

COUNTERTOP REVIEW

With so many luxurious and durable premium countertop surfaces available today, choosing the right material for your application could become confusing. Let's look at the options:

SOLID SURFACE

Most people are familiar with brand names such as Corian, Staron, Hi-Macs, Gibraltar and Avonite. Man made and non-porous, solid surface comes in a wide variety of colors and patterns. Seamless, integrated sinks, cove (one piece) backsplash, and a seamless appearance make this product unique.

With its superior stain / heat / scratch resistance, and numerous edge options, solid surface is a perfect choice for both residential and commercial applications.

NATURAL STONE

Granite is an all natural product, which means every slab is unique. Most granite comes with a highly polished finish, although some stones are available in honed, antiqued and flamed finishes.

If you are looking for a "one of a kind" application, natural stone is the

option for you. Although not stain-proof, a good quality stone sealer will help protect and enhance your countertop investment.

QUARTZ (ENGINEERED STONE)

Quartz surfacing is approximately 93% pure quartz crystals, which makes it extremely durable and scratch resistant. The translucent particles give the product depth and radiance without the imperfections of natural stone. Custom-fit to your exact specifications and virtually maintenance free, quartz is a beautiful and long-lasting alternative for residential and commercial design.

"GREEN" PRODUCTS

Many solid surface lines including Hi-Macs, Staron, Corian and Avonite offer collections of Greenguard certified or recycled materials. Additionally, many new products like PaperStone, Richlite, Vetrazzo and others have been introduced to the countertop market. Olive Mill is currently researching these new products to find the best fit for our clients.

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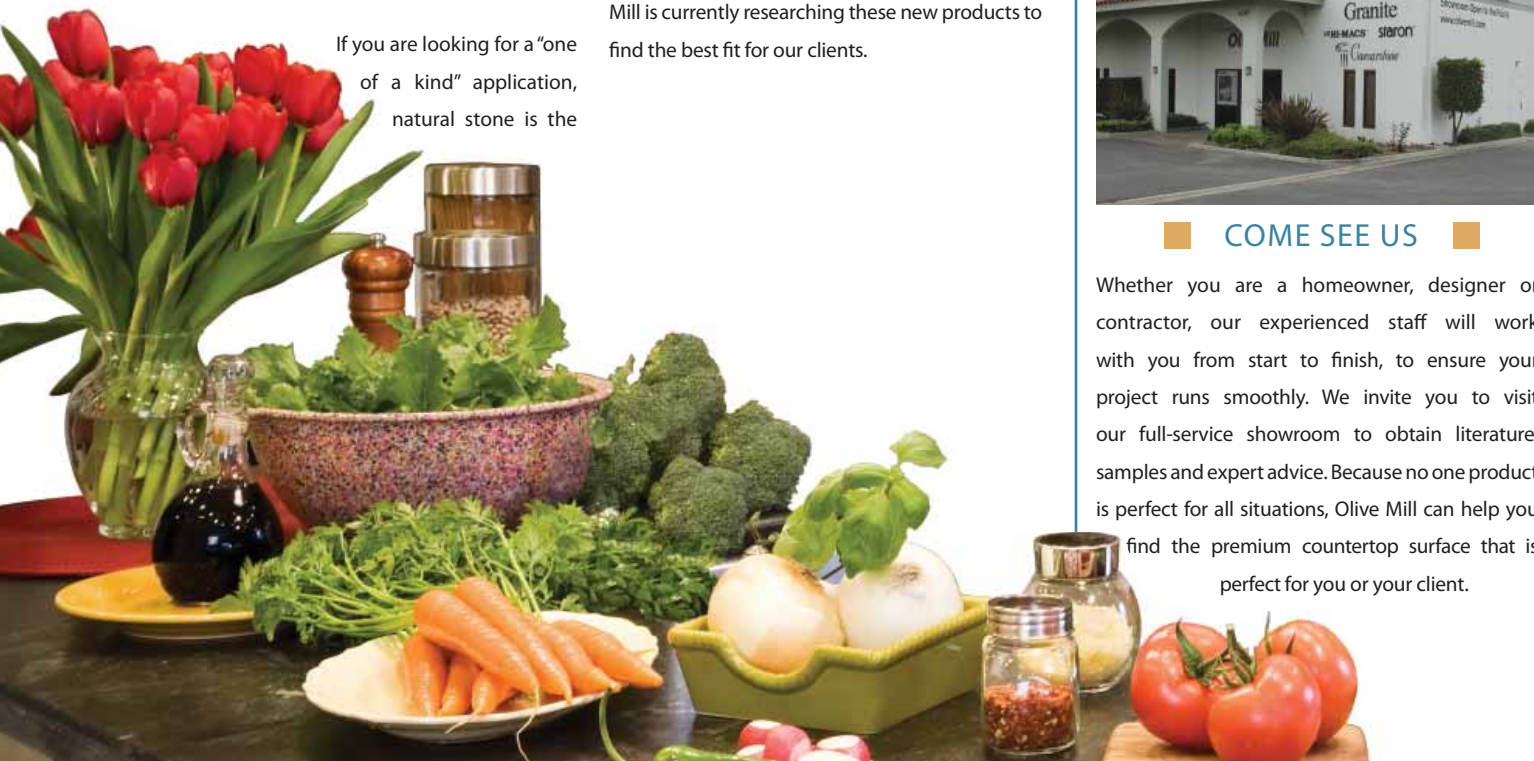


