How Expensive Are Marble Countertops

Depending on who you ask, marble countertops can be the best or worst choice to install in your kitchen. The rich history and beauty of marble is certainly appealing, but the high price tag and constant maintenance require more energy to keep it looking pristine.

For many people, the aesthetic of having a marble countertop to show off how luxurious your home is, is worth the price. But what exactly is the price to install marble countertops? The main answer is that it depends. There are a lot of factors that contribute to how expensive marble countertops are that you should know before you buy.

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Average Cost of Marble Countertops

Marble countertops can range in price and how much is needed for installation. Marble is charged by the square foot being installed. A standard range of marble can cost anywhere from $40-$200 per square foot with the average being about $60-$80 per square foot.

Taking into account installation fees and other charges, a homeowner can be charged anywhere from $2000-$5000, with the average being $3000 in total.

Marble countertop installation is broken down into several elements which affect the price.

· Grade of Marble

· Type of Marble

· Availability

· Color

· Job Complexity

· Installation & Labor

· Edging

· Finish

· Waste Removal

· Add On Purchases

As you can see, there is a lot that goes into gauging the price of marble.

Grade of Marble

Marble is graded on a scale to determine the level of quality with each piece. The Marble Institute of America established these grades to ensure customers are not cheated in purchasing low-grade marble at high prices.

Grade A: High quality marble stone with minimal flaws, light veining, subtle colors, strong durability, with a very high cost.

Grade B: Second to highest quality marble stone with minor flaws like pitting and fissures, a blotchy appearance, and a medium to high price range.

Grade C: This marble has some flaws with pitting and fissures, large cracks and chipping which will need repair, and set at a lower price because of the damage.

Grade D: Lowest quality marble stone which is heavily damaged, contains bright colors, dark veins, minor to major flaws, and is the least expensive option.

Obviously the higher the grade of marble purchased, the more the price will increase.

Type of Marble

Marble comes in a variety of colors and styles, but the most iconic appearance is a soft white stone with minimal veining. The most iconic types of marble stone are:

Carrara: One of the most common and desirable marbles to purchase. Carrara only comes from the quarries in Carrara, Italy and has the iconic look of white stone and light veining. Carrara is often priced around $40 per sq. ft.

Calacatta: The most expensive marble on the market, Calacatta is remarkably similar to Carrara but with more pronounced features. Calacatta is also only quarried in Italy, making it rarer to obtain; making it cost around $180 per sq. ft.

Statuario: A white and dark grey stone which is a popular alternative to Carrara when it is not available. It is just as affordable, costing $50 per sq. ft.

Danby: A denser and less porous marble quarried in Vermont, USA. Danby is touted as being more eco-friendly than the other stones and a higher quality alternative that is easier to obtain, costing $80 per sq. ft.

Cultured: Cultured marble is an artificial marble stone where marble fragments are fused together with a synthetic resin and dyed. It is sealed earlier and has higher durability than natural marble, costing $65 per sq. ft.

Makrana: Quarried from India, Makrana marble is difficult to obtain internationally but very budget friendly costing $12 per sq. ft.

Crema Marfil: Mainly used by contractors and interior designers for its warming colors of beige and yellow, Crema Marfil can cost $40 per sq. ft.

Type of Marble	Appeal	Price Per Sq. Ft	Example
Carrara	Common, affordable, popular	$40	
Calacatta	Rare, expensive, iconic	$180	
Statuario	Common, affordable, popular	$50	
Danby	Denser, less porous, eco-friendly	$80	
Cultured	Artificial, denser	$65	Can appear as any type of marble
Makrana	Budget friendly, difficult to obtain	$12	
Crema Marfil	Brighter colors	$40	

Availability

Marble stone is very popular for its historical significance in Italian culture, using it for famous statues, monuments, and overall interior design in high society. This popularity made marble highly coveted, and like all things that have a high demand, comes limited supply.

Carrara and Calacatta are the most sought-after marble stones, but they are only quarried in one location. Depending on how much is unearthed, there may not always be a readily available supply of Carrara or Calacatta available. This makes the price to obtain them go up.

Color of Marble

The highly desired marble colors are white with light veining. It is the style people choose most often and it also makes it a more expensive marble to purchase. The demand for white marble means that it can sell out quickly, so companies can sell it at a higher price.

Other colors like beige, pink, brown, red, and blue are not as widely desirable. This makes them less expensive where companies will often put them on sale to entice homeowners or contractors to purchase it.

Job Complexity

Depending on the job being completed, the price for marble countertops will be affected. For example, a job that is going to install Calacatta white marble, with multiple cutouts for extra sinks and a cooktop, premium edging, and has several curves on the counter surface will become exceedingly expensive. On the other hand, a job requiring a single slab of Carrara marble with a single cutout and standard edging will be much cheaper.

