

# Kitchen & Bath design news



6 | Elbow offers stainless steel custom countertops that can be integrated with any model sink from its eight sink families. It is available in a choice of Lustrous Spin or Custom Matte finishes.  
**Circle No. 185 on Product Card**



7 | Yorkline is one of the Cambria Natural Quartz Surfaces available from Cambria. Available in polished or honed finishes, Yorkline captures the look of limestone and provides quartz durability.  
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8 | Her Stone from Hereta Living & Creative Care, is now offered in the five-color Russett collection. It is bacteria-, stain- and heat-resistant, the firm notes.  
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9 | This Elstonart from VT Industries uses no acid used, urea-formaldehyde, particle-laced resin, water-based adhesives and fire-retardant under-air quality certified laminates.  
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Green products, too, are gaining a foothold in an increasingly eco-conscious world, as natural materials and countertop materials with recycled content garner interest among some consumers.

Both natural and engineered stone products remain strong sellers, and nature-inspired hues that convey depth and dimension remain one of the hottest trends. That's according to countertop manufacturers recently surveyed by *Kitchen & Bath Design News*, who cited soothing colors, rich textures, nature-inspired designs, value-priced offerings and unique products as some of the hottest trends in today's countertop market.

## MATERIAL CHOICES

When it comes to material choices, John F. Scott, R.I. notes, "Engineered stone and granite are the most popular choices today, solid surface has definitely declined the past five years, and laminate countertops are making a comeback because of the new designs offered and the affordability [of the product]." Scott, vp. for distribution sales at The Swan Corp., in St. Louis, MO, sees a continued trend toward mining and matching countertop materials to maximize functional and aesthetic appeal.

Both manufacturers and designers see granite and quartz products continuing to gain ground, along with laminates that imitate the look of stone. Wood countertops are also seeing renewed interest, lending a warm and natural appearance to the kitchen while offering recyclability.

Much ado has been made about recent media reports that stating that some granite can emit

potentially dangerous radon emissions (see related story, page 14). The Cleveland, OH-based Marble Institute of America has countered that the claims are misleading, and merely part of a competitive attack that needlessly panics homeowners. But while some kitchen and bath dealers have seen consumers locking off from granite as a result of the controversy, others continue to see granite remaining mostly strong.

Another countertop product that is showing strength in the marketplace is laminate. With the nation's current financial concerns, the laminate market has seen sales increase thanks to its more affordable price tags.

"Laminate countertops continue to be a good price point for many consumers," states Trisha Schmitt, marketing communications manager for VT Industries in Holstein, IA. Schmitt, who admits that "natural products are growing in popularity," nevertheless points out some of the advantages of the new premium laminates.

"I have noticed a large increase toward the new premium laminates that have more of a three dimensional look," Schmitt explains. "The new products also do a better job emulating natural products such as granite. And with advances in post-form technology, you can get the granite look on the edges of the countertops instead of the brown line you get on self lay-up legs."

Of course, the laminate tops do not require sealing like stone products and are easy to maintain, as well, she points out, noting that this addresses consumer demand for easy-to-maintain products.



10 | DuPont Corian offers 13 colors that reflect traditional New England cottage living and present movement through organic floral veins and particles. Among the light neutral shades offered are Alice Vera, Aster Quill, Carobac, Clair Shell, Egyptian Tappan, Java Rock, Nam Cloud and Stone Harbor.  
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11 | ALine by Advance Tabco, too, adds the Island Dina line of bar counters to its full line of stainless steel countertops. The 18-gauge, 304 stainless steel counters are designed with a 16" wide integral serving shelf with a 42" bar height.  
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12 | Surfaces from Mystere Solid Surfaces/Mystere Solid Surfaces have the distinct veined look of natural stone, yet are non-porous and stain resistant.  
**Circle No. 191 on Product Card**



13 | Bio-ox Plover is the latest addition to the River Series from Silestone by Cosentino. The quartz top is scratch-, scorch- and stain-resistant, and incorporates antimicrobial protection.  
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14 | Genuine Stone Tile from Outdoor Plastics Industries are comprised of 100% natural stones sorted by color, size and thickness, and then individually adhered in mosaic or stacked patterns.  
**Circle No. 193 on Product Card**



15 | Composite Quartz from Compo Marmel & Quartz is a scratch-resistant, European-styled quartz surfaced by that can be used for kitchen countertops and bathroom vanities, among other applications.  
**Circle No. 194 on Product Card**