

Decorator's Notebook

Turn Your Kitchen Into An Island Paradise

(NAPSA)—For some, a trip to the island of their dreams is as close as their kitchen. Many design experts consider kitchen islands a simple way to expand storage capacity and countertop areas, without going through a major kitchen renovation.

Plus, for many, these stand alone countertops—with or without a sink attached—become a way to move food preparation closer to the stove.

Most designers agree that selecting the right material for the countertop is a key ingredient to a successful kitchen design. A correct selection is critical to both the overall appearance and the day-to-day function of the kitchen.

Granite is one of the most popular choices. It is a very dense, durable material that may be honed or highly polished. There are other natural stones, including serpentine, marble, limestone, quartzite and slate which, depending on the design, lend themselves very well.

A natural stone countertop is also economical. Improved technology has made it comparable in cost to man-made alternatives. The intrinsic beauty and limitless variety of patterns and colors of natural stone offer unique opportunities for creative design. Also, a kitchen island



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with a stone top can be at home in kitchens done in elegant, traditional, country, English Cottage, French Provincial or a sleek, modern setting.

You might also want to think about coordinating island work areas, baking centers, planning desks, food and bar service counters, bathroom vanities, walls and flooring. Natural stone offers you the opportunity to coordinate all of these areas and the cost will be lower because it can all be done at the same time.

To learn more about using stone materials in your home design, visit the Web site at www.buildingstone.org.