A family-owned business for over 20 years, Olive Mill specializes in Solid Surface, Natural Stone, and Quartz Surfacing. We manufacture to the highest standards of quality workmanship for kitchen & bath countertops, shower walls, bars, table tops or commercial applications.



COME SEE US

Whether you are a homeowner, designer or contractor, our experienced staff will work with you from start to finish, to ensure your project runs smoothly. We invite you to visit our full-service showroom to obtain literature, samples and expert advice. Because no one product is perfect for all situations, Olive Mill can help you find the premium countertop surface that is perfect for you or your client.



COLOR TRENDS FOR 2009

Color, perhaps more than any other aspect of design, is a personal preference. "You rarely get a revolution in color trends; it's more of an evolution," says Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute.



Yet preferences do ebb and flow. The sophisticated use of rich jeweled colors — purples, yellows, and burnt orange — are on the upswing, according to Eiseman's color predictions for this year. Chinese reds and blacks also continue in their popularity. She terms the trend "ethnic chic."

The main color directions for 2008 and beyond are opposites that not only attract, but which also complement one another,

reflecting a balanced approach in the use of color in our environment.

Perhaps the most important thing to keep in mind about home design trends today is that there is no one overarching trend. Access to more design ideas in the media has spurred consumers to trust their own taste. Whether it's combining styles or melding Ikea with antiques, people are making space more personal. Design is less and less about what's prescribed in the catalogs.

The pervasiveness of open kitchens and their growing role as the home's center has promoted a new level of decoration in those spaces. Sconces, chandeliers (which are growing in popularity), and more decoration of all sorts are now almost as important as functionality in a kitchen space.

While bright shades continue to dominate most design palettes, a shift may be underway toward cooler grays, purples, and lavenders. The next new thing: One of the Pantone color palettes for 2009 is called Animé, a nod to popular Japanese animation. "These vibrant, sometimes clashing, colors reflect the look of Japanese comics and appeal to younger clients," says Eiseman.

THE FOUR MAIN COLOR GROUPS FOR 2009

— Source: Benjamin Moore Paint

Raw. Elemental, back to basics, the simplest form, re-use, not overly processed, purity, basic, pared down. Colors are white on white and layering of whites. Gray dominates. Also, cool gray and warm beige.

Simplexity. A combination of simple and complex. Themes include lace, pattern and shape, origami, pleating, mosaic, leather patchwork, kaleidoscopes, modular. Colors are blue with grays, color blocks, blackened hues.

Urban Silence. Green buildings, garden rooftops, silent beauty, slow food, hostels, tree as an element. Colors are brown and leaf green. Copper in brown is growing in influence. Oiled bronze is a new color that will be seen in appliances. Concrete grays with shades of green

Private Identity. The simplistic beauty of the spirit. Personalization, thumbprint. We maintain our identity as we are "absorbed" into the cultural world. Graphics, expressionism. Colors are slick black, denim, brass, warm and cool metallics.



A HELPFUL LITTLE PAD

Have you ever wondered how to smooth out those high and low spots in the finish of your solid surface countertops created by normal wear and tear? The good news is it's an easy fix that is also very light on your pocketbook, and is available at your corner grocery store.

