

Best Granite Alternatives: What Are Your Options?

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Granite countertops are the centerpiece of many of today's homes. However, perhaps you feel that this natural stone is not the right fit for your home. If that is the case, this guide can help you find viable alternatives to granite countertops.

What Are the Best Alternatives to Granite Countertops?

The following options are not only great alternatives to granite countertops, but some of the best countertop options in general.

Marble Countertops

[Marble countertops](#) are beloved among homeowners. The classic and timeless appearance of marble countertops create an inviting environment in the home. Marble will offer you various colors and styles, many of which feature elegant veining. The countertops typically cost between \$40 to \$100 per square foot.

On the negative side, marble is a very porous stone, so you will need to make sure you keep up on sealing. Sealing must be repeated a few times per year. The natural stone is also prone to scratching and staining, so you must be careful.

Marble

Pros	Cons
Classic, timeless appearance	Porous
Various colors and styles	Prone to scratches and stains
Reasonably priced options	

Quartz Countertops

Quartz is an engineered stone that is made by combining roughly 90 percent quartz with around 10 percent polyresin. Although these surfaces are not natural stone, they are some of the [most beautiful](#) that you can find on the market. Because quartz is engineered, customization is easily available. In addition to their beauty, quartz countertops are very durable and easy to care for. These benefits all make the material one of the best choices for any countertop.

On the downside, quartz is susceptible to damage from excessive heat. Because of this, it may not be the best choice for kitchen countertops. But as long as you are careful, you should not have any problems with the material.

The cost of quartz is hard to categorize as a positive or negative, considering it can be found in such a wide price range. You will generally find quartz for anywhere between \$50 to \$120 per square foot.

Quartz

Pros	Cons
Beautiful appearance	Can be damaged by excessive heat
Wide variety to choose from	
Durable	
Easy to care for	

Quartzite Countertops

Not to be confused with the similarly named quartz, quartzite is an elegant natural stone material that is a great choice for countertops. Many types of this natural stone look so similar to marble that they get confused for the other stone. If you are looking for a natural stone that will give you the look of marble with the durability and strength of granite, [quartzite countertops](#) can be just what you are looking for. Quartzite is also resistant to heat and stains.

In terms of negative qualities, quartzite only has a handful. It is not available in as many colors and styles as some of the other countertop materials. You will also need to re-seal the surface about twice per year.

Quartzite countertops can generally be found for around \$60 to \$120 per square foot.

Quartzite

Pros	Cons
Elegant appearance	Not available in as many styles as other materials
Durable	Needs re-sealing twice per year
Can withstand wear and tear	
Heat resistant	
Stain resistant	

Slate Countertops

[Slate countertops](#) are a great option for modern kitchen designs. These stunning darker colored surfaces are quite the stylish addition for the home. Slate countertops are also durable, which is a benefit.

While it is a great option for countertops, slate does have some drawbacks. If you want a lighter colored countertop, slate will not be an ideal option for you. The surfaces are only available in tones of black and gray.

Slate countertops are often available for around \$50 to \$200 per square foot.

Slate

Pros	Cons
Beautiful	Not available in many color or style options

Pros	Cons
Great for modern kitchen designs	

Soapstone Countertops

If you are looking for a countertop that is smooth to the touch, soapstone countertops will be the perfect choice for you. These [surfaces](#) are also ideal if you are looking for a material that is on the darker side in terms of color. You can find soapstone countertops in a range of dark greens and grays.

One thing you will have to watch out for with soapstone countertops is scratching. The material is relatively easy to scratch. That said, these scratches are easy to sand out.

Soapstone countertops usually cost about \$55 to \$100 per square foot.

Soapstone

Pros	Cons
Attractive	Easy to scratch
Smooth to the touch	

Limestone Countertops

Limestone countertops will give any home a feeling of light and life. These surfaces are known for their delicate beauty.

Although they are beautiful, you will need to be careful with [limestone countertops](#). The material is very porous, which makes it not the greatest choice for a high traffic area. Although this is the case, you can surely have limestone countertops in your kitchen if you exercise the proper amount of caution and are willing to maintain the surfaces.

Depending on your budget, the cost of limestone countertops may be seen as a negative. The surfaces generally cost around \$70 to \$200 per square foot.

Limestone

Pros	Cons
Beautiful	Porous
Brings feeling of light and life to the home	Cost

Travertine Countertops

Travertine is a natural stone that is very similar to limestone. This is due to the fact that it actually is a form of limestone, although the two names should not be used interchangeably. Travertine features some distinct differences from limestone.

Much like limestone, this [material](#) can bring a natural feeling of light to your home. It is admired by homeowners because of its beauty.

As with limestone however, the negative aspects of travertine are its porous qualities and high cost.

Travertine

Pros	Cons
Pleasing to the eye	Porous
Brings feelings of light and life to the home	High cost

Gemstone Countertops

Looking for something that is truly exotic? If you are, consider [gemstone countertops](#). These surfaces can easily become the focal point of any room you install them in. Beyond their beauty, gemstone countertops are very durable.

