



SET IN STONE

*Countertops, backsplashes, walls, tub surrounds —
if there's not natural or engineered stone materials
in your kitchen or bath, you're ready for an update —
and there's no better time than now.*

“Spring is an ideal time to update your home,” says Mitch Mahoney, president and founder of Empire Countertops. “It’s time to tackle those projects you’ve been putting off, especially if you’re looking to sell your home. The kitchen can make or break you, and even keep buyers from viewing your home just based on the online photo gallery. Refreshing your kitchen and bath can make your home feel brand new.”

If you’re upgrading countertop materials and plan to enjoy them for years to come, the choices can even be overwhelming. Puzzled by the products and process? Here are a few tips:



CHOOSE YOUR MATERIALS WISELY

A symbol of elegance and taste, granite is often used in high-traffic areas like kitchens and baths for its gorgeous, luxurious appearance and its resistance to heat, stains, scratches and knife cuts. Add the rich color, texture, crystals and flowing movement for a striking showpiece in your kitchen, bathrooms or even a custom table for your dining area.

Silestone® and Corian® engineered products are a combination of natural quartz and other raw materials that create a resilient and scratch-resistant surface. Known for its durability, engineered stone promises to always look as good as the day it was installed. Aesthetically, it is perfect for surfaces where you want a fairly uniform pattern or a sleek, modern look.

If you’re searching for a “wow factor” material in a lower traffic area like a fireplace, wet bar or formal area, consider natural marble. The opulent beauty of mineral swirls, veins and even an ancient fossil or two is always in fashion, and marble is a perfect choice for statement furnishings in your home.

“We’re seeing a big increase in the use of natural materials,” Mahoney says. “Our materials are quarried from nearly everywhere in the world, giving your home a custom and exotic feel, and nearly every region has a distinct color. It’s fun to tell your friends about where your stone came from and learn about the area’s culture.”

BE EVEN MORE SELECTIVE WITH YOUR INSTALLER

Now that you’re ready to upgrade, it’s time to choose your design and installation partner. “Consider carefully. An on-budget and perfect installation is as critical as your design choice,” Mahoney says. He encourages choosing a company who employs background-checked workers with a history of excellence and attention to the finest details, are insured and carry the best guarantees.

Mahoney stresses that local showrooms with onsite inventory and production facilities are important. “It’s hard to envision a custom kitchen design based on a few sample inches. Plus, local deliveries reduce the opportunity for transportation issues and delays.” He advises to be sure to ask for project time expectations. “Your project should only take about 7-10 days from design acceptance or about two weeks for specialty custom projects. Longer time estimates could be an indication of turnover with installers or lack of technology to cut your designs. Look for members of CBUSA and NARI for the most knowledgeable service and commitment to quality.”

Most of all, have fun with the process. Whether you’re choosing surfaces for a custom home or remodeling the previous owner’s choices, this is the home of your dreams and you should enjoy making your dreams reality. ♦

EMPIRE COUNTERTOPS

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