

Better Homes and Gardens Special Interest Publications.

BEAUTIFUL KITCHENS

Cabinets
to Love
Forever

Fabulous
Countertops

The Finest Materials,
Exquisite Shapes & More p. 15

Armani's New Kitchen • Do-It-All Pantries
Chef's Choice Appliances

Spring 2008
Display until April 15

\$7.99 U.S.

8 1 >



KitchenBathIdeas.com

Counter Intelligence

For truly distinctive countertops, consider the fine details.



Stone Smarts

BUILDING DESIGNER RAMSIN KHACHI EXPLAINS HOW TO MAKE SOLID STONE COUNTERTOPS EXTRA LUXURIOUS.

How do you begin designing stone countertops?

I like to start with an idea of a color scheme, then handpick the slab of stone. I know I can tweak the color of a cabinet finish later—but there's no way to predict the exact hues and pattern of stone. Best to leave the design open to the slab with the most character.

What do you look for in a slab?

Flaws can be worked around. What I hunt for is variation of the kind that can never be duplicated. Every day I look at that countertop, I want to see something different.

What kind of details do you add to the stone's beauty?

I like to profile edges, cut troughs for drainage, and think how that countertop can be made to best bring out the stone's innate beauty.

Any other extras to consider?

Temperature. Stone is cold to lean against. I warm the countertops where people gather with a radiant heat product called Nuheat (800/778-9276; nuheat.com).

And
the



It's not just the countertop material, but how you use it.

"Clients are always asking what the next new material is," kitchen designer Mick De Giulio says. "Truth is, the most unique looks come from rethinking how to use traditional materials. Maybe you opt against using one solid slab for an island countertop, for instance, and create a surface book-matching the grains on four slabs instead." Building designer Ramsin Khachi agrees. "The art is in the fabrication," he says. Details to consider include a countertop's overall shape, the profile of its edge, and variations in finish and how they affect texture and hue. If two or more materials are used, consider how to mix them for decorative effect. Highly patterned surfaces make great focal points, while neutral, solid hues work well on long stretches of countertops. Consider the details, and even the simplest materials gain distinction.



**FV edge profile
on Bristol Blue quartz**
Cambria; 866/226-2742;
cambriausa.com



**Double-bevel inlaid
edge on Burled Beach
solid-surfacing inlaid
with Lava Rock**
Dupont Corian; 800/906-
7765; corian.com

