

a consumer's guide to

GRANITE COUNTERTOPS

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*Cabinetry by Red Rose Cabinetry, Inc.
(see ad p. 20)*

*Product Description: Countertop –
Fantasy Brown; Field Tile – Glass Color
Taupe; Accent Tile – Artistic Tile Estrella
Grande*

FEATURE

NATURAL STONEWORKS

455 Ice Avenue | Fax: 393-5827
Lancaster • 393-5818 | Mon-Fri 9am-5pm • Sat 10am-4pm • Evenings by Appointment

PA069038

Natural Stoneworks is the premier stone fabricator, tile installer and retailer in Lancaster and the surrounding area. We are proud to offer the largest selection of beautiful and exotic stone slabs in the county.

We are a family-owned business. We have built our solid reputation by providing impeccable, personal service and unmatched craftsmanship. Our stone and tile installations have added beauty and function to many homes and businesses. We truly enjoy our work and take personal pride in each of our jobs.

Our mission is to ensure that you are not only delighted with the final result, but that you feel comfortable and confident throughout the entire experience.

Natural Stoneworks will guide you to make the best and the most appropriate choices for your home or business. Visit our showroom and indoor stone gallery. We offer quality products, the latest in home fashions, and service that continues long after the sale.

www.NaturalStoneworks.com

PLANNING

Countertops are one of the biggest investments you make in a new kitchen or project. As with any big investment with such a life span as granite, you want to adequately plan. In getting countertops, you must first establish a budget, understand what is within that budget, and designate the role that you want the countertop to play in the design scheme (functional, centerpiece, or accent). Most importantly, you must allow adequate time for decision making. Here are some tips for the planning process:

Request leveled pricing. Some shops can give you an estimate based on general levels that include type of granite and overall dimensions based on what you submit to them. Once you understand the price windows, you can understand your limitations and abilities based on your granite selection.

Research natural stone. Natural stone is a product of millions of years of natural forces and cut from the Earth. The attractive, yet, difficult trait

As a company operated by experienced professionals in countertop and kitchen renovation, we understand the stress and headaches that arise when deciding to begin a new project or improvement. Over the years, we've learned a lot from our customers in the process of selecting natural stone for a project. Any transition of this kind will undoubtedly come with stress and work. However, we find that the headache is all rooted in lack of preparation, understanding, and time allowed during the countertop process.

To pass on our knowledge and advice to others, we've compiled a little guide of advice for people stepping into the world of granite tops with their own projects, or for people who are interested in learning more about it. This guide includes tips and suggestions for minimizing the amount of stress you may feel during the process. Following this guide will not only make the process run more smoothly, but will also leave you with higher quality and longer-lasting countertop result.

We organized the process into four

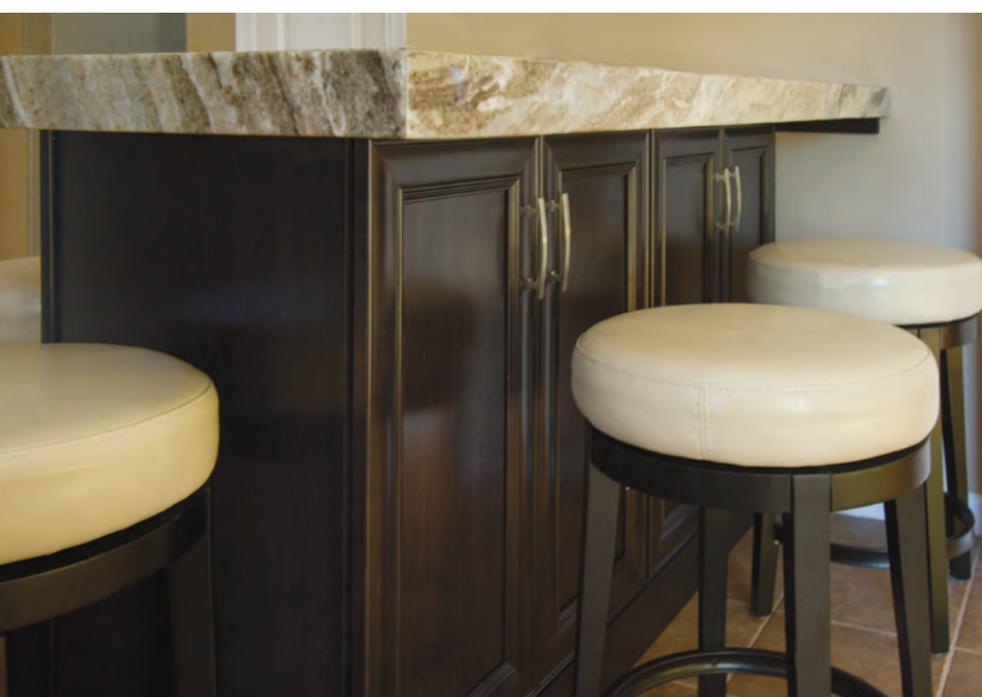
phases: planning, selection, fabrication/installing, and aftercare.

