

NEW BRUNSWICK KITCHENS

Costs & Pricing

Kitchen renovation costs, budgeting, financing, ROI,
and price comparisons for NB homeowners

27 Expert Answers from Kitchen IQ

newbrunswickkitchens.com/construction-brain

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What percentage of a kitchen renovation budget in New Brunswick goes to labor versus materials, and how does that split change for a \$20,000 versus \$60,000 project?

In New Brunswick kitchen renovations, labor typically accounts for 35-45% of the total budget, with materials making up 55-65%. However, this split changes significantly between a \$20,000 cosmetic refresh and a \$60,000 full remodel due to the complexity and scope of work involved.

For a **\$20,000 kitchen renovation** (cosmetic refresh with new countertops, backsplash, paint, and hardware), the split typically runs 30-35% labor and 65-70% materials. This type of project focuses heavily on material upgrades like quartz countertops (\$3,000-\$4,000), cabinet refacing or painting (\$2,000-\$4,000), and new appliances (\$4,000-\$6,000). The labor is primarily installation work — countertop templating and installation, cabinet door replacement, backsplash tiling, and appliance hookup. Since you're working within the existing layout, there's minimal electrical or plumbing work required.

A **\$60,000 full kitchen remodel** shifts the balance to roughly 40-45% labor and 55-60% materials. This scope typically includes new custom or semi-custom cabinets (\$15,000-\$20,000), premium countertops (\$4,000-\$6,000), complete electrical upgrades (\$2,000-\$4,000), plumbing rough-in changes (\$2,000-\$4,000), flooring (\$3,000-\$4,000), and high-end appliances (\$8,000-\$12,000). The increased labor percentage reflects the complexity — cabinet installation requires precise leveling and alignment, electrical panel upgrades need permits and inspections, and layout changes involve structural considerations.

New Brunswick's labor market affects this calculation significantly. NB contractors charge 15-20% less than Ontario or BC rates, but material costs remain similar since most products ship from the same national distributors. This means NB homeowners see a slightly higher material percentage compared to national averages. A kitchen that might run 50% labor in Toronto could be 40% labor in Moncton due to lower hourly rates.

Seasonal timing also impacts the labor-to-material ratio. Winter renovations (November through March) often see 10-15% lower labor costs as contractors offer better rates during slower periods. However, material costs remain constant year-round, effectively shifting more budget toward materials during off-season projects.

The **age of New Brunswick housing stock** can dramatically alter these percentages. Many NB homes built in the 1960s-1980s need electrical panel upgrades (from 60-amp to 100-amp service) and galvanized pipe replacement during kitchen renovations. These infrastructure upgrades can push labor costs to 50-55% of the budget, even on mid-range projects, because the work is labor-intensive but doesn't add visible value like new cabinets or countertops.

Smart budgeting tip: Always allocate 10-15% contingency for unexpected issues common in older NB homes — outdated wiring behind walls, plumbing that needs updating, or structural surprises when removing cabinets. This contingency typically goes toward additional labor rather than materials.

Need help finding a kitchen renovator to provide accurate labor and material estimates for your specific project? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local contractors who understand the unique challenges of renovating in our Maritime climate.

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Q2

How does the cost of renovating a heritage or character home kitchen in Saint John's uptown compare to a standard renovation?

Renovating a heritage kitchen in Saint John's uptown typically costs 25-40% more than a standard renovation due to structural challenges, code compliance issues, and the need for specialized trades familiar with century-old construction methods.

Heritage homes in Saint John's Trinity Royal and uptown areas present unique renovation challenges that significantly impact kitchen costs. These Victorian and Edwardian-era homes (1880s-1920s) were built with plaster-and-lath walls, knob-and-tube wiring, cast iron or galvanized plumbing, and structural systems that don't align with modern kitchen layouts. What appears to be a \$35,000 mid-range renovation can easily become \$45,000-\$50,000 once you encounter the realities of 100+ year old construction.

Structural and Layout Challenges add substantial costs to heritage kitchen renovations. Original kitchens were typically small service rooms, often in basements or rear additions, requiring significant reconfiguration for modern open-concept living. Load-bearing walls may need engineered solutions to create the desired flow, adding \$3,000-\$8,000 for structural engineering and beam installation. Floor joists sized for lighter historical loads may require reinforcement for heavy quartz countertops and large kitchen islands. Uneven floors and walls require extensive prep work before cabinet installation — cabinets must be perfectly level or doors won't align properly.

Electrical and plumbing upgrades represent the largest cost premium in heritage renovations. Most uptown Saint John homes still have 60-amp electrical panels and knob-and-tube wiring that must be completely replaced before installing a modern kitchen. Upgrading to a 200-amp panel with new circuits throughout the kitchen area runs \$4,000-\$7,000 compared to \$1,500-\$2,500 for electrical work in newer homes. Original cast iron drain lines and galvanized supply pipes should be replaced during renovation — they're likely corroded internally and won't support modern appliances reliably. Moving plumbing in heritage homes often means working around massive foundation stones and accessing cramped crawl spaces, increasing labour time significantly.

Code compliance and permit complexity add both time and cost to heritage projects. Saint John's heritage district has additional review requirements for exterior changes, though interior kitchen work typically follows standard building code. However, bringing century-old electrical and plumbing up to current NB Building Code standards often triggers requirements for additional upgrades throughout the home. Asbestos testing is mandatory before demolition in pre-1980 homes — budget \$500-\$1,500 for testing and potential abatement of floor tiles or plaster.

Material and design considerations also impact heritage renovation costs. Standard cabinet sizes may not fit properly in rooms with uneven walls and non-standard dimensions, requiring custom or semi-custom solutions. Maintaining period-appropriate character while incorporating modern functionality often means higher-end finishes and custom millwork details. However, the good news is that heritage homes' solid construction and quality materials provide an excellent foundation for renovation — once properly updated, these kitchens often outperform new construction in longevity and character.

Seasonal timing is particularly important for heritage renovations in Saint John. Winter work can reveal additional moisture and insulation issues as heating systems work harder. Plan for a 15-20% longer timeline than standard renovations due to unexpected discoveries and the need for specialized trades familiar with heritage construction methods.

Need help finding contractors experienced with heritage home renovations? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with renovators who understand the unique challenges of Saint John's historic properties.

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How much has kitchen renovation cost inflation risen in New Brunswick over the past two to three years?

Kitchen renovation costs in New Brunswick have increased 25-35% over the past three years, with the steepest increases occurring in 2022-2023 before moderating somewhat in 2024.

The most significant price jumps hit **materials and appliances**. Cabinet costs rose 30-40% due to supply chain disruptions and lumber price volatility. A mid-range semi-custom kitchen that cost \$12,000-15,000 in 2021 now runs \$16,000-20,000. Countertop materials saw similar increases — quartz that was \$50-80 per square foot installed in 2021 now costs \$60-120 per square foot in most NB markets.

Appliance packages experienced the most dramatic inflation. A standard four-piece package (refrigerator, range, dishwasher, microwave) that cost \$3,000-5,000 in early 2022 jumped to \$4,500-7,500 by late 2023. Supply chain issues particularly affected higher-end brands, with some homeowners waiting 4-6 months for delivery — delays that became costly when contractors had to return multiple times to complete installations.

Labour costs in New Brunswick increased more modestly — about 15-20% over the three-year period. NB's renovation market remained less inflated than Ontario or BC, where labour shortages drove wages up faster. However, **contractor availability became the bigger issue**. Many established kitchen renovators are booked 3-4 months out during peak season (May through October), compared to 4-6 weeks pre-pandemic.

Permit and inspection fees also crept up 10-15% across most NB municipalities, though these represent a small portion of total project costs. More significantly, **electrical panel upgrades** — necessary in many older NB homes — increased from \$1,200-2,500 to \$1,500-4,000 due to material shortages and increased demand.

The **good news for 2024-2025** is that material costs have stabilized somewhat. Lumber prices dropped from their 2022 peaks, and appliance supply chains normalized. However, prices haven't returned to 2021 levels and likely won't. Most contractors are quoting projects with 60-90 day material price protection, compared to 30 days previously.

Practical budgeting advice: If you were planning a \$30,000 kitchen renovation based on 2021 pricing, budget \$38,000-42,000 for the same scope today. Get multiple quotes quickly once you're ready to proceed — material prices can still shift with little notice, and the best contractors book up fast during renovation season.

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How much does a full kitchen renovation cost in Moncton NB?

A full kitchen renovation in Moncton typically costs between \$25,000 and \$75,000, depending on the scope of work, materials selected, and whether layout changes are involved. The Greater Moncton area — including Riverview and Dieppe — benefits from a competitive contractor market and proximity to major kitchen suppliers, which helps keep costs reasonable compared to more remote parts of the province.

For a **cosmetic refresh** that keeps the existing layout intact — think new countertops, painted cabinets, updated backsplash, and fresh hardware — expect to spend \$12,000 to \$20,000. This is the most budget-friendly option and works well in homes where the cabinet boxes are still solid and the layout functions well. A **mid-range renovation** that includes new semi-custom cabinets, quartz countertops, LVP flooring, and a mid-range appliance package typically lands between \$25,000 and \$45,000. This is the sweet spot for most Moncton homeowners looking to modernize a dated kitchen from the 1980s or 1990s.

