

18 Awesome Countertops That Aren't Granite

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Quartz

Quartz has become a popular choice for countertops in recent years because of its high-end look and durability. Quartz is an engineered stone made from a mix of real quartz and rock-solid binders. As seen here on this kitchen island from [@ennscabinetry](#), quartz provides the look of marble without the cost or maintenance.

What We Like About It: "The biggest benefit of installing quartz is that it is a robust material that can be both beautiful and easy to clean and maintain," says Culp, "Wine spill? No problem, just wipe it up!"

Stainless Steel

Once the domain of industrial kitchens across the globe, stainless steel countertops are a chic option for a kitchen that sees a lot of action. Stainless steel countertops can also be installed with an integrated sink, as shown here from [@foshankitchencabinet](#), completely eliminating those pesky cracks and crevices that trap water and food particles.

What We Like About It: "Stainless Steel can be an amazing material choice for the right situation," says Culp. "It is reasonably priced for a material that will patina to a nice finish. Any scratches simply add to its character."

Solid Surface

If you're looking for a budget-friendly option for your kitchen countertops, a solid surface is a solid choice! Non-toxic, low-VOC and non-porous, solid-surface countertops are a great-looking option with endless color choices. Keep in mind, though, that the solid surface is composed of mineral dust mixed with different types of plastics. So, it's not as tough as stone and can be prone to chipping and scratches.

What We Like About It: "Solid Surface is a versatile material that allows for seams to be imperceptible with a very affordable price point," says Culp.

Butcher Block

The long-favored material of butchers and [bar owners](#), butcher block will give your kitchen beautiful texture and warmth, like in this bright and airy kitchen by [@ellcedesigns](#). While

scratches in laminate and natural stone can be difficult to repair, wood can be sanded and refinished as necessary, making it a long-lasting, inexpensive solution.

What We Like About It: "For tight budgets or for specific design intent, butcher block is an amazing option," says Culp.

Concrete

The biggest benefit to concrete countertops is they're pretty much indestructible, even strong enough for outdoor kitchens like this example from [@zcounterform](#). And because concrete countertops are formed and poured on-site, they're completely customizable to fit any shape, size or color you want. Concrete does require some sealing and maintenance (like using a pH-neutral cleaner) to ensure it stands the test of time.

What We Like About It: You know we love DIY, and with the right materials and skills you can install concrete countertops yourself!

Laminate

Don't overlook laminate as a viable alternative to granite. As seen here, [@home.with.em](#) shows off her Formica countertops that are surprisingly similar to real soapstone! Easy to install yourself, today's laminate is durable, easy to maintain, and looks so good, you'll have trouble telling it apart from its natural competitors.

What We Like About It: Laminate comes in a wide range of colors, patterns, and even textured options—so you can get the exact look you want for a fraction of the price of real stone.

Recycled Glass

Recycled glass countertops have a unique look that will set your kitchen apart, like in this beautiful space from [@charlestoncrafted](#). Because of the crushed glass pieces (with countless color options), your countertop will literally glisten! But the main draw is the low environmental impact. Made from recycled glass and cement, most brands contain zero resins, glues, petrochemicals, plastics or chemical binders.

What We Like About It: Because they are created with a powerful binding agent, they never require sealing.

Marble

Classic white marble countertops are a hot home trend that's showing no signs of slowing down, given its ability to coordinate with almost every color of cabinet and flooring. It's a luxurious choice that won't be cheap, but you can't beat the look or solid feel of real marble. Marble is susceptible to etching and staining and requires more care than some of its man-made counterparts.

What We Like About It: "There is a reason why the Romans loved using marble," says Culp. "The slabs are naturally beautiful with reasonably consistent colors for a stone."

Terrazzo

Similar to recycled glass countertops, Terrazzo is made by pouring a solid layer of concrete or epoxy resin, then embedding chips of marble, stone, glass or other materials into the surface. The final look will depend on the size and color of chips. In her kitchen, [@cassie bustamante](#) chose black and white terrazzo to fit her modern style.

What We Like About It: Properly installed terrazzo can last 75 years or more, which is why it's often still in perfect condition in vintage mid-century-modern homes.

