



In With The New: Interior Designer Linc Thelen Predicts That Modern Styles Will Continue To Influence Design Trends In 2020

Versatile designer brings a modern aesthetic and a contractor's expertise to interior design.

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Linc Thelen's passion for art and design began at an early age and developed from watching his father run his own design-build company. Now, the Chicago-based designer owns his own company—[Linc Thelen Design](#)— that focuses on architecture, designing and building. Referred to a “triple threat” by writer Barri Leiner Grant in [Modern Luxury's Interiors Chicago](#), Thelen is known for his ability to create spaces that are timeless, modern and eclectic.

Thelen's wide-ranging expertise makes him a unique individual in the design space: He approaches his projects as a “master builder” by taking on the roles of the artist, designer and

general contractor, resulting in spaces that are built with a distinctive and artistic vernacular.

ESTATENVY spoke with Thelen about the design trends he predicts will shape the mold in 2020.

For the last few years, interior design trends have been moving in a more modern direction, and they will continue to do so in the future, according to Thelen. “Design trends are going in the direction of a clean-lined, contemporary and modern aesthetic,” he said.

So just how does one achieve this modern aesthetic throughout their home?

Thelen recommends maintaining a cohesive design throughout the entire house, rather than varying the design of every room in order to establish a natural flow. According to the designer, the house should tell a story and that story can have multiple characters, but each character should fit nicely into that story. Think of corresponding colors, For example, more neutral and light colors can serve as an overall theme that is accentuated by a bright pop of color on an accent wall or a piece of artwork. Use patterns that have a nice flow to them—while modern designs aren’t pattern-heavy, adding a few accent patterns can really enhance a space, he noted.

Worried you can’t create this aesthetic with kids in the house?

According to Thelen, design goals can be achieved even with kids sharing the space. “Your home can definitely be transitional and clean-lined even with kids,” he said. “Create a space that both allows kids to play with their toys and has areas where you can store the toys afterwards. Homes are meant to be lived in. Having a space that is organized and clean, but also provides comfort, is the key.”

Another trend Thelen predicts will become more popular in 2020, based on his experience as a builder and contractor, is updating one’s kitchen. There will be a lot of people wanting to redesign their kitchens in the future to a more modern look and feel, according to Thelen.

“From a contractor standpoint, we will begin to see kitchen countertops made with materials such as porcelain slabs that aren’t as thick as they previously were,” Thelen said. “With more developed technology that makes it easier to design countertops and backsplashes, we will start to see more designs with larger format tiles and less use of mosaics.”

“I also think we will start to see plumbing fixtures become more exposed, and even painted with a bright pop of color, to really stand out in the kitchen,” he added.