Natural stone greatly expands the possibilities and options for your kitchen design. Just like anything that is very expansive, (e.g. moving to a new city) effectively finding things you like for the best price takes both experience and knowledge. This is where a guide becomes invaluable. The same goes for selecting granite. You want to have a good guide in the process that may help you navigate the complicated world that is countertops and kitchen design.

First, find a reputable fabrication shop to work with. A good shop will provide you with the expertise you need. Their guidance will not only make your final product look great, but will also save you the stress of trying to navigate the details on your own. The company you select will also be the one you likely deal with after the installation.

So let's say you found your reputable granite fabrication shop...now we go into how you should move forward.





of natural stone is its inherent variety. Good natural stone knowledge will make communication between you and your fabrication shop streamlined.

Again, give yourself ample time. When you are faced with a lot of choices and options, you will need more time to make proper decisions. Many customers become frustrated and frantic when they leave themselves little time and have five natural stone options to sort through. Rushed decisions rarely yield the best results. We can't stress enough the importance of this.

SELECTION

After you have planned and established what you want (and can realistically purchase), you may now decide on material. Go into your reputable fabricator to meet with a designer with whom you may discuss and view options. Bargain shops and big chain stores do not allow you to see the actual slabs you will have cut, leaving you very much in the dark and poised for a surprise when installation day rolls around. Here are tips on selection:

Bring as much visual information from your design as you can. This includes paint colors, cabinet samples, and if applicable, hardware (appliances). These samples help paint an accurate picture for the designer and will lead him/her to find the best natural options for your kitchen that you may choose from.

Retrieve samples to bring home for reference. Sometimes fabricators may not be given all samples of the slabs they have by wholesalers, but if possible, requesting a sample to bring home can help tremendously. The varying factor in anything to do with the perception of design and visual aesthetics is light. Bringing a natural stone sample home with you will give you a realistic idea of how that material will appear under your lighting and color scheme.

FABRICATION/INSTALLATION

At this point, the fabricator does most of the work. While you wait anxiously for the arrival of your new piece, here are some things you can do to make installation day run smoothly.

Get down any questions or concerns you may have about the template before the company sends someone out. Doing this will guide you in your discussion with the employee making the template. This way, any questions can be addressed during the template making process to better excel the fabrication process. Addressing small issues here saves time and effort during installation day.

Have any appliances such as sinks, ovens, stovetops, and dishwashers delivered prior to installation day. It's never a fun scenario when a several hundred pound slab of stone is installed to given dimensions of an appliance, and a few days later you discover it doesn't fit. Aim to have all appliances there for installation so that the installer can make adjustments if necessary. This way, the installer may leave with everything in place, finished, and looking great.

AFTERCARE

Granite is a durable surface. Once it is installed, there is little left that needs

to be done but a few small maintenance practices. Some advice in after care:

Read the care sheet a fabricator leaves behind. The minimal care is very simple and easy to do. It may require sealing the surface every couple of years but each material is different and knowing what your surface needs is important.

Thank your fabricator. Just like you, the designers, craftsmen and installers all spent time and effort on your gorgeous countertop. They enjoy hearing your feedback whether it's a post on a review site or a personal email.

It's Worth It!

The drawn breath and exhaled "ahh" as you look at the finished product



feels that much better because of the effort you put into it. As outlined above, there are ways to minimize the stress and improve the process that makes the experience as enjoyable as the finished product. We hope this enlightens some you who are curious about natural stone and can be a useful guide for those beginning the journey.

Happy home improving!

R&A

bringing the
highest quality granite & tile
to your home

Marble • Limestone • Quartz • Soapstone • Artistic Tile

Our Reputation speaks for itself!

Our newest technology high-speed CNC water jet/saw gives us the edge our competitors can't match! Faster productivity times, precision cuts, design technology, less waste, eco-friendly and digital layout custom designs that can be emailed directly to you!

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Designers On Staff



Indoor Design Gallery



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