If you're planning a **high-end remodel** with custom cabinetry, premium quartz or granite countertops, layout changes, and high-end appliances, budget \$50,000 to \$75,000 or more. Full gut renovations that involve structural changes — such as removing a load-bearing wall for an open-concept layout — can push past \$75,000 to \$100,000+, especially when you factor in engineering fees, permits, electrical panel upgrades, and plumbing rough-in work.

What Drives Costs in Moncton

Cabinets represent the single largest expense, typically 30-40% of your total budget. Stock cabinets run \$5,000 to \$10,000, semi-custom \$10,000 to \$18,000, and full custom \$18,000 to \$25,000+. Countertops are the second major line item — laminate at \$20-45 per square foot installed versus quartz at \$60-120 per square foot. Don't forget to budget for demolition and disposal (\$1,000 to \$3,000), which homeowners often overlook.

One important consideration for Moncton's older housing stock: many homes built before 1980 have 60-amp electrical panels, galvanized plumbing, or even knob-and-tube wiring. Discovering these during renovation adds \$1,500 to \$4,000+ for an electrical panel upgrade and another \$1,500 to \$4,000 if plumbing needs replacing. A good contractor will flag these issues during the quoting phase.

NB labour rates run 15-20% lower than Ontario or BC, which means your dollar stretches further here. Material costs are roughly the same since they ship from the same distributors, but the labour savings mean total renovation costs in Moncton are typically 10-15% below the national average.

Timing and Next Steps

Moncton contractors are busiest May through October, so booking by March or April for a summer start date is wise. Winter renovations (November through March) can save 10-15% on labour as contractor availability improves. Always get at least three detailed quotes — pricing in Moncton varies 30-40% between contractors for identical scope. Need help finding a kitchen renovator? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local contractors for free estimates on your project.

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Q5

How much do custom kitchen cabinets cost in Fredericton NB?

Custom kitchen cabinets in Fredericton typically cost \$18,000 to \$25,000 or more, depending on the size of your kitchen, wood species, door style, and finish. This includes design, fabrication, and professional installation. Fredericton is home to several skilled local cabinet shops, and choosing a local builder means your cabinets are built to the exact dimensions of your kitchen — no filler strips, no compromises on layout.

The appeal of custom cabinets comes down to three things: they're built to fit your exact space, you choose every detail from wood species to hardware, and the construction quality is generally superior to factory-built alternatives. For a typical Fredericton kitchen with 20 to 25 linear feet of cabinetry, custom work runs \$800 to \$1,200+ per linear foot. A smaller galley kitchen might come in closer to \$15,000, while a large open-concept kitchen with an island, pantry wall, and specialty storage can push past \$30,000.

Wood species significantly affects price. Maple and birch are the most common and affordable choices for custom NB cabinets, while cherry and walnut command a premium. Painted MDF-core doors have become increasingly popular because they provide a perfectly smooth finish and handle New Brunswick's humidity swings better than some solid wood options. In fact, MDF-core with a painted finish is considered the best mid-range choice for NB's climate — solid wood can shrink and crack during dry winter months when forced-air heating drops indoor humidity to 15-25%.

How Custom Compares to Other Options

To put the investment in context: **stock cabinets** from big box stores cost \$5,000 to \$10,000 but come in limited sizes, requiring filler pieces and compromises on layout. **Semi-custom cabinets** run \$10,000 to \$18,000 and offer more size and finish flexibility with a 4 to 8 week lead time. Custom cabinets take longer — typically 8 to 16 weeks from design approval to installation — but you get exactly what you want.

Fredericton's older housing stock is worth considering here. Many homes in neighbourhoods like Skyline Acres, Lincoln Heights, or the Northside have kitchens from the 1970s and 1980s with non-standard dimensions, uneven walls, and quirky layouts. Custom cabinets solve these problems elegantly because they're built to your actual measurements rather than factory standard sizes.

One important caution: avoid thermofoil cabinet doors if you're investing in custom cabinetry. NB's dry winter air causes thermofoil to delaminate within 5 to 10 years, and that's a disappointing outcome on a \$20,000+ investment. Stick with painted MDF, natural wood with a quality lacquer finish, or wood veneer over a stable substrate.

Fredericton contractors are busiest from May through October, so if you're planning a kitchen renovation with custom cabinets, start the design process by January or February. This gives your cabinet maker time to build during the quieter winter months and have everything ready for a spring or early summer install. Get at least three quotes — pricing in Fredericton varies 30-40% between shops for comparable quality. New Brunswick Kitchens can help match you with local kitchen renovators for free estimates on your project.

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Q6

What is the ROI of a kitchen renovation for NB homeowners?

Kitchen renovations in New Brunswick typically return 60-80% of their cost at resale, with mid-range renovations offering the best ROI and over-improvements in lower-value neighbourhoods carrying the highest risk of loss. The kitchen remains the single most impactful room for home resale value — real estate

professionals across Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John consistently report that an updated kitchen is the first thing buyers notice.

The key to maximizing ROI in New Brunswick's real estate market is matching your renovation investment to your home's value and neighbourhood. A \$40,000 mid-range kitchen renovation in a Moncton home valued at \$300,000 to \$400,000 will likely return \$28,000 to \$32,000 at resale — roughly 70-80%. That same \$40,000 spent on a home valued at \$180,000 in a rural area may only return \$20,000 to \$24,000 because there's a ceiling on what buyers will pay in that market regardless of kitchen quality.

Mid-range renovations (\$25,000 to \$45,000) offer the strongest ROI in NB. This typically includes semi-custom cabinets, quartz countertops, LVP flooring, subway tile backsplash, and a mid-range appliance package. These updates bring a dated kitchen into the current decade without over-capitalizing. **Cosmetic refreshes (\$12,000 to \$20,000)** — painting cabinets, replacing countertops, new hardware, updated backsplash — offer the highest percentage return because the investment is modest, but the visual impact is significant. A \$15,000 refresh can return \$12,000 to \$14,000 at resale.

High-end renovations (\$50,000+) return a lower percentage — typically 50-65% — because NB's real estate market doesn't command the same premiums as Toronto or Vancouver. Custom cabinetry, premium natural stone, and luxury appliances may not be fully valued by buyers in a market where the average home price is significantly lower than national benchmarks.

Beyond Resale Value

ROI isn't just about resale. If you're staying in your home for 10 to 15 years, the daily enjoyment of a well-designed kitchen has enormous personal value. A functional kitchen with proper storage, good lighting, and modern appliances improves your quality of life every single day. Many NB homeowners renovate their kitchen not to sell, but because they're living with a 30 to 40-year-old kitchen that no longer meets their needs.

There are a few NB-specific factors that affect ROI. Addressing **deferred maintenance** during a kitchen renovation — upgrading a 60-amp electrical panel, replacing galvanized plumbing, or remediating asbestos floor tiles — adds cost that doesn't show up as flashy upgrades but removes red flags that would scare buyers away or reduce offers. These upgrades protect your home's value even if they don't directly increase it.

To maximize your return, focus on timeless finishes over trendy ones. White or wood-tone cabinets, neutral quartz countertops, and classic subway tile backsplash will still look current in 10 to 15 years. Bold colours and dramatic patterns date quickly. Get matched with a kitchen renovator through New Brunswick Kitchens for free estimates that help you plan the right level of investment for your home and neighbourhood.

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How much does a mid-range kitchen remodel cost in Saint John NB?

A mid-range kitchen remodel in Saint John typically costs **\$25,000 to \$45,000**, covering **new cabinets, quartz or granite countertops, updated flooring, backsplash, and a mid-range appliance package**. Saint John's housing stock and cost of living make this price range the sweet spot for most homeowners looking to modernize a dated kitchen without over-investing.

Here's how that budget typically breaks down for a Saint John kitchen. **Cabinets** are the biggest single expense at \$10,000 to \$18,000 for semi-custom — these offer a good balance of quality, customization, and value with a 4 to 8 week lead time. **Countertops** run \$3,000 to \$6,000 for quartz at \$60 to \$120 per square foot installed, which is the most popular choice in the Saint John market. **Flooring** costs \$2,000 to \$4,000, with luxury vinyl plank (LVP) being the top recommendation for NB kitchens — it's waterproof, handles humidity swings, and feels warmer underfoot than ceramic tile during Saint John's cold winters. A **mid-range appliance package** (refrigerator, range, dishwasher, microwave) runs \$4,000 to \$8,000. Add \$1,000 to \$3,000 for backsplash, \$500 to \$2,000 for electrical updates, and \$1,000 to \$3,000 for demolition and disposal.

Saint John has some unique considerations that affect renovation costs. The city has a high proportion of older homes — many in the South End, West Side, and East Side neighbourhoods date from the early 1900s through the 1970s. These homes frequently have **60-amp electrical panels** that cannot support a modern kitchen's demands. Upgrading to a 100-amp or 200-amp panel adds \$1,500 to \$4,000 to your budget but is absolutely necessary and required by the NB Building Code. Similarly, galvanized plumbing in pre-1980 homes should be replaced during a renovation — internal corrosion reduces water pressure and can leach contaminants.

