

EuroCucina 2018 – Overview

These days, the world showcased by EuroCucina is very firmly rooted in the **values of rationality, functionality and linguistic purity**. While furnishings, for the living area in particular, can play the nostalgia or provocation card, the large kitchen manufacturers have opted for the **serenity of perfectly calibrated surfaces**, made from fine materials and boasting increasingly cutting edge technology (internal fittings, hinges and sliding systems). The years in which the public was perceived to be demanding country kitchens, rather than classic or modern ones, are now well and truly over and a contemporary vocabulary has finally taken hold everywhere. The kitchen scene is now expertly built on solids and voids, with **sophisticated geometrical compositions** (see the impeccable Ratio range by Belgian architect **Vincent van Duysen** for **Dada**). There is also a more or less extensive predilection for **totally enclosed surfaces**. In this sense, **Giuseppe Bavuso's** approach to Inside System for **Ernesto Meda** is paradigmatic: a kitchen intended as a summation of functional microcosms ripe for "penetration". Equally, **Gabriele Centazzo's** Logica Celata design for **Valcucine** is a monolith with a surprise! **Scavolini** has come up with an **integral proposal** - Box Life (**Rainlight design** with HOK), a complete living system, with domestic appliances, utility room, fold-up bed and stool concealed behind hidden doors. Basically, the **traditional floor and hanging units system seems to be losing significant ground**, and is now seen as unsuited to expressing the spatial values of endless horizontal surfaces made of stone, steel, Corian or Fenix, or large vertical surfaces composed of technological laminates, coloured glass or precious woods (see **Veneta Cucine's** Lounge model in which oxydised pine is teamed with liquid bronze metal). The **solid effect**, achieved with full height walls, alternates with the **void effect** of the surfaces used for washing or cooking, the latter marked out by highly efficient and visually impactful cooker hoods (see, on this subject, FTK, *Technology for the Kitchen*). Breaking with the traditional floor/hanging relationship has thus led to significant, now-consolidated **variations in size**. In particular, the so-called bases tend to be made both taller, fostering **more ergonomically correct** work positions, and deeper, leaving more room for small accessories. Even the **colourways** respect the general "architectural construction" tone that kitchens have assumed, and thus the dry hue of steel alternates with the colours of the materials themselves, with palettes ranging from warm grey to brown, with pops of old rose and Terranova red. Black and white have lived to fight another day, especially where integrally monochromatic kitchens are concerned, but references to the primary and pastel colours that had characterised the kitchen world some time ago are now few and far between. Needless to say, there are also **contradictions** that serve to buck this general architecturalist trend (material, volumetric and chromatic), but they are driven by particular conditions: see **the Soft Grey & Nicheled Brass** project from **Officine Gullo**, a company traditionally linked with the image of **highly professional kitchens**. Equally, there are projects with special focus on the demands posed by city apartment living: **Atelier Mendini** has come up with AM 01 for **Sanwa Company**, a "real piece of furniture" with curving painted and decorated doors measuring a mere 120x65 cm., designed to be placed in the middle of the room. The **domestic appliance world** has deliberately disengaged from this riot of continuous surfaces although some - technological items such as ovens - are still built-in, while most have been largely



left in full view, in materials and finishes that contrast sharply with the kitchens around them. These elements therefore take on the value of the cockpit in a motor car or the control panel in a spaceship and in this vein, a visit to **FTK**, EuroCucina's parallel exhibition, takes on the connotations of a very real journey into science fiction.

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