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Courtesy photos: Out of the Woods Cabinets and North Davis Cabinets

A wide range of cabinet styles makes it possible to blend beauty with practicality in any kitchen update. Custom cabinets will capture exactly the ambience you're looking for, whether the family is gathering for a meal or guests are sitting down for a relaxing visit and snack.



## Custom cabinets offer affordability in tough economy

By DEANNE WINTERTON  
Standard-Examiner correspondent

Three local cabinetry companies claim that custom work is just as affordable as the deals you can find at big-box home improvement retailers.

"A lot of people don't realize you can get a custom cabinet for the same price or less (than big box stores)," said Marianne Rusch of Wasatch Custom Cabinets Inc., based in Pleasant View. The company has been serving clients in northern Utah for more than 20 years, with clients as far away as New York and California.

"I have yet to be underbid," by big-box retailers, said Lonnie Rasmussen, of Out of the Woods Cabinets. With 26 years of experience, Rasmussen started his business eight years ago. Now, he serves clients throughout Utah and even California and Idaho.

Installing custom cabinets is one way to make a home truly unique, Rasmussen said.

"Custom cabinets are interesting and innovative," he said. "Everyone wants something different from the next guy."

With the various door styles, woods and finishes available, the combinations are plentiful. Maple, oak, cherry and alder are woods that can have various spinoffs by simply finishing them in different stains and glazes. Rasmussen is seeing a trend back to the dark stain colors.

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Knotty alder and cherry are popular looks in new homes, while oak with a medium stain is finding appeal in remodels, Rusch said.

"Many people with oak in other rooms of the house are trying to carry the look into the kitchen," she said.

Full-extension soft-close drawer slides and hinges are all the rage now. With this new feature, drawers softly glide closed with a simple nudge. The electrical devices enabling automatic doors take the idea further, but are a little more expensive, Rusch said.

But local cabinetry companies are finding more and more that clients are on a tight budget. For the price-conscious, most custom cabinetry companies offer their own line of modular cabinets, complete with a variety of stain options.

"They are nice-looking cabinets without the options," like spice racks, Rasmussen said.

Laminate counter tops are also making a comeback in the cash-strapped economy, Rusch and Rasmussen agreed.

However, at Clearfield-based North Davis Cabinet and Design, granite countertops are in high demand, particularly because the company cuts cost by fabricating its own, said co-owner Wayne Rasmussen. The company buys six colors of granite in bulk to bring the price point down, and now installs granite countertops in 90 percent of its jobs.

"Granite is so practical, but beautiful," Wayne Rasmussen said. "It has been the people's choice in the last three to four years. People want their own unique piece of granite."

North Davis Cabinet and Design boasts 40 years of business. In addition to the company's signature custom cabinetry, the new design center carries flooring, tile, and appliances.

Decorative wood columns provide another popular feature, Rusch said. "For people who don't want to spend a lot, they can spend a little on columns and make a big difference," Rusch said.

At Out of the Woods Cabinets, decorative plate racks and stack moldings are drawing attention. Demand for decorative range hoods and covers is also increasing.