Permits and Timing

Saint John has its own building inspection department, which generally processes kitchen renovation permits faster than the Regional Service Commissions that cover rural areas — expect 1 to 3 weeks for permits involving electrical, plumbing, or structural changes. Permit fees run \$75 to \$300 depending on scope. Cosmetic-only changes (countertops, paint, hardware, backsplash, flooring on the same layout) don't require permits.

Contractors in Saint John are busiest May through October. Booking by March or April gives you the best selection of contractors for a summer start date. If your schedule is flexible, winter renovations (November through March) can save 10-15% on labour costs as contractor availability improves during the slower season. This can knock \$2,500 to \$5,000 off a mid-range project.

NB labour rates are 15-20% lower than Ontario or BC, so your renovation dollar goes further in Saint John than in most Canadian cities. Always get at least three detailed quotes — pricing varies 30-40% between Saint John

contractors for identical work. New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local kitchen renovators for free estimates on your project.

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Q8

What is the average cost of kitchen backsplash installation in New Brunswick?

Kitchen backsplash installation in New Brunswick costs \$1,000 to \$5,000 for a typical kitchen, depending on the material chosen and the area to be covered. Most kitchens have 25 to 40 square feet of backsplash area, measured from the countertop surface to the bottom of the upper cabinets, plus any areas behind the range.

Ceramic or porcelain tile is the most common choice in NB kitchens, running \$1,000 to \$3,000 installed for a typical area. Within this category, **subway tile** is the most popular and affordable option at \$1,000 to \$2,500 — it's classic, easy to clean, and works with virtually any kitchen style. The timeless 3x6-inch white subway tile with contrasting grout has been the go-to choice in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John kitchens for years, and it still looks fresh.

Glass mosaic tile creates a more premium, contemporary look but costs more — \$2,000 to \$5,000 installed. The higher price reflects both the material cost and the increased labour involved. Glass mosaic tiles require careful handling, special thin-set adhesive, and unsanded grout. The result is stunning, but it's worth considering whether the premium fits your overall renovation budget.

Natural stone backsplash (marble, travertine, slate) runs \$2,500 to \$5,000 installed. An important NB-specific consideration: natural stone is porous and requires sealing, especially in New Brunswick's humid summers when moisture can penetrate unsealed stone and promote mold growth behind the surface. If you choose natural stone, plan on resealing annually.

For homeowners on a tight budget, **peel-and-stick backsplash tiles** are a DIY-friendly option at \$200 to \$600 for materials. These have improved dramatically in recent years and can look surprisingly good, though they don't offer

the same durability or moisture resistance as properly installed tile. This is one of the few kitchen projects that's genuinely suitable for DIY — no special tools required and mistakes are easily fixed.

What Affects the Price

Beyond material choice, several factors influence your final cost. **Layout complexity** matters — a simple straight run behind a countertop is much faster to install than an area with many outlets, switches, and window openings that require precise cutting. **Pattern choices** like herringbone or chevron take significantly more labour than a standard brick pattern, adding 20-30% to installation costs. **Full-height backsplash** (counter to ceiling) is trending in NB kitchens and roughly doubles the material and labour compared to a standard 18-inch height.

Proper installation requires removing the old backsplash, preparing the wall surface, applying waterproof membrane in areas near the sink, setting tiles with appropriate thin-set, and grouting. While backsplash seems straightforward, poor installation leads to tiles falling off, grout cracking, and moisture getting behind the surface — hire a professional for tile installation to ensure it's done right. Get matched with a kitchen renovator through New Brunswick Kitchens for free estimates.

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Q9

Can I finance a kitchen renovation in Moncton NB and what are the options?

Yes, there are several ways to finance a kitchen renovation in Moncton, including home equity lines of credit (HELOCs), personal loans, contractor financing plans, and government programs. Most NB homeowners use a combination of savings and one financing method, and the best option depends on your home equity, credit score, and renovation budget.

A **home equity line of credit (HELOC)** is the most popular financing option for Moncton kitchen renovations. You borrow against the equity in your home at rates significantly lower than personal loans — typically prime + 0.5% to 2%. For a \$30,000 to \$45,000 mid-range kitchen renovation, a HELOC offers the lowest monthly payments and the

interest may be tax-deductible if you use the Smith Manoeuvre strategy. All major banks and credit unions in Moncton offer HELOCs, including local options like Vestcor Credit Union and UNI Financial Cooperation. You'll need at least 20% equity remaining after the HELOC is set up.

Personal loans through banks or credit unions offer fixed rates and predictable monthly payments, typically at 6-12% interest for 3 to 7 year terms. These work well for smaller renovations (\$12,000 to \$25,000) where the predictability of fixed payments is worth the higher interest rate compared to a HELOC. You don't need home equity, which makes this accessible for newer homeowners.

Contractor financing is offered by some larger kitchen renovation companies and cabinet suppliers. These are typically arranged through third-party lenders and may offer promotional rates — sometimes 0% interest for 6 to 12 months. Read the fine print carefully: deferred interest plans charge all accumulated interest retroactively if you don't pay the full balance before the promotional period ends. That can turn a 0% deal into a 25%+ effective rate.

Government Programs Worth Exploring

The **Canada Greener Homes Grant** and its successors may help offset costs if your kitchen renovation includes energy-efficient upgrades — such as replacing old windows in or near the kitchen, upgrading insulation on exterior walls, or installing an energy-efficient range hood that vents outside. These programs change frequently, so check the current offerings through Natural Resources Canada. New Brunswick also periodically offers **provincial energy efficiency rebates** through NB Power's Total Home Energy Savings Program, which can apply to certain aspects of a kitchen renovation.

For lower-income homeowners, the **NB Department of Social Development** offers the Home Repair Program, which provides forgivable loans for essential home repairs. This typically covers health and safety issues rather than cosmetic upgrades, but if your kitchen has electrical, plumbing, or structural deficiencies, it may qualify.

Credit cards should be a last resort for financing a kitchen renovation due to interest rates of 19-22%. However, some homeowners use a rewards credit card to pay for materials (earning cashback or points) and pay the balance immediately from savings or a HELOC — this is a smart strategy if you have the discipline to pay it off right away.

A practical tip: get your financing pre-approved before you start getting quotes from contractors. Knowing your exact budget helps you make realistic decisions about scope and materials. New Brunswick Kitchens can help match you with local kitchen renovators for free estimates once you've established your budget.

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How much does it cost to move plumbing during a kitchen renovation in NB?

Moving plumbing during a kitchen renovation in New Brunswick costs \$1,500 to \$4,000, depending on how far you're relocating the sink, whether drain lines need rerouting, and the condition of your existing plumbing. This is one of the most significant cost factors when changing a kitchen layout, and it requires a plumbing permit and inspection in every NB municipality.

The cost varies based on what's being moved and how far. **Moving a sink 3 to 5 feet** along the same wall — say, shifting it from a corner to a centre position — is the simplest scenario, typically \$1,500 to \$2,500. The supply lines (hot and cold water) are relatively easy to extend, and the drain line may only need a short extension. **Moving a sink to a different wall or into a new island** is significantly more complex, usually \$2,500 to \$4,000+, because the drain line needs to run across or under the floor, and maintaining proper slope for drainage (1/4 inch per foot) over longer distances requires careful planning.

Island sink plumbing deserves special attention. Running drain and supply lines to a kitchen island means going through the floor, which involves cutting into the subfloor and potentially the floor joists below. In homes with basements (common in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John), this is manageable because the plumber can work from below. In homes built on concrete slabs, it means cutting into the concrete — a much more expensive proposition that can add \$1,000 to \$2,000 to the project.

NB-Specific Plumbing Concerns

Many New Brunswick homes built before 1980 have **galvanized steel plumbing**, which corrodes internally over decades, reducing water pressure and potentially leaching contaminants. If your plumber discovers galvanized pipes while moving your kitchen plumbing, strongly consider replacing all accessible kitchen supply lines with copper or PEX at the same time. Doing it during a renovation — when walls are open — is far cheaper than dealing with it later. This adds \$500 to \$1,500 but eliminates a ticking time bomb.

The plumbing permit process in NB requires a rough-in inspection before walls are closed up. In cities like Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John, the municipal building inspection department handles this with turnaround times of 1 to 3 weeks for the permit and typically 1 to 3 business days for the inspection once work is ready. Rural areas covered by Regional Service Commissions may take 2 to 5 weeks for permits and have less flexible inspection scheduling.

Dishwasher relocation is another plumbing cost to factor in. If you're moving your dishwasher to a new location, it needs a hot water supply line, a drain connection (ideally near the sink drain), and a dedicated electrical circuit. Keeping the dishwasher adjacent to the sink — on either side — minimizes plumbing costs significantly. Moving it to the opposite side of the kitchen can add \$800 to \$1,500.

A practical tip: before committing to a layout change that involves moving plumbing, ask your contractor for a quote on the plumbing relocation separately from the overall renovation quote. This lets you evaluate whether the layout improvement is worth the additional plumbing cost. Sometimes a modest compromise in sink placement saves thousands. Find local kitchen renovation contractors through the New Brunswick Construction Network to get detailed estimates for your project.

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Q11

How much should I budget for kitchen electrical upgrades in New Brunswick?

Kitchen electrical upgrades in New Brunswick typically cost between \$500 and \$4,000, depending on the scope of work. A simple job like adding a few GFCI outlets near the countertop runs \$500 to \$1,000, while upgrading an outdated 60-amp panel to a 100-amp or 200-amp service—common in many older NB homes—will cost \$1,500 to \$4,000.

