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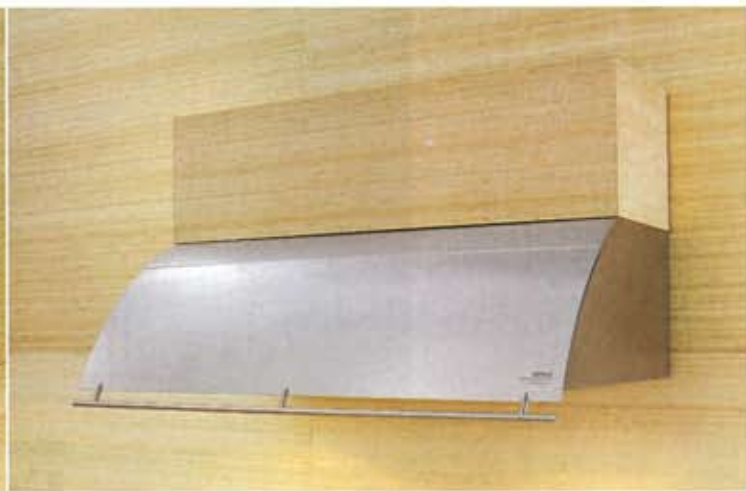
MEET FU-TUNG CHENG

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 Founder of Cheng Design, [www.chengdesign.com](http://www.chengdesign.com).

# Venting

Interview by Melissa Larsen

Once a design afterthought, ventilation hoods are becoming a stylish staple in upscale kitchens—thanks in large part to Fu-Tung Cheng. The Los Angelino began fashioning innovative kitchen hoods with his firm Cheng Design in the early 1990's; and four years ago, he teamed up with Zephyr, a company that manufactures high-end hoods. "I couldn't find anything that looked appropriate for the houses and kitchens I was designing," he says. Contemporary, curvaceous and sometimes colorful, the Zephyr Cheng Collection is ensuring the appliance its position in the upper echelon of à la mode. "We have been able to revolutionize the design of the hood and make it a true focal point of the kitchen," Cheng says. Here, the designer touches on this ventilation hood revival, his own kitchen and his joy of cooking.



How has the ventilation hood evolved into such an important design element?

The kitchen hood is an appliance that often comes paired with the stove. Historically, people have not had much of a choice about the design of the hood. As stoves grew larger with more and hotter burners, the hood was born of necessity. It is only recently that the kitchen hood has come into its own, offering so many different design options.

Any favorites when it comes to your hood designs?

One of my favorite hoods in the Zephyr Cheng Collection is the Padova (shown left), which is completely customizable—interchangeable panels can be inlaid with mosaic tiles or filled with colored, hard plasters. It allows the designer and the homeowner to have choices and make a statement with the hood. This is unique for an appliance. I think people appreciate having options that allow them to express their creativity.

Do you do other types of design?

I lead a team of architects and craftsmen that create across a spectrum of design—from complete custom homes and commercial projects, to consumer products like hoods, sinks and cabinets. We love working on concrete water features, sculptural countertops, walls, custom hoods, as well as complete kitchen and bath [projects].