay to materials like copper, aluminum, stainless steel, and cast iron, reflecting advancements in technology and culinary practices.

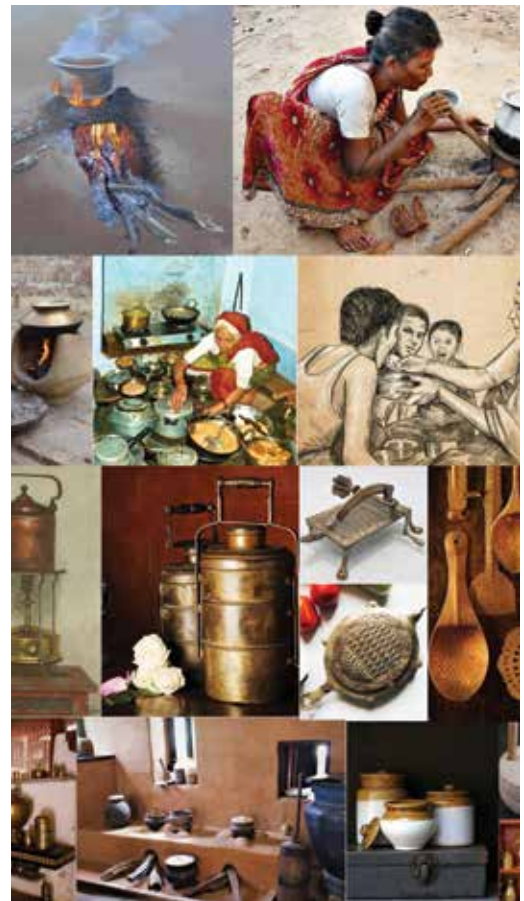
The spatial dynamics of kitchens have also witnessed significant changes from an Outhouse kitchen to an in-house facility. The transition from a naturally ventilated space to a high-tech indoor exhaust and ventilation system, and from occupying a larger cooking space to a compact work space integrated with cold storage, cooking, washing, and pre-prep appliances including compact and adequate storage spaces.

The cooking counters have witnessed a significant transformation, progressing from stone shelves to diverse materials such as concrete, wood, and laminated particle boards. Further advancements have taken









kitchens beyond traditional choices to incorporate sleek stainless steel and glass counters, complemented by luxurious marble, granite, and quartz countertops. These modern cooking spaces are enhanced with overhead storage and utility cabinets, featuring smooth, seamless, and easily maintainable surfaces.

The design of the kitchen, is comparatively, a more focused area by the lady of the house while planning and designing, which as per the Indian lifestyle has to serve a three time meal a day if not more. Including space for a service pantry/laundry, utility, and adequate storage, with a break out space for staff. The requirements of 'Vastu' is a common preference, for orienting the location of the kitchen in the southeast zone of the house with the cooking station preferably facing the east. In addition, there is an emphasis on incorporating adequate sunlight, natural ventilation, efficient lighting, and mechanical exhaust and ventilation, particularly above the HOB (Stove).

The dimension of the kitchen is planned and designed according to the number of family members and their socializing lifestyle. In the Indian context, the kitchen is generally larger in floor area compared to the Western kitchen due to the preference to prepare fresh food daily compared to depending on the prepacked food. With a changing lifestyle from living as a joint family to nuclear families staying in compact apartments, a self-help open kitchen and dining is a preference with minimal support of a helping hand to attend to the supporting household chores.

In anticipation of future requirements, the focus is shifting towards accommodating individuals in serviced apartments that feature a new generation of micro-efficient kitchenettes. As India experiences rapid economic growth and the younger generation plays a pivotal role in propelling the country forward, their lifestyles are intricately tied to the diverse opportunities and placements available across the nation.

Recognizing this trend, a significant portion of real estate developers have proactively embraced the construction of multistoried micro apartments. This forward-thinking approach anticipates the need for compact living spaces, featuring micro kitchens equipped with essential appliances. These kitchenettes are thoughtfully designed to include indispensable appliances such as induction plates, microwave ovens, sinks, fridges, and, in some instances, washing machines. This adaptation reflects a commitment to providing modern, convenient living solutions that align with the dynamic and fast-paced lifestyles of the emerging generation. Indeed, as we progress through time, the evolution of kitchen design becomes imperative to align with the distinct needs and preferences of the end user. **DI**



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Established as Fab Interiors in 1976 by Sarbjit Singh in New Delhi, Fab's legacy spans over four decades and has

pioneered the Indian design industry.