The biggest factor driving electrical costs in NB kitchen renovations is the age of your home. Homes built in the 1960s through 1980s across Moncton, Saint John, and Fredericton frequently have undersized electrical panels that simply cannot support a modern kitchen. Today's kitchens require dedicated 20-amp circuits for countertop outlets, plus individual circuits for the refrigerator, dishwasher, range or oven, microwave, and garburator. If your home still has a 60-amp panel, plan for the panel upgrade first—it is not optional. Trying to run a modern kitchen on an undersized panel is a fire hazard.

The NB Building Code requires **GFCI protection on all countertop outlets within 1.5 metres of a sink**, and a minimum of **two 20-amp small appliance circuits** serving the countertop area. Any electrical changes—moving outlets, adding circuits, or upgrading the panel—require a permit and inspection through your local municipality. In cities like Fredericton and Moncton, permits typically cost \$75 to \$200 and take one to three weeks to process. If you are in a rural area served by a Regional Service Commission, expect two to five weeks.

Typical Electrical Cost Breakdown

Adding or relocating a single outlet runs roughly \$150 to \$300 per outlet. Installing a new dedicated circuit from the panel costs \$200 to \$500. Under-cabinet lighting installation typically adds \$300 to \$800 depending on whether you choose hardwired LED fixtures or simpler plug-in strips. If your kitchen renovation involves moving the range from one wall to another, you will need to relocate the 240-volt circuit, which usually costs \$500 to \$1,200.

One practical tip: get your electrical quote before finalizing your kitchen design. Many NB homeowners plan their dream layout only to discover that moving the range or adding an island with outlets doubles their electrical budget. A licensed electrician can walk your existing kitchen and identify what your panel supports, what needs upgrading, and where the real costs lie. Always insist on a rough-in inspection before drywall goes up—skipping this step is a code violation and could mean tearing out finished walls later.

Winter renovations in New Brunswick, from November through March, sometimes offer better scheduling availability with electricians, and you may see savings of 10 to 15 percent on labour. If your kitchen renovation is in the planning stages, booking your electrician by March or April for a spring or summer start ensures you are not competing with the busiest season.

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Q12

What does a cosmetic kitchen refresh cost compared to a full remodel in NB?

A cosmetic kitchen refresh in New Brunswick typically runs \$12,000 to \$20,000, while a full mid-range remodel costs \$25,000 to \$45,000—and a high-end gut renovation can reach \$75,000 to \$100,000 or more.

The difference comes down to whether you are working with your existing layout and infrastructure or tearing everything out and starting fresh.

A cosmetic refresh keeps your current cabinet boxes, plumbing locations, and electrical layout intact. You are updating the surfaces and finishes rather than the bones. This typically includes painting or refacing the cabinets

(\$5,000 to \$12,000 for refacing), installing new countertops (laminates at \$20 to \$45 per square foot or quartz at \$60 to \$120 per square foot installed), adding a backsplash (\$1,000 to \$3,000 for ceramic or subway tile), swapping out hardware, and possibly replacing the faucet and sink. The big savings come from avoiding permit-required work—no electrical changes, no plumbing moves, no structural modifications. Cosmetic refreshes are popular across Moncton and Fredericton with homeowners whose kitchens have a solid layout but look dated after 20 to 30 years.

A full remodel is a different animal. At the **mid-range level (\$25,000 to \$45,000)**, you are replacing cabinets entirely with semi-custom options (\$10,000 to \$18,000), installing quartz or granite countertops, new flooring (LVP is the most popular kitchen floor in NB right now at \$2,000 to \$4,000), a new appliance package (\$4,000 to \$8,000), plus electrical and plumbing upgrades to bring everything up to current NB Building Code. This level of renovation usually requires permits for electrical and plumbing changes, adding one to three weeks to your timeline for processing in cities and two to five weeks in RSC areas.

When Each Makes Sense

A cosmetic refresh is the right call when your cabinet boxes are structurally sound, your layout works for how you cook, and your electrical panel and plumbing are adequate. Many 1980s and 1990s NB homes have solid oak or maple cabinet boxes that are perfectly serviceable—it is the cathedral-arch doors and almond laminate countertops that need to go. Refacing with flat-panel painted MDF doors and adding quartz countertops can make a kitchen look entirely new for half the cost of replacement.

A full remodel makes sense when the layout is dysfunctional, the cabinets are falling apart, or the home still has a 60-amp electrical panel and galvanized plumbing—common in pre-1980 homes across Saint John and older Fredericton neighbourhoods. In these cases, a cosmetic refresh is putting lipstick on infrastructure problems.

One important NB-specific consideration: if your home has older plumbing or a small electrical panel, the jump from cosmetic to full remodel may be unavoidable once walls are opened up. Many homeowners in New Brunswick budget for a refresh and discover knob-and-tube wiring or galvanized pipes that must be addressed before anything cosmetic goes on top. Budget a 10 to 15 percent contingency regardless of which path you choose, and always get three or more quotes—NB pricing varies 30 to 40 percent between contractors for identical scope.

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Are HELOC options available for kitchen renovations in New Brunswick?

Yes, home equity lines of credit (HELOCs) are widely available in New Brunswick and are one of the most popular ways to finance a kitchen renovation. Most major banks and credit unions operating in NB offer HELOCs, and kitchen renovations are among the most common uses because they directly increase your home's value.

A HELOC lets you borrow against the equity you have built in your home, typically up to 65 percent of your home's appraised value minus what you still owe on your mortgage. For a New Brunswick homeowner with a home appraised at \$300,000 and \$150,000 remaining on the mortgage, that could mean access to up to \$45,000 in revolving credit—more than enough for a mid-range kitchen renovation (\$25,000 to \$45,000). Interest rates on HELOCs are variable and tied to the prime rate, making them significantly cheaper than personal loans or credit cards. You only pay interest on what you actually draw, which is useful when renovation costs come in stages—deposit to the contractor, cabinets delivered, countertop installation, and so on.

New Brunswick credit unions like the Caisse populaire acadienne (UNI Financial Cooperation) and various local credit unions often offer competitive HELOC rates and may have more flexible qualification criteria than the big banks, particularly for properties in smaller communities like Bathurst, Miramichi, or Edmundston. It is worth getting quotes from both your primary bank and a local credit union.

Practical Considerations for NB Homeowners

Before applying, you will need a current appraisal of your home. In New Brunswick's real estate market, home values have seen steady appreciation in recent years, particularly in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John, which means many homeowners have more equity available than they realize. The appraisal typically costs \$300 to \$500 and is sometimes covered by the lender.

Timing matters for your renovation budget. If you can schedule your kitchen renovation during the winter months (November through March), many NB contractors offer better pricing—savings of 10 to 15 percent are common during the slower season. This means your HELOC dollars stretch further. Combine that with NB's labour rates being 15 to 20 percent lower than Ontario or BC, and a well-planned kitchen renovation can deliver excellent value.

Other financing options worth exploring alongside a HELOC include the **Canada Greener Homes Loan** if your renovation includes energy-efficient upgrades (like an Energy Star appliance package or improved kitchen ventilation), and NB Power's residential programs for qualifying electrical upgrades. Some kitchen renovation contractors in NB also offer payment plans or work with third-party financing companies, though interest rates on those tend to be higher than a HELOC.

A practical approach is to get three or more contractor quotes first to establish your actual renovation budget, then approach your lender with a clear number. This ensures you are borrowing what you need rather than what you qualify for—a distinction that keeps your renovation financially manageable.

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Q14

How much does cabinet hardware replacement cost in NB?

Replacing cabinet hardware is one of the most affordable kitchen upgrades you can do in New Brunswick, typically costing \$100 to \$600 for a standard kitchen with 20 to 35 knobs and pulls. This is a straightforward DIY project that delivers a surprisingly big visual impact for very little money.

The cost breaks down almost entirely into the hardware itself, since installation requires only a screwdriver and possibly a drill. Basic knobs and pulls from big box stores in Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John run \$2 to \$5 per piece. Mid-range brushed nickel, matte black, or brass hardware—the most popular finishes in NB kitchens right now—costs \$5 to \$12 per piece. Premium hardware from specialty kitchen showrooms or online retailers can run \$12 to \$25 per piece or more for solid brass, hand-forged, or designer options.

For a typical NB kitchen with 20 cabinet doors and 10 to 15 drawers, you are looking at roughly 30 to 35 pieces of hardware. At mid-range pricing, that is \$150 to \$420 for the hardware alone. If you are switching from knobs to bar pulls or changing the hole spacing, you may need to drill new holes and fill the old ones with wood filler and touch-up paint—add \$20 to \$40 in supplies for that. If the existing holes do not line up, a cabinet hardware jig (\$15 to \$30) makes drilling precise new holes much easier.

This is firmly in **DIY territory**. You do not need a contractor for cabinet hardware replacement, and paying someone to do it would cost more in labour than the hardware itself. The entire job takes two to four hours for a full kitchen. The only situation where you might want professional help is if your cabinet doors are in poor shape and need repair or refinishing at the same time—in that case, you are really looking at a cabinet refacing project (\$5,000 to \$12,000).