Think two words: Scotch Brite®. The last thing

a countertop fabricator does before finishing an installation is rub down the countertop surface with an industrial version of this ubiquitous household tool.

Each strand of the pad is coated with an abrasive that actually feathers and blends the look of your countertop as you go over it. The color of the pad determines the grit of the abrasive, which means the appropriate pad for your countertop will vary depending on the sheen of the finish. Call your

sales associate for more information about which pad to use for your particular countertop finish.

If you make a habit of regularly wiping the countertop surface with a Scotch Brite pad, you will maintain that "factory fresh" finish you loved so much when the countertops were installed.

EVERYTHING, INCLUDING THE KITCHEN SINK!

The latest trend in kitchen sinks is all about having options. Never before has there been such a fabulous array of materials, colors and installation options for consumers to choose from.



Copper. Imagine a gorgeous kitchen sink that practically cleans itself, is made of one of Earth's natural elements and won't support the growth of bacteria. Forget about harsh chemicals and cleaners with this beauty – a copper sink cleans easily with just soap and water. Even more appealing, copper possesses antibacterial properties that make it impossible for bacteria such as e-coli to survive for more than an hour or two.

Available in either "live patina" (raw) or heat-bonded lacquer finish, copper lends a rich look to any kitchen. Live patina copper will change appearance over time as the copper oxidizes. This does not have any harmful health benefits; in fact, the live patina assists in the process of eliminating germs and bacteria and is considered exceptionally healthy. Lacquered finish sinks maintain the fresh coppery look of a new sink.

Recommendation: Available primarily in undermount and farm house styles, copper sinks are an elegant and sanitary solution to any kitchen's décor.

Stainless Steel. Forget the hollow sound and stodgy look from yesteryear. Today's stainless steel sinks are manufactured from high quality stainless



steel and nickel alloys for strength, durability and beauty.

A perfect complement to the current trend of increased use of steel and chrome on appliances and accessories in the kitchen, stainless steel sinks come in a mind-boggling variety of shapes, sizes and configurations.

Recommendation: Undermount a stainless steel sink on a natural stone or quartz countertop. It's an appealing combination that is sleek, sultry and sanitary.



Solid Surface. Chief among the many benefits of using solid surface in the kitchen is the ability to create an elegantly seamless junction between the countertop surface and the sink. Add to this water-loving combination design features like built-in decorative drainboards, mix and match bowl configurations and custom placement of faucet locations, and you have the makings of a designer's dream.

Although normally manufactured in various shades of off-white, custom-fabricated solid surface sinks are available in vibrant colors and patterns to match or complement virtually any countertop. Ask your sales associate for more details.

Recommendation: Although solid surface bowls work well with any countertop surface, they are most versatile as seamed-in, integral-bowls in a solid surface countertop.

Composite. Consisting of quartz crystals blended with a bonding resin, composite sinks are tough, durable and hygienic. These hard-working sinks are highly resistant to extreme changes in temperature and are unaffected by acids and alkalis normally found in the home.

Although the color range is somewhat limited, composite sinks are an attractive addition to any kitchen. They are available in both undermount and drop-in varieties.

Recommendation: Perfectly at home in a "working" kitchen, composite sinks offer the appealing combination of good looks and reliable service for the long haul.



Stone. A natural material that time has made strong and man has made beautiful, a stone sink will sustain its beauty and durability indefinitely if given proper care. Materials include granite, soapstone, marble and limestone. Cleaning involves a soft cloth and warm water.

Because natural stone is a porous material, stone sinks are treated with a penetrating sealer that fills the microscopic voids between crystals. Most manufacturers recommend resealing the sink every six months to one year, using a sealer found in most hardware stores.

Recommendation: Stone sinks are singularly beautiful when installed as part of a natural stone countertop. As long as care is taken during cleaning, a stone sink should last a lifetime.

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Reflections is a quarterly newsletter focusing on the latest surfacing trends for your home, office, and commercial applications. It is offered to you courtesy of your friends at Olive Mill

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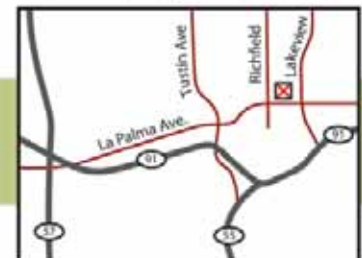
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4247 E. La Palma Avenue
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