The Kitchen Design Special Contest is an interior design award promoted by The Plan as part of THE PLAN Award in partnership with Ernestomeda. The awards ceremony was in Venice on 23 May past, bringing to an end this contest that focused on the kitchen in home environments. The numerous entries resulted in a broad array of home environments, cementing the idea that a kitchen really is the pivotal heart of a home, a place for chatting and enjoying the company of others. It is also truly a place where design meets technology and practicality, potentially tucked into a small space or spread over an extensive area, perhaps with four walls, or open to the landscape - or even outside.

The jury - Giuseppe Bavuso, Alida Forte Catella, Alessia Garibaldi, Alberto Scavolini and Nicola Leonardi - awarded the top prize to “Al coperto - una cucina sul lago” project, by Bergmeisterwolf Architekten, on Lake Garda, and made two honorable mentions, to 3ndy Studio for KOOQ and to NA3 Architetti for Portonaccio. These top three projects are also emblematic of the variety of solutions submitted.

Toscolano Maderno, on the beautiful Lake Garda, was the setting for the kitchen created by Bergmeisterwolf Architekten that is part of an extension to a 17th-Century villa. This addition is very much open to the landscape, with completely glazed walls that both separate and unite, as they can slide completely away and literally remove the border between inside and outside. The overall effect is that the building never really ends, merging right into nature. The kitchen transforms from being a closed setting, into an open but sheltered space, an effect reinforced by the kitchen floor physically extending into the garden.

KOOQ, created not far from Venice, is 3ndy Studio’s proposal for a stainless steel outdoor kitchen protected by a sliding shelter made of Corian®. This entirely customized project leverages the durability and resistance of the materials, while also exalting their aesthetic properties. KOOQ is a single structure, but it is fully equipped with all the accessories a kitchen might need. It is also modular, designed using standard sizes for household appliances, and it can be expanded or reproduced.

Portonaccio marks a move to an entirely different setting - a home in Rome. This house is a reflection of the young owner, a place that is transforming and still becoming something. And the same holds for the kitchen. The use of materials is strong and evident, especially raw iron and wood. It is a closed space, but sliding walls give the option of opening it up completely onto the entrance. The overall effect is a play of elegant colors and shapes, in which the attention to detail is evident.
1. Al coperto - una cucina sul lago
   Bergmeisterwolf Architekten
   Winner
   © Gustav Willeit,
   courtesy of Bergmeisterwolf Architekten

2-3. KOOQ
    Andy Studio
    Honorable mention

4-5. Portonaccio
    NA3 Architetti
    Honorable mention