While the material is beautiful and durable, gemstone countertops have some downsides. In order to keep them in great shape, you must be willing to put in the necessary maintenance efforts. The main drawback to gemstone countertops is their cost: These surfaces start at around \$100 per square foot – and very often cost much more.

Gemstone

Pros	Cons
Beautiful and unique	Need frequent maintenance
Can be the focal point of any room	High cost
Durable	

Glass Countertops

If you like more of a modern look, you should consider glass countertops. These surfaces will give your kitchen or other rooms an attractive and up-to-date appearance. [Glass countertops](#) are also very durable, stain resistant and easy to clean.

As far as cons go, glass countertops are prone to cracking and chipping. The surfaces are also on the more expensive side.

Glass

Pros	Cons
Attractive	Prone to cracking
Modern	Prone to chipping
Durable	High cost
Stain resistant	
Easy to clean	

Onyx Countertops

[Onyx countertops](#) are an excellent choice if you are looking for a surface that is truly one-of-a-kind. The material is known for its stunning beauty. One unique feature that you will receive with onyx countertops is the ability to backlight the surfaces. Backlighting will allow you to further emphasize the beauty of the stone. Onyx is a great addition to the home as a countertop and can also look great as a bar top or backsplash.

Despite having many positives, onyx is like any other material in that it is not perfect. The main drawback to this breathtaking natural stone is its cost: Onyx countertops typically cost anywhere between \$75 to \$250 per square foot.

Onyx

Pros	Cons
One-of-a-kind natural beauty	High cost
Can be backlit	
Versatile	

What Are Some Other Alternatives to Granite?

While stone countertops (both natural and engineered) are the best alternatives to granite, they are not the only alternatives you have. Below is a list of other material options you have, as well as the pros and cons of each.

Stainless Steel Countertops

Stainless steel is not only suitable for appliances. Many modern kitchens feature stainless steel countertops. If you like the modern look, it is an option you can consider.

The major downside to stainless steel is that the material is prone to scratching and denting. Some homeowners also feel that these countertops have a 'cold' look.

Stainless Steel

Pros	Cons
Modern look	Prone to scratching
	Prone to denting
	Can look 'cold'

Butcher Block Countertops

Butcher block is another common material for countertops. Unlike stainless steel, these surfaces are known to give off a 'warm' look. Butcher block countertops are also resistant to bacteria.

Maintenance can be a hassle with butcher block countertops. While the sealing required for natural stone surfaces is fairly simple, the sanding and oiling required to keep these surfaces in top shape can be a pain.

Butcher Block

Pros	Cons
Stylish	Requires frequent maintenance
Bacteria resistant	

Wood Countertops

Butcher block countertops are made from wood, which means that wood countertops are similar in that they provide a 'warm' look. The surfaces are also quiet to work on.

As with butcher block, wood countertops require frequent maintenance. You will have to oil the surfaces two to three times per year.

Wood

Pros	Cons
Warm look	Frequent maintenance required
Quiet to work on	

Tile Countertops

While tile backsplashes are more common, you can have a tile countertop. One of the primary benefits of tile countertops are the wide selection of tiles available and the DIY ability installation affords you.

Grout lines are the major drawback to tile countertops. Not only are these lines unattractive, but you will also have to worry about cleaning them as well.

Tile

Pros	Cons
Wide selection of styles	Grout lines are unattractive, need cleaning and must be re-sealed yearly
DIY installation	

Concrete Countertops

Just as tile is not only for backsplashes, concrete is not only for sidewalks. If you want an outside-the-box stylish countertop, concrete can give you just that.

On that note, the material has many negatives. Concrete countertops are porous, expensive and not able to be repaired if any damages occur.

Concrete

Pros	Cons
Unique and stylish	Porous
	Expensive
	Cannot be repaired

Solid Surface Countertops

Brands such as Corian are referred to as solid surface countertops. The surfaces are known for being durable and smooth to the touch.

While solid surface has its benefits, the material also has many drawbacks. It is not resistant to heat, easy to scratch, prone to dents and can stain easily.

Solid Surface

Pros	Cons
Durable	Can be damaged by heat, scratches and dents
Smooth	Prone to staining

Laminate Countertops

Lastly, laminate countertops are another common countertop option on the market. The surfaces are popular due to their low cost.

Although laminate is inexpensive, you will be paying for what you get. The material can very easily be damaged, especially by heat.

Laminate

Pros	Cons
Low cost	Can be damaged by heat
	Can chip, scratch and stain easily

Countertops are a very important part of any home – especially in the kitchen. Your countertops are very likely to be the focal point of the room they are in. While granite is an ideal countertop material, there are many good alternatives to choose from. Something to keep in mind when selecting your countertop is that you should get something you will enjoy not only now, but for many years to come. While budgets can always play a role in what materials you select for your home remodeling project, you should not let cost be the only determining factor when you purchase new countertops.

Through reviewing this guide, you will be able to see what other options exist outside of granite countertops. While some of these options are listed among the ‘best’ alternatives, it will ultimately be up to you to decide which material is the right fit to complete your remodel. This guide will also help you keep in mind many key factors of the various countertop materials, which can help make your decision easier.