

Choosing a countertop



BY AVIVA
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- Today's market is full of choices. When selecting a new countertop for your home it is best to review some of the characteristics of the different materials available.

The first choice you must make is between solid surfaces, such as stone, wood, Corian or Zodiaq, and laminates or tiles.

Tile countertops are generally an uneven surface to work on, and require sealant over the grout lines to prevent bacterial growth, which needs to be refreshed over time. Be sure to specify that your grout must be chemically suited for areas that are used for food preparation. The durability and heat-resistance of this type of countertop will depend upon the type of tile selected.

Laminate countertops have changed a great deal since they were first introduced. Our high-pressure laminates have excellent wear resistance under regular use. There are hundreds of colors and many textures to choose from in a variety of edges all at an affordable price. Our showroom has sample swatches from Formica, Arborite, Pionite, Nevamar, and Wilsonart. The latest looks imitate slate and granite without the weight or the cost of real stone.

Stainless steel countertops are formed to suit the specification of the kitchen layout. They have excellent bacteria resistance, and can withstand heavy use, hence their popularity in commercial applications. Do remember that this is a material that will show scuffmarks, and fingerprints. Although it can be re-buffed, it is not intended to remain pristine.



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Butcher's Block remains a favorite for its warm look. For homeowners who want an authentic "retro" appeal it can't be beat. The wood surface will become distressed over time and requires frequent oiling to maintain its moisture level. A relatively high level of care is needed to prevent stains, but if badly stained, it can be sanded down and re-oiled.

A natural stone countertop has wonderful feel and is among the most durable available. It also has one of the highest heat thresholds in countertops. Granite countertops are among the most popular choice. Most people immediately perceive added value to a home with granite countertops. Other solid-surface options include Corian and Zodiaq. They are both stain resistant (non-porous), and renewable if scratched.

Concrete countertops are relatively new to the Ottawa market, but there is a growing demand. This material feels smooth due to the many layers of beeswax used in finishing. The countertops can be formed on site, and in most cases will not need seams.

No matter what your budget, today's countertops can make a difference to your kitchen. We showcase many of these options in our displays, so come to our showroom to see what we can do for you.

This is the second in a five-part series presented by Laurysen Kitchens. Look for Part 2 in Home Life, October 19th.

Laurysen Kitchens

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