One tip that many NB homeowners overlook: swapping hardware is most impactful when combined with a fresh coat of paint on the cabinets. A painted cabinet with modern matte black or brushed brass hardware looks completely different from the original oak-and-brass-knob combination found in thousands of 1990s New Brunswick kitchens. If your cabinet boxes and doors are structurally sound, new hardware plus paint can transform your kitchen's appearance for under \$1,000 in materials.

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Q15

What is the typical deposit required for a kitchen renovation contractor in NB?

Most kitchen renovation contractors in New Brunswick require a deposit of 10 to 25 percent of the total contract price before work begins, with 10 to 15 percent being the most common range for reputable contractors. On a \$35,000 mid-range kitchen renovation, that translates to \$3,500 to \$8,750 upfront.

The deposit covers the contractor's initial material orders, primarily cabinets and countertop materials, which require payment at the time of ordering. Since semi-custom cabinets have a four to eight week lead time and custom cabinets run eight to sixteen weeks, your contractor needs to place orders well before they show up on your job site. This is a legitimate business need, especially in New Brunswick where many materials are shipped from central Canadian distributors and lead times can be longer than in larger markets.

A healthy payment structure for a kitchen renovation in NB typically looks like this: **10 to 15 percent deposit** at contract signing, **25 to 30 percent** when demolition is complete and materials are delivered, **25 to 30 percent** at the midpoint (cabinets installed, rough-in plumbing and electrical complete), and the **final 20 to 25 percent** upon completion and your walkthrough approval. This staged approach protects both you and the contractor. You should never pay more than the value of work completed plus materials on site.

Red Flags to Watch For

Be cautious of any contractor requesting more than 30 percent upfront or asking for the majority of payment before substantial work is done. In New Brunswick's market, a contractor who needs 50 percent up front may have cash flow problems—a warning sign about their business stability. Similarly, be wary of cash-only requests with no written contract. Every payment should be documented, and the contract should clearly outline the payment schedule tied to project milestones.

Always ensure your contract includes the full scope of work, material specifications, timeline, payment schedule, and what happens if either party needs to make changes. In NB, the Consumer Protection Act provides some safeguards for residential contracts, but a detailed written agreement is your best protection.

Before paying any deposit, verify that the contractor carries liability insurance and WorkSafeNB coverage. Ask for proof of both—a reputable NB kitchen contractor will provide these without hesitation. Check that any required permits (electrical, plumbing, building) are included in the contract scope and that the contractor will pull them, not you.

One practical approach used by many homeowners in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John is to get three or more detailed quotes and compare not just the total price but the payment terms. NB pricing varies 30 to 40 percent between contractors for identical scope, and payment structures vary just as much. A contractor who offers reasonable milestone-based payments is demonstrating confidence in their ability to deliver on schedule.

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How much do NB kitchen renovation contractors charge per hour?

Kitchen renovation contractors in New Brunswick typically charge \$45 to \$85 per hour for general carpentry and renovation work, with specialized trades like electricians and plumbers charging \$75 to \$120 per hour. However, most kitchen renovations are quoted as fixed-price projects rather than hourly, so understanding hourly rates matters mainly for change orders and small add-on tasks.

General renovation labour—demolition, cabinet installation, trim work, flooring—falls in the \$45 to \$85 per hour range across New Brunswick. Rates at the lower end are more common in smaller communities like Miramichi, Bathurst, and Edmundston, while contractors in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John tend to charge at the higher end due to greater demand and higher operating costs. NB labour rates run about 15 to 20 percent lower than Ontario or BC, which is one reason kitchen renovations in this province cost 10 to 15 percent less than the national average.

Specialized trades carry higher hourly rates because of licensing requirements and the complexity of the work. **Licensed electricians** in NB charge \$75 to \$110 per hour and are required for any circuit changes, panel upgrades, or new outlet installations—all of which need permits and inspections. **Licensed plumbers** charge \$80 to \$120 per hour for supply line modifications, drain relocations, or gas line work. **Countertop templating and fabrication** is usually quoted per square foot rather than hourly, but the installers' time on site typically runs \$300 to \$600 for a standard kitchen template and installation day.

The reason most kitchen contractors quote a **fixed price** rather than hourly is that it protects both parties. A detailed quote with a set price means you know your costs upfront, and the contractor is motivated to work efficiently. If you receive a quote that is purely hourly with no cap, ask for a not-to-exceed figure or a fixed-price alternative. Open-ended hourly billing on a kitchen renovation can quickly spiral, especially when hidden issues like galvanized plumbing or outdated wiring are discovered behind walls in older NB homes.

When Hourly Rates Apply

You will most commonly encounter hourly billing for **change orders** during the renovation (you decide to add pot lights or move an outlet after the contract is signed), **small standalone tasks** like installing a new faucet or adding a backsplash to an otherwise finished kitchen, and **time-and-materials repairs** when the full scope cannot be determined until demolition reveals what is behind the walls. For these situations, get the hourly rate in writing before the work starts.

When comparing quotes from NB kitchen contractors, focus on the total project cost rather than hourly rates alone. A contractor charging \$75 per hour who works efficiently may cost less overall than one charging \$50 per hour who

takes twice as long. Always get three or more quotes for your kitchen renovation to understand the true market rate for your specific scope of work.

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Q17

What kitchen renovation mistakes increase costs the most?

The most expensive kitchen renovation mistakes in New Brunswick are changing the layout mid-project, skipping proper planning, and failing to account for the hidden conditions common in older NB homes.

These mistakes can add \$5,000-\$20,000 or more to your final bill, turning a well-budgeted project into a financial headache.

Changing your mind after work has started is the single biggest cost driver. Moving the sink location after plumbing rough-in is complete means tearing out and redoing work, adding \$2,000-\$5,000. Switching cabinet styles after they have been ordered means restocking fees (15-25% of the cabinet cost) and new lead times of 4-8 weeks for semi-custom or 8-16 weeks for custom. Every change order during construction costs more than it would have during the planning phase because you are paying for demolition of completed work plus the new work.

Not budgeting for what is behind the walls catches many NB homeowners off guard. In homes built before 1980, opening up walls commonly reveals galvanized plumbing that needs replacing (\$1,500-\$4,000), knob-and-tube or aluminum wiring that must be updated (\$1,000-\$3,000), inadequate insulation on exterior walls, or water damage and mold from slow leaks. A good contractor builds a 10-15% contingency into the budget for these discoveries, but many homeowners skip this and then scramble when the unexpected appears.

Ignoring your electrical panel capacity is another costly oversight specific to NB's older housing stock. Many homes in Moncton, Saint John, and Fredericton still have 60-amp electrical panels that simply cannot power a modern kitchen with a range, refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave, and multiple small appliance circuits. Discovering this mid-renovation means an unplanned panel upgrade costing \$1,500-\$4,000 and potential delays while waiting for the electrical utility to schedule the upgrade.

Measuring incorrectly or ordering wrong causes expensive problems. Cabinets ordered in the wrong size cannot be returned if they are semi-custom or custom. Countertops templated before cabinets are fully installed and levelled result in poor fit and potential waste of expensive quartz or granite. Appliances ordered without confirming exact cutout dimensions can arrive and not fit the allocated space. These measurement errors typically cost \$500-\$3,000 each to correct.

Skipping permits feels like a savings but can become the most expensive mistake of all. If your municipality or RSC discovers unpermitted electrical or plumbing work, you may be required to tear out finished walls for inspection, pay fines, and redo work to code. When you eventually sell your home, unpermitted work can derail a sale or reduce your property value.

Other costly mistakes include not getting multiple quotes (NB pricing varies 30-40% between contractors for identical scope), paying too much upfront before work is completed, choosing the cheapest materials that need replacing in 5-7 years, and not accounting for demolition and disposal costs (\$1,000-\$3,000). Build your budget with a realistic 10-15% contingency, finalize all design decisions before construction begins, and get three detailed written quotes to protect yourself from the most common budget-busting mistakes.

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Q18

How do I set a realistic kitchen renovation budget for NB?

A realistic kitchen renovation budget in New Brunswick starts with understanding what scope of work you actually need, then building in a 10-15% contingency for the surprises that older NB homes almost always deliver. The good news is that NB renovation costs run 10-15% below national averages thanks to lower labour rates, while material costs remain comparable.

Start by defining your scope. A cosmetic refresh (paint, hardware, backsplash, new countertops on the existing layout) runs \$12,000-\$20,000. A mid-range renovation with new cabinets, countertops, flooring, and appliances costs \$25,000-\$45,000. A high-end remodel with custom cabinets, premium materials, and layout changes typically

runs \$50,000-\$75,000. A full gut renovation with structural changes starts at \$75,000 and can exceed \$100,000. Be honest with yourself about which category your project falls into before collecting quotes.

To build your budget, **break costs into categories** and research each one. Cabinets are the largest single expense, typically 30-40% of your total budget. Stock cabinets run \$5,000-\$10,000, semi-custom \$10,000-\$18,000, and custom \$18,000-\$25,000 or more. Countertops are next at 10-15% of budget: laminate at \$20-45 per square foot installed, quartz at \$60-120, or granite at \$55-110. Flooring for a typical kitchen runs \$2,000-\$5,000 depending on material, with LVP being the most popular and practical choice for NB's climate. Appliances for a mid-range package cost \$4,000-\$8,000. Do not forget demolition and disposal at \$1,000-\$3,000 and design fees at \$500-\$5,000.

