

kitchen & bath DESIGN NEWS[®]

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Wellness and the Tub



Marble has been a decorative staple in kitchens when natural stone is the preference, as showcased on the countertops, backsplashes and waterfall island in this kitchen designed by Minka McDonald of Jinx McDonald Interior Design.

Photo: Blaine Johnathan Photography

Tops on Their List

Rapidly evolving lifestyles, design trends and consumer hot buttons continue to fuel robust demand – and spending – for kitchen countertops, a *KBDN* survey finds.

Changing lifestyles, emerging design trends and consumer product “hot buttons” are having a major impact on materials, colors and styles for countertops, which continue to grow in prominence as both an aesthetic and functional feature in today’s new and remodeled kitchens.

That’s one of several key findings of a nationwide survey conducted by *Kitchen & Bath Design News* among kitchen dealers and designers, who report that countertops – impacted largely by the COVID-19 pandemic – have increasingly become the focal point of the modern-day kitchen, serving not only in their traditional roles of food prep, eating, cleanup and entertaining, but as a multi-purpose space for homework, hobbies, work-from-home projects, and various other activities.

Yet despite the dizzying array of colors, materials, features and other choices available, kitchen consumers are very specific when it comes to the criteria they consider when selecting their countertops, the *KBDN* survey found.

According to the findings of the survey, conducted last month, key factors in countertop selection include material,

color, durability, affordability and sustainability. Sanitary benefits have also become increasingly important, dealers and designers tell *KBDN*. Similarly, cost is also a factor in homeowners’ selection of a countertop material, although it seems that clients are increasingly willing to invest – and even stretch their budget – in order to obtain the material, functionality and overall aesthetic they desire (see related story, p. 33).

QUARTZ LEADING MATERIAL

According to the survey’s results, engineered quartz continues to be the countertop material that dealers and designers report is growing fastest in demand among their kitchen clients.

Specifically, the *KBDN* survey found that engineered quartz countertops are seen by nearly 33% of those surveyed as the countertop they see growing fastest in demand (see Figure 1).

By comparison, quartzite – natural sandstone that is fused under heat and pressure with sparkly quartz crystals – is viewed as the fastest-growing kitchen countertop material by roughly 17% of survey respondents, while granite is seen