Installation & Labor

The cost of marble is more than just the stone itself. It includes the installation and labor to make sure the countertops are properly measured, fabricated, transported, and installed.

Depending on the company you are working at, laborers can be charged by the hour or by the square foot being installed. Companies that charge by the hour typically charge $35-$45 per hour. Considering several hours of labor, it can easily become $300-$500.

Travel costs also play an important role as marble is very delicate. It can be damaged easily which is why the grading system has been implemented. However, transporting marble from the fabricator to the job site is another charge, depending on the homeowner's proximity to the fabricator. Homeowners who live farther away will have to pay more to safely transport the heavy material. Homeowners could opt to transport the marble stone themselves, but without a proper vehicle then they risk damaging the stone or their car. Renting a large truck is an option, but then that could become more costly than just paying the fabricator.

Some companies will have a standard installation fee which is added into their quote.

Edging

Edging involves shaping the edges of the countertop into set designs. Depending on the company, some quotes will add-on a standard edging with installation or they may apply it as a separate charge. There are two main types of edging, standard and premium.

Standard Edging has basic shapes and rounded designs to prevent injury from hard angles or sharp points.

Premium edging has more elaborate designs which requires more time to fabricate. These are typically seen as an upgrade and will cost extra.

Companies will send or provide homeowners with an [Edging Tool](#) to visually see the types of edging they are selecting before choosing.

[Finish](#)

A finish is the service that makes the marble stone shiny and bright. Different finishes will change the price of the marble depending on what you are selecting.

Polished Finish has the iconic glossy and shiny coating that is the standard coating with marble.

Honed Finish has a smooth and matte coating and is considered an upgrade, costing $10-$20 per sq. ft.

Leathered Finish is another upgrade, costing $20-$25 per sq. ft. to apply. This involves running a diamond tipped brush on the surface to create an uneven and textured feel and appearance. Due to the many crevices, it does not have a reflective surface.

Caressed Finish is an expensive upgrade, costing $30-$35 per sq. ft. This finish has a polished layer on the leather texture. Not every marble stone is capable of withstanding this, so homeowners must ask for more information if this option is available.

Waste Removal

When a homeowner is planning to install a marble countertop, then they will have to remove the previous countertop material first.

Again, depending on what the company includes in their quote, they might have a standard fee for old countertop removal or they could charge by the amount of sq. ft. being removed.

Add On Purchases

Like the name suggests, these are all add-on purchases which will be a separate charge from the installation price for your marble.

Backsplash: A backsplash is an added piece of material that acts as an extension to the countertop. They can be made from the same material as your countertop or another material. Installing a backsplash is recommended by many fabricators to protect your walls from grease, stains, and food debris, as well as serving as an accent piece to the room design.

Extra Cutouts: Some companies will include a limited number of cutouts for countertop installation. But ordering more cutouts for a second sink or second cooktop will be an additional charge.

Plumbing: Depending on what is being done, doing the plumbing work for an extra sink will be an additional charge.

Future Payments

Marble is an excellent stone to install for interior design, but it has a few drawbacks which will require future monetary investments.

Repair: Marble is an incredibly soft stone, meaning it has a higher chance of being damaged unlike other stones. In case damage occurs from scratches or staining, it will cost the homeowner to have it fixed or replaced. Repairs and treatments for marble countertops can cost $200-$600 depending on the damage.

Refinishing: Marble stone can dull over time from active use and improper cleaning. To keep it shining, it will need to have a finish reapplied once or twice a year which can cost $500-$1200.

Saving Tips

So far, it seems like marble countertops are going to be quite expensive. It makes sense that it will cost a couple thousand dollars when you figure out the stone, buy it, understand the services and install it. Still, there are ways to help save you money.

1. **Buy Tiles**: Marble slabs are broken down and excess pieces are used for other purposes. Asking for marble tiles instead of slabs can reduce the price by a few dollars to help eliminate some of the excess material the fabricators have. In contrast though, there will be more exposed seams and more maintenance to keep it sealed.

2. **Purchase Affordable Marble**: Buying less expensive marble like Makrana can lower the price a great deal.

3. **Purchase Non-Popular Colors**: Everyone wants white marble countertops because they look nice and are expensive. Instead, purchase beige, pink or gray marble since no one is purchasing it, making it less costly.

4. **Check Your Quote**: See what the quote says regarding what does and does not come with the installation fee. Some companies may include countertop removal, cutouts, and edging as part of their installation service.

5. **Get Multiple Quotes**: Shop around to see which fabricator is closest to your area and see what they offer. Obtaining 3 quotes from different companies can allow you to make a more reasonable decision on who is giving you the most for your money.

Conclusion

In summation, how expensive are marble countertops? Answer, it depends, but it will probably be expensive since it is a hot commodity and a popular interior design trend. However, something that is expensive and rare is usually worth the effort.