Cherry is often considered the top-of-the-line in hardwoods. Light yet strong, Cherry’s fine grain pattern is more subtle than some of the other hardwoods. The smooth texture feels satiny to the touch and its distinctive luster seems to glow.

A number of natural characteristics such as gum spots (small black flecks), pin knots, and sapwood that is lighter in color than the heartwood will be present with Cherry. These color variations may show up on the same board, with a range from off-white to light red or dark, reddish brown.

Something to consider: Cherry’s rich coloring will darken with age and exposure to light—more so than with other woods. Lignins in the wood react to direct sunlight, natural light, and day-to-day-use to give Cherry a rich patina.

If portions of your kitchen are flooded with sunlight, those areas will darken at a different rate than more protected areas. Any new or replacement cabinets that are brought in will have a much lighter appearance for a while. As the product ages, the color tones of the new pieces will blend with the original.

Darker stain colors can mask these changes, but will also cover up the natural beauty of the wood—tough call!