The NB Contingency Factor

Budget 10-15% above your planned total for unexpected issues. This is not optional in New Brunswick. The province's older housing stock means renovation surprises are the norm, not the exception. Common discoveries include galvanized plumbing that needs replacing, 60-amp electrical panels that cannot support a modern kitchen (upgrade costs \$1,500-\$4,000), asbestos in floor tiles requiring professional abatement (\$2,000-\$6,000), and water damage behind walls. On a \$40,000 renovation, set aside \$4,000-\$6,000 in contingency.

Get three detailed quotes before finalizing your budget. NB contractor pricing varies 30-40% for identical scope, so comparing quotes gives you a realistic picture of what your project will actually cost in your area. Contractors in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John tend to have competitive pricing due to the larger contractor pool, while rural areas and northern NB may see slightly higher labour costs due to less competition and travel distances.

Timing affects your budget significantly. Booking your renovation for November through March can save 10-15% on labour costs because contractors have more availability during the slower winter season. If you plan a summer renovation, book by March or April to lock in your preferred contractor and avoid rush pricing.

Finally, **separate your wants from your needs** and prioritize accordingly. If your budget is tight, spend on quality cabinets and countertops that you will live with for 15-20 years, and save on elements that are easy to upgrade later like hardware, lighting, and backsplash. New Brunswick Kitchens can help you connect with local contractors who will provide detailed quotes matched to your budget and scope.

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What is the cost difference between DIY and contractor kitchen reno in NB?

A full DIY kitchen renovation in New Brunswick can save 30-50% on labour costs compared to hiring a contractor, but the savings come with significant trade-offs in quality, time, and risk that most homeowners underestimate. For a mid-range kitchen renovation that costs \$25,000-\$45,000 with a contractor, a DIY approach might bring the total to \$15,000-\$25,000 in materials alone, but the final result depends entirely on your skill level.

Labour typically represents 35-45% of a kitchen renovation budget in NB. On a \$40,000 project, that means roughly \$14,000-\$18,000 goes to labour. That is the theoretical maximum you could save by doing everything yourself. However, certain tasks legally require licensed professionals in New Brunswick regardless of your DIY ambitions. Any electrical circuit changes require a permit and licensed electrician (\$500-\$4,000 depending on scope). Plumbing rough-in modifications require a licensed plumber (\$1,500-\$4,000). Gas line connections require a licensed gas fitter. Structural changes require an engineer and permitted contractor. Even the most ambitious DIY renovator must budget for these professional costs.

Where DIY savings are real and practical includes demolition (\$500-\$1,500 saved), painting cabinets (\$1,000-\$2,500 saved), installing hardware (\$200-\$400 saved), installing LVP flooring (\$1,000-\$2,000 saved if you have experience), and simple backsplash installation (\$500-\$1,500 saved). These tasks have a lower risk of costly mistakes and are within reach for a handy homeowner with good tools and patience.

Where DIY gets expensive when it goes wrong is cabinet installation, countertop work, and tile. Installing cabinets requires them to be perfectly level and plumb. If they are off even slightly, doors will not align, drawers will not close properly, and countertops will not sit flat. Fixing improperly installed cabinets often costs more than having them professionally installed in the first place. Quartz and granite countertops weigh 15-20 pounds per square foot, require specialized tools for cutting, and crack if mishandled. A ruined \$4,000 countertop slab eliminates any labour savings instantly.

The hidden cost of DIY is time. A professional crew completes a mid-range kitchen renovation in 3-6 weeks. A homeowner doing evenings and weekends will take 3-6 months for the same scope, and that is assuming no major mistakes. During that time, you are living without a functional kitchen. In NB's long winters, the inconvenience of doing dishes in a bathroom sink for months is not trivial.

The most cost-effective approach for most NB homeowners is a **hybrid strategy**: do the demolition, painting, hardware installation, and simple flooring yourself, then hire professionals for cabinets, countertops, electrical, and plumbing. This typically saves \$3,000-\$6,000 on a mid-range renovation while ensuring the critical elements are done correctly. Talk to your contractor about this option, as many NB renovators are happy to work alongside homeowners who handle the simpler tasks, and it keeps the overall project cost down without sacrificing quality

where it matters most.

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Q20

How much does kitchen demolition cost in New Brunswick?

Kitchen demolition in New Brunswick typically costs \$1,000-\$3,000 for a standard kitchen, covering labour, dumpster rental, and disposal fees. The exact cost depends on your kitchen's size, the materials being removed, and whether any hazardous materials like asbestos are present.

A **basic demolition** of a standard NB kitchen (removing cabinets, countertops, backsplash, flooring, and fixtures) runs \$1,000-\$2,000 when done by a contractor. This includes 1-2 days of labour for a two-person crew and hauling debris to a dumpster. A **more complex demolition** that involves removing built-in appliances, tearing out walls, or dealing with difficult materials like tile set in mortar over plywood pushes the cost to \$2,000-\$3,000. If you are doing a full gut renovation that includes removing portions of drywall to access plumbing and electrical, expect the higher end of that range.

Dumpster rental is usually the biggest single cost within demolition. In Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John, a 10-yard dumpster (sufficient for most kitchen demos) costs \$350-\$600 including delivery, pickup, and disposal fees based on weight. A 20-yard bin runs \$500-\$800 and is needed only for larger kitchens or when you are gutting a kitchen plus adjacent rooms. Some contractors include dumpster rental in their demolition quote, while others charge it separately, so ask for clarification.

Hazardous material removal is where demolition costs can spike significantly. If your NB home was built before 1990 and has 9"x9" floor tiles, there is a strong chance they contain asbestos. Professional asbestos abatement adds \$2,000-\$6,000 to your demolition costs, as it requires certified abatement workers, containment with poly sheeting and negative air pressure, HEPA filtration, and proper disposal at an approved facility. Testing before demolition costs just \$30-\$75 per sample and should always be done in older NB homes. Skipping the test and having your contractor break up asbestos tiles unknowingly creates a health hazard and potential WorkSafeNB

violation.

DIY demolition is one area where homeowners can save real money. If you handle the demolition yourself, your main cost is the dumpster rental (\$350-\$600) plus basic tools like a pry bar, reciprocating saw, and safety equipment (dust mask, safety glasses, work gloves). This can save \$500-\$1,500 in labour. However, you must shut off water, electrical, and gas to the kitchen before starting, and you should not disconnect gas lines yourself. Leave any suspected hazardous materials for professionals.

When getting quotes from NB kitchen renovation contractors, ask whether demolition and disposal are included in their price or quoted separately. Some contractors prefer to handle demo themselves so they can inspect the condition of walls, subfloor, plumbing, and wiring as they go, catching hidden issues before new materials are installed. Others are happy to let homeowners do the demo to reduce the overall project cost. Either way, make sure the demolition scope and disposal costs are clearly defined in writing before work begins.

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Q21

What hidden costs should I expect in a NB kitchen renovation?

Hidden costs in a New Brunswick kitchen renovation typically add 15-25% to your original budget, and the biggest surprises come from what's behind the walls rather than what's on display. Planning for these extras from the start prevents budget shock and mid-project stress.

The most common hidden cost in NB homes is **electrical panel upgrades**. Many homes built in the 1960s through 1990s still have 60-amp panels, which simply cannot power a modern kitchen with a range, dishwasher, refrigerator, microwave, and countertop outlets. Upgrading to 100-amp or 200-amp service runs \$1,500-\$4,000 and is non-negotiable if your panel is undersized. On top of that, NB Building Code requires a minimum of two 20-amp small appliance circuits for countertop outlets plus dedicated circuits for each major appliance — if your current wiring doesn't meet code, it must be brought up to standard during the renovation.

Plumbing surprises are the second most expensive hidden cost. If your Fredericton or Saint John home was built before 1980, there's a good chance you have galvanized steel pipes. These corrode internally over decades, reducing water pressure and potentially leaching lead into your water. Replacing galvanized plumbing during a kitchen renovation adds \$2,000-\$5,000 but is far cheaper than tearing out your new kitchen later. Moving a sink to a new location adds \$1,500-\$4,000 for extending supply and drain lines.

Behind-the-Wall Surprises

Older NB homes often contain **asbestos in floor tiles and adhesive** (9x9-inch tiles from the 1950s-1970s are a red flag) and **knob-and-tube wiring** in the walls. Asbestos abatement runs \$1,500-\$4,000 depending on the area involved, and it must be handled by a licensed abatement contractor — you cannot legally remove it yourself. Knob-and-tube rewiring for a kitchen typically costs \$2,000-\$5,000.

Structural discoveries also catch homeowners off guard. That wall you want to remove for an open-concept layout? If it's load-bearing, you'll need an engineer (\$500-\$1,500 for drawings) plus a beam and post installation (\$3,000-\$8,000). Subfloor damage from old leaks around dishwashers and sinks is another common find, adding \$500-\$2,000 for repair or replacement.

Don't overlook the **soft costs** that add up quickly: demolition and disposal runs \$1,000-\$3,000, building permits cost \$75-\$300 depending on your municipality, and design fees range from \$500-\$5,000 if not included in your contractor's quote. Temporary meals during renovation — when your kitchen is out of commission for 4-8 weeks — can easily add \$1,000-\$2,000 to your household expenses.