Zinc

Warmer than stainless steel, zinc countertops are bonded to a wood or medium-density fiberboard (MDF) substrate and provide a patina and finish that changes over time. We love the look in this kitchen by [@dmwelding](#), paired with turquoise cabinets and a glossy 3D tile backsplash. What makes zinc unique is the endless edging options available, from industrial rivets to Victorian molding.

What We Like About It: Not only does it look sharp, but zinc is also non-porous, naturally antibacterial, and easy to clean.

Soapstone

Though slightly softer than other natural stones, soapstone provides a rustic patina that ages well and a timeless look that you won't tire of. It is less likely to chip than marble and has a high heat resistance. Maintenance involves periodically treating it with mineral oil to restore its lovely sheen. In this kitchen by [@ohara interiors](#), the dark soapstone offers a nice contrast to the white cabinetry.

What We Like About It: "Soapstone has an elegant black coloring and can make a space look quite refined," says Culp.

Tile

Tile countertops were popular in the '90s, but cheap tile chipped easily and grout was impossible to keep clean. But tile countertops are back! The updated style features ultra-thin grout lines and a matching backsplash for a chic, monochromatic look. [Installing tile countertops](#) yourself is a budget-friendly way to add the charm of stone for a fraction of the price.

What We Like About It: It's a cheaper alternative to solid stone slabs while also providing nearly endless options for color and pattern.

Epoxy

For a non-toxic, eco-friendly and completely customizable option for countertops, consider [poured epoxy](#). The application is similar to applying epoxy flooring in your [garage floor](#), and the result is a countertop that is durable, heat-resistant and FDA food-safe.

What We Like About It: Epoxy is a budget-friendly option that can be used to make over your existing countertops instead of fully replacing them. It can be poured over most countertop materials, including porcelain and ceramic tile, laminate, granite, marble, quartz, cultured marble, and solid surfaces.

Quartzite

Quartzite is a natural stone known for its exceptional durability and striking veining patterns. It will hold up well to daily wear and tear in the kitchen, and can withstand hot pots and pans. It's on the pricier side, with slabs costing about the same as marble. But the one-of-a-kind look is worth the investment, as shown in this kitchen from [@reems design](#).

What We Like About It: "Quartzite provides some beautiful real stone patterns," says Culp. "The elegance and depth of color can make a statement in any room."

Porcelain

A new player in the countertop game is the porcelain slab. Porcelain slab countertops are similar to quartz, but come in more color options, and some look closer to real stone. The downside to porcelain is it's more delicate, so it must be installed with the utmost care to avoid cracking—as explained in this video from [@buildtxsolutions](#).

What We Like About It: "Porcelain slabs come in millimeter thicknesses, and so they can be used to create sharp-looking countertops with minimal material on the edges," says Culp.

Limestone

Like other natural stone countertops, limestone is durable, heat-resistant, and comes in various unique and delicate color patterns. This kitchen from [@stone fusion](#) shows off Tundra Blue Limestone countertops and backsplash with eye-catching results. Keep in mind, limestone is easier to scratch than other stones, and can stain easily if not properly sealed.

What We Like About It: If you don't like shiny countertops, limestone is a great choice for its elegant matte finish.

Travertine

Travertine is a type of limestone known for its creamy beige colors and subtle texture. You can see the beauty of the stone on full display in this laundry room from [@Qing.Zeng](#). Travertine is a good choice if you're looking for warmer tones in your space, while still getting that solid natural stone durability.

What We Like About It: Travertine is easier to cut than other materials, making it ideal for spaces that require unusually shaped countertops.

Copper

Check out this stunning copper countertop from [@robholowka](#) (photographed at Devol Kitchens Showroom). Copper will take on a rich patina over time, as well as dents and other textures; so it's not a good choice if you want a countertop that always looks like new. But for unique character and a rich finish, copper can't be beat.

What We Like About It: Copper will give your kitchen or bathroom old world charm, and has been certified as anti-microbial by the Environmental Protection Agency(EPA).

About the Expert

- **Jonathan Culp** is the Design Principal for [Land Agency](#), a high-end residential design firm based in Denver, Colorado. Jonathan has a decade of experience working for award-winning architecture firms. He is the winner of the Global Visionary award from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) DC Chapter.