Appliance delivery delays are a hidden cost unique to New Brunswick's geography. Being farther from distribution centres means 4-8 week lead times are standard, and delays can stall your entire project. If your contractor's crew has to leave and come back, you may face remobilization charges of \$500-\$1,500.

The smartest approach is to build a **contingency fund of 15-20% above your quoted price** before the first hammer swings. On a \$40,000 renovation, that means setting aside \$6,000-\$8,000 for surprises. Get three or more quotes from local contractors — NB pricing can vary 30-40% for identical scope — and ask each one specifically about their process for handling hidden conditions. A good contractor will walk you through the most likely surprises for your home's age and construction type before you sign a contract.

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How do NB property assessments change after a kitchen renovation?

A kitchen renovation in New Brunswick will increase your property assessment by Service New Brunswick (SNB), though typically not dollar-for-dollar with your renovation spending. Most homeowners see an assessment increase of 50-75% of their renovation cost, which translates to higher annual property tax — something worth factoring into your long-term budget.

Service New Brunswick reassesses properties on a regular cycle, and any building permits pulled for your kitchen renovation will flag your property for review. If your renovation involved electrical, plumbing, or structural work that required a permit through your municipality or Regional Service Commission, SNB will eventually learn about the upgrade. Even if your renovation was purely cosmetic and didn't require permits, a future assessment or sale will capture the improved value.

How Assessments Work in NB

SNB uses a **market-value approach**, comparing your property to recent sales of similar homes in your area. A \$40,000 mid-range kitchen renovation in Moncton might add \$20,000-\$30,000 to your assessed value, while the same renovation in a rural area might add somewhat less because the local housing market supports lower sale prices. In cities like Fredericton, Saint John, and Moncton, kitchen renovations tend to recover more value because buyers in those markets specifically look for updated kitchens.

The **tax impact** depends on your municipality's tax rate. NB property tax rates typically range from \$1.20 to \$1.80 per \$100 of assessed value (combining municipal and provincial portions). If your assessment increases by \$25,000, that translates to roughly \$300-\$450 per year in additional property tax. This is an ongoing annual cost that homeowners often forget to budget for.

That said, kitchens consistently rank as one of the **highest-ROI renovations** in New Brunswick. A well-executed mid-range kitchen renovation recoups 60-80% of its cost at resale, and in competitive markets like Moncton's current housing environment, a modern kitchen can be the deciding factor for buyers choosing between similar homes. Premium renovations (\$50,000+) tend to recover a lower percentage but still add substantial market value.

To minimize assessment surprises, consider the timing of your renovation relative to SNB's assessment cycle. You can also **appeal your assessment** if you believe the increase is excessive — SNB has a formal appeal process with a filing deadline each year (typically spring). Keep all receipts and a detailed scope of work, as this documentation helps establish the actual cost versus the assessed value increase.

One practical tip: cosmetic-only renovations that don't require permits — such as painting cabinets, replacing hardware, installing new countertops on the existing layout, or adding a backsplash — still improve your home's

market value but are less likely to trigger an immediate reassessment. This doesn't mean you should skip permits on work that requires them, but it's worth knowing that a \$15,000 cosmetic refresh can deliver excellent value without the same assessment bump as a \$50,000 gut renovation.

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Q23

What is the cheapest way to update a kitchen in NB?

The cheapest way to update a kitchen in New Brunswick is a cosmetic refresh that keeps your existing layout, cabinets, and plumbing in place — budget \$2,000-\$8,000 depending on how many elements you tackle. The moment you move plumbing, electrical, or walls, costs jump dramatically, so working with what you have is the key to an affordable transformation.

The single highest-impact change for the lowest cost is **painting your existing cabinets**. This is a DIY-friendly project if you do it properly: clean with TSP, sand thoroughly, apply a bonding primer (Zinsser BIN or STIX), then two coats of a quality cabinet paint like Benjamin Moore Advance. Total material cost is \$200-\$500 for a typical NB kitchen. Pair that with new hardware — modern handles and pulls run \$3-\$8 each, so outfitting 30 cabinets and drawers costs \$90-\$240. Together, paint and hardware can make 1980s oak cabinets look completely current for under \$700 in materials.

Replacing your countertops on the existing layout is the next best bang for your dollar. Laminate countertops installed run \$20-\$45 per square foot, which means a standard 30-40 square foot kitchen countertop costs \$600-\$1,800 installed. Today's laminates look dramatically better than older styles, and brands like Formica and Wilsonart offer convincing stone and quartz patterns. If you want a step up, butcher block at \$40-\$70 per square foot installed adds warmth, though in New Brunswick's humid summers you'll need to oil it every 3-6 months and avoid installing it directly adjacent to the sink.

A **peel-and-stick backsplash** is another affordable upgrade you can do yourself for \$100-\$400 in materials. It won't fool a contractor up close, but from normal viewing distance modern peel-and-stick tiles look surprisingly good and are completely removable if you change your mind later. For a more permanent upgrade, a simple subway tile backsplash professionally installed runs \$1,000-\$2,500.

Other Budget-Friendly Updates

Replacing your kitchen faucet is a small change with outsized visual impact — a modern brushed nickel or matte black faucet costs \$150-\$400 and is a reasonable DIY project if your shut-off valves are accessible. New **light fixtures** (\$100-\$500) and **under-cabinet LED strip lighting** (\$50-\$150 for plug-in strips) brighten up the space and make everything else look newer.

For flooring, **luxury vinyl plank (LVP)** is the most affordable installed option at \$2,000-\$4,000 for a kitchen. It's waterproof, handles NB's humidity swings well, and many click-lock products are DIY-installable over existing floors if the subfloor is level.

Winter renovations in New Brunswick — November through March — can save you 10-15% on labour costs because contractors have more availability. For a cosmetic refresh, this timing works perfectly since you're not dealing with structural work that's affected by cold weather. Get at least three quotes even for smaller projects, because NB contractor pricing varies 30-40% for the same scope of work.

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Q24

How do I save money on a kitchen renovation without sacrificing quality?

The most effective way to save money on a New Brunswick kitchen renovation without sacrificing quality is to keep your existing kitchen layout intact and invest selectively in the materials that matter most. Moving plumbing and electrical is where budgets explode — keeping the sink, stove, and refrigerator in their current positions can save \$5,000-\$15,000 compared to a layout change.

Start with a clear **priority hierarchy**. Cabinets and countertops dominate the visual impact of any kitchen, so put your best dollars there. Spend less on items that are easy to upgrade later, such as hardware, lighting, and backsplash. A common smart strategy is pairing semi-custom cabinets (\$10,000-\$18,000) with quartz countertops (\$60-\$120 per square foot) — this combination looks premium and performs well in NB's climate, where solid MDF-core cabinets with painted finishes handle the dry winter air and humid summers far better than budget thermofoil options that can delaminate within 5-10 years.

Cabinet refacing is an underrated option that saves 40-60% compared to full replacement. If your existing cabinet boxes are solid and the layout works, new doors and drawer fronts with updated hardware can transform the look for \$5,000-\$12,000 instead of \$15,000-\$25,000 for new cabinets. Many NB cabinet shops in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John offer refacing services — ask specifically about this when getting quotes.

Strategic Splurges and Smart Savings

For countertops, consider quartz only on your main work surfaces and use laminate on a secondary run, a pantry counter, or an island back. This hybrid approach can cut countertop costs by 30-40% while keeping the premium look where you actually see it daily. Similarly, a stunning backsplash behind the stove paired with simple painted drywall behind less visible areas saves \$500-\$1,500.

Appliance timing makes a real difference in New Brunswick. Watch for holiday sales — Black Friday, Boxing Day, and spring clearance events at major retailers regularly offer 20-30% off appliance packages. Buying a matching set as a package saves more than purchasing individually. Consider keeping your refrigerator if it's in good working order — a functional fridge doesn't need to be replaced just because the cabinets are new.

Schedule your renovation for **November through March** when NB contractors have lighter workloads. Winter pricing often runs 10-15% lower than peak season (May through October), and you'll have more contractor options to choose from. Book by March or April if you do want a summer start, as the best kitchen renovators in Fredericton, Saint John, and Moncton fill their schedules months ahead.

Get a minimum of three detailed quotes — NB renovation pricing varies 30-40% between contractors for identical work. Make sure each quote breaks down the cost by category (cabinets, countertops, labour, electrical, plumbing, demolition) so you can compare accurately. A contractor who gives you a single lump sum without a breakdown is harder to evaluate.

Finally, handle the simple tasks yourself to save on labour. Demolition of old cabinets, painting walls before cabinet installation, removing old backsplash, and cleaning up after each workday are all things homeowners can safely do. Just be clear with your contractor upfront about which tasks you're handling — surprises mid-project cause delays and friction. Leave electrical, plumbing, cabinet installation, and countertop work to the professionals, as mistakes in those areas cost far more to fix than you'd save doing them yourself.

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How much does it cost to add a kitchen island with plumbing and electrical in NB?

A kitchen island with plumbing and electrical in New Brunswick typically costs \$10,000 to \$25,000 all-in, depending on the island size, materials, complexity of the plumbing run, and whether your home's electrical panel needs upgrading. This is one of the most impactful kitchen upgrades, but also one of the most involved from a trades coordination standpoint.

Here is a realistic cost breakdown for a mid-range plumbed and wired kitchen island in NB:

Plumbing runs \$3,000 to \$6,000 and covers extending hot and cold water supply lines to the island location, running a drain line with proper slope through the floor joists, installing the appropriate venting (loop vent or air admittance valve), and connecting the sink and potentially a dishwasher. The cost depends heavily on the distance between the island and the existing plumbing stack. If your island is within six feet of the current sink drain, you are on the lower end. If it is across the kitchen — 10 to 15 feet — expect to pay more for the longer drain run and additional venting requirements. Homes with basements (most NB homes) are easier to plumb than slab-on-grade construction since the plumber can access floor joists from below.

Electrical runs \$1,500 to \$4,000 and includes GFCI-protected countertop outlets (required by NB Building Code on kitchen islands), a dedicated circuit for the dishwasher if you are adding one, a circuit for a garbage disposal, and island pendant lighting or under-counter lighting. If your NB home has a 60-amp electrical panel — common in homes built before the 1980s — adding these circuits may push you over capacity, requiring a panel upgrade to 100 or 200 amps at \$1,500 to \$4,000 additional.

Island cabinetry costs \$2,500 to \$8,000 depending on whether you choose stock, semi-custom, or custom cabinets. Stock island cabinets from big box stores are the most affordable but come in limited sizes. Custom-built islands from a local NB cabinetmaker give you exact dimensions, built-in features like wine racks or microwave cubbies, and higher-quality construction — expect eight to sixteen weeks lead time.

Countertop for the island runs \$1,500 to \$5,000 depending on material and overhang. Quartz is the most popular island surface in NB at \$60 to \$120 per square foot installed. If you want seating overhang (typically 12 to 18 inches), the countertop will need support brackets, and you may need a thicker slab or corbels for stability.

Permits and inspections add \$150 to \$400. You will need both a plumbing permit and an electrical permit. In Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John, these process in one to three weeks. Rural areas served by RSCs may take two to five weeks. A rough-in inspection is required before the floor is closed up and the island is installed.

Additional Costs to Budget For

Flooring repair around the island footprint runs \$300 to \$1,000 if the existing floor needs patching where plumbing and electrical penetrate. **Demolition and floor preparation** can add \$500 to \$1,500 if you need to cut into concrete or modify floor joists. If you are adding a gas cooktop to the island instead of or in addition to a sink, gas line installation by a licensed gas fitter adds \$500 to \$1,500.

For a complete mid-range island with sink, dishwasher, electrical outlets, and quartz countertop in a New Brunswick home with basement access, budget \$15,000 to \$20,000 as a realistic total. Get three quotes from local contractors — NB pricing varies 30 to 40 percent between companies for the same scope. New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with kitchen renovators for free estimates on your island project.

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Q26

What are the labour costs for kitchen renovation in rural New Brunswick vs Moncton?

Kitchen renovation labour costs in rural New Brunswick typically run 10 to 20 percent lower per hour than in Moncton, but total project costs can end up similar or even higher due to travel surcharges, fewer competing contractors, and longer timelines. The labour rate difference is real, but it does not tell the whole story.

In **Moncton and the Greater Moncton area** (including Dieppe and Riverview), skilled kitchen renovation labour rates generally fall between \$45 and \$75 per hour depending on the trade. General carpentry and cabinet installation sit in the \$45 to \$60 range, while licensed electricians and plumbers charge \$65 to \$90 per hour. Moncton has the largest concentration of kitchen renovation contractors in New Brunswick, which creates healthy competition and keeps pricing in check. You can realistically get four to five quotes for a kitchen renovation in Moncton, giving you strong leverage on pricing.

In **rural New Brunswick** — communities like Woodstock, Sussex, Campbellton, Edmundston, Caraquet, or the Miramichi area — base hourly rates are often \$35 to \$60 for general carpentry and \$55 to \$80 for licensed trades.

However, several factors can push total costs upward.

Travel charges are the most significant hidden cost. If a contractor is based in Fredericton or Moncton and your kitchen is in a rural community 60 to 90 minutes away, expect a daily travel surcharge of \$75 to \$200, or the equivalent baked into the overall quote. Over a two to four-week kitchen renovation, travel charges alone can add \$1,000 to \$3,000 to the project.

Limited contractor availability in rural areas means fewer quotes to compare, reducing your negotiating power. In Moncton, getting three to five quotes is straightforward. In rural NB, you may only have one or two contractors willing to take on a full kitchen renovation, and their schedules may be booked further out — especially during the May to October peak season. This supply-demand imbalance can keep rural pricing higher than the lower hourly rates suggest.

Material Delivery and Subcontractor Costs

Material delivery surcharges affect rural renovations. Most countertop fabricators are based in Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John. A quartz or granite countertop delivery to Edmundston or Bathurst typically carries a \$200 to \$500 delivery surcharge compared to a Moncton installation. Custom cabinet shops are similarly concentrated in the three major cities, so rural homeowners pay more for delivery of finished cabinetry.

Subcontractor coordination is harder in rural areas. A kitchen renovation typically requires a general contractor, electrician, plumber, countertop fabricator, and sometimes a tiler and painter. In Moncton, these trades are readily available and accustomed to working together. In rural NB, your general contractor may need to bring in trades from the nearest city, adding to scheduling complexity and cost.

Total Project Cost Comparison

For a mid-range kitchen renovation (\$25,000 to \$45,000 scope), here is a realistic comparison. In Moncton, labour typically accounts for 35 to 40 percent of the total project cost. In rural NB, labour is a similar percentage, but the total may be 5 to 15 percent higher once travel, delivery surcharges, and limited competition are factored in. A kitchen that costs \$35,000 in Moncton might run \$37,000 to \$40,000 in a rural community two hours away.

The **exception** is winter renovations (November through March). Rural contractors often have more availability in winter and may offer competitive pricing to keep their crews busy during the slow season. If your timeline is flexible, scheduling a rural kitchen renovation for winter can offset the geographic premium and potentially save you 10 to 15 percent.

Whether you are in Moncton or a smaller NB community, always get multiple quotes where possible. New Brunswick Kitchens can help match you with kitchen renovators serving your area — get started for free.

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How much should I expect to pay for kitchen design services in New Brunswick?

Kitchen design services in New Brunswick range from \$500 to \$5,000 depending on the scope and who provides them, with many kitchen renovation contractors including basic design in their project quote at no additional charge. Understanding what you're paying for — and what you actually need — helps you make the right choice for your budget and the complexity of your renovation.

At the most accessible level, **big box stores** and kitchen cabinet dealers in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John offer complimentary kitchen design when you purchase cabinets through them. These designs are functional and handle straightforward layout planning, but they're primarily sales tools — the designer's goal is to sell you cabinets, not to optimize your entire kitchen renovation. For a basic cosmetic refresh or a layout that isn't changing much, this level of service is often sufficient.

Independent kitchen designers charge \$1,500 to \$5,000 for a comprehensive design package that typically includes initial consultation, site measurements, 2D floor plans, 3D renderings, material specifications, appliance recommendations, lighting plans, and sometimes project management support. These designers work for you, not for a cabinet supplier, so their recommendations are brand-neutral and focused on your needs. This level of service makes sense for mid-range to high-end renovations (\$40,000+) where layout changes, structural modifications, or complex configurations are involved. Some designers charge a flat fee, others charge \$75 to \$200 per hour.

Many **kitchen renovation contractors** in NB include design services as part of their project proposal, rolling the cost into the overall contract price. This is the most common approach for renovations in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 range. The contractor measures, proposes a layout, helps you select materials, and handles the build. The advantage is a single point of accountability. The limitation is that their design expertise varies — a skilled renovator

with 15 years of kitchen-specific experience may produce better designs than a generalist who also does basements and bathrooms.

Getting the Best Value

For a **cosmetic refresh** (\$12,000 to \$20,000) where you're keeping the existing layout and replacing surfaces, paying for professional design is usually unnecessary. Take accurate measurements, use free online kitchen planning tools, and bring your ideas to contractors when getting quotes.

For a **mid-range renovation** (\$25,000 to \$45,000) with new cabinets and minor layout tweaks, your contractor's included design service is typically adequate. Get three quotes and compare not just pricing but the quality and creativity of each contractor's proposed design.

For a **high-end remodel** (\$50,000+) involving structural changes like removing load-bearing walls, relocating plumbing, or creating an open-concept layout, investing \$2,000 to \$5,000 in an independent designer is money well spent. They'll produce engineered drawings needed for building permits, coordinate with structural engineers if walls are coming down, and optimize every inch of your kitchen. In many cases, a good designer saves you more than their fee by preventing expensive mistakes and suggesting efficiencies your contractor might miss.

Regardless of who designs your kitchen, make sure the final plan accounts for NB-specific factors: adequate electrical circuits (minimum two 20-amp countertop circuits plus dedicated appliance circuits), proper ventilation vented to the exterior, and materials suited to our Maritime humidity swings. Get your design finalized before ordering cabinets — semi-custom cabinets have 4 to 8 week lead times and custom cabinets take 8 to 16 weeks, so design decisions made in March set you up for a summer installation.

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