

Laminate vs Granite: Which one is better?

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When remodeling your kitchen there are tons of factors to take into consideration one of the biggest for most people is their budget. Natural stone and wood countertops tend to cost a pretty penny making some consider laminate as an alternative. Laminate has come a very long way since it was commonplace in homes decades ago but it is still not comparable to natural stones and woods.

Laminate is a good alternative when trying to cut costs. When installing them into a rental or investment property laminate can be an eye-appealing and cost-effective choice. However, natural stone countertops are the most ideal surface for longevity, high traffic areas, and to add value to your home. No matter what your preference, here is a complete guide with everything you need to know when comparing granite and laminate countertops.

What is Laminate?

Laminate is often associated with cheap countertops that rose to popularity in the Fifties and Sixties but they have much evolved since then. Laminate countertops are made from layers of plastic that are bonded to a particleboard or kraft paper to create a strong solid countertop surface. Laminate countertops are made of a mixture of wood and paper products held together with glue and resin.

What is Granite?

Granite is a natural igneous rock. It takes hundreds even thousands of years for granite to form in underground volcano chambers. It forms slowly during a crystallization process of magma. Granite is made of mostly quartz and feldspar but also includes small amounts of other minerals.

Granite is mined from the earth since it is an igneous stone. The place where granite is mined is referred to as quarries. Granite is extracted from the quarries and then transported to facilities where it is cut into slabs. Those slabs are then shipped all over the world to different fabricators. Next, the slabs are cut into home surfaces and installed creating breathtaking home designs. Granite is mined from many different places all over the world.

Most of the granite sold in the United States is from Brazil, India, and Canada. High-end granite is rare and harder to get it typically comes from Mediterranean countries such as Spain, Italy, and Greece. Granite can also be found here in the United States.

Durability

Laminate is relatively durable and tough enough to withstand daily use. Unlike stone and wood laminate is susceptible to scratches, water damage, and peeling. Laminate is not heat resistant since it is made of plastic and other meltable materials. Laminate countertops do not have a long shelf life and will need to be repaired over the years.

Granite is a very durable resistance to scratching, cracking, and chipping. Granite is also one of the most heat resistant countertop materials. A properly installed and sealed granite countertop will look like new for an entire lifetime under normal use and proper care. Granite usually does not require re-sealing.

Is there Laminate that looks like Granite?

Yes! The look of natural stone like marble and granite are some of the most popular laminate patterns. Other laminate patterns include natural wood and bold decorative colors.

Appearance

At one point laminate countertops were limited to only a few patterns and designs but today there are hundreds of colors, patterns, and textures available. Today high-end laminates can resemble some of the most popular natural stone countertops such as marble, granite, and quartz. Laminate typically has a matte finish.

Granite countertops come in numerous vibrant colors and unique patterns. Natural stone is a breathtaking element to have in any room. Granite comes in the most common colors such as beige and white as well as exotic colors such as blue and red. Granite typically has a polished and elegant finish.

Maintenance

Laminate is low maintenance material once it is installed it does not need to be sealed or specially cleaned. Daily household cleaning items can be used on laminate surfaces. Laminate countertops can be subject to delamination over time and can be difficult to repair.

Granite countertops do need to be sealed in order to ensure they do not stain. Do not use abrasive cleaners, which can destroy the protective sealant on the granite. Polish and clean counter frequently to keep your countertops looking good as new.

Installation

Laminate countertops are fast and easy to install there is even the option to do it yourself. Laminate countertops can be installed in as fast as one day.

Granite countertops are fabricated to your home's specifications within a few days after getting exact measurements. Granite should be installed by a professional and it is not a good idea to attempt to DIY a granite countertop.

How much more expensive is granite than laminate?

The average laminate countertop installation costs between \$800 to \$1,700 in total. The price is around \$10 to \$50 per square foot. This is a great option to cut costs and save money. Granite countertops will cost you around \$35 to \$100 per square foot and up if the granite is considered "[high end.](#)" The total price for installation and materials of granite countertops is usually between \$2,000 to \$4,500. The cost of granite is determined by thickness, appearance, porosity, and country of origin.

Laminate is the obvious cheaper option but something to consider is the lifespan of a laminate countertop vs natural stone such as granite. You may pay less now but in the long run, it may cost you more money in constant upkeep and replacement. Another perk of granite to consider is that in addition to its durability and beauty it will increase your home's resale value.

What are the Pros and Cons of Laminate Countertops?

<u>Pros of Laminate</u>	<u>Cons of Laminate</u>
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Inexpensive

Not heat resistant

DIY-Friendly

Susceptible to delamination

Many design options

Short lifespan

Difficult to repair

What are the Pros and Cons of Granite Countertops?

<u>Pros of Granite</u>	<u>Cons of Granite</u>
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Heat Resistant

Seams

Sustainable

Needs to be installed by professionals

Scratch and Crack Resistant

Low Maintenance

Many options of color and patterns

Is Granite better than Laminate?

The short answer; yes. Granite is a far superior countertop material than laminate. Granite has a classier and more elegant look and feel than laminate. Granite will also increase the value of your home after installation and can last a lifetime with very minimal maintenance. New homeowners or those looking to enhance an investment property should consider laminate since high-quality natural stone countertops do not always fit into the budget. Laminate countertops are the perfect solution for a low budget project or to use temporarily until you are ready to invest in stone countertops.

Most Popular Laminate Brands

The possibilities of laminate types are endless however you should not just purchase laminate from anyone. The three most reliable and high-quality companies to purchase laminate from are Formica, Wilsonart, and Nevamar.

Formica is the original manufacturer of plastic laminates and still the leading company. Wilsonart is known for some of the toughest of the high-pressure laminates, Wilsonart also manufactures other countertop materials, including quartz and solid-surface material. Nevamar is owned by Panolam Industries, Nevamar makes some of the most artistic laminates. Their selection includes standard wood grains and stone patterns, but also hundreds of abstracts and texture prints in a wide array of colors.

The top 5 most popular laminate colors are those that resemble natural wood or stone such as Calacatta Marble, Ouro Romano, Stormy Night Granite, Graystone Oak, and Manchester Oak.

Most Popular Granite

Many different types of retailers sell stone but it is best to purchase granite from the stone industry professional and fabricators. By purchasing from a fabricator instead of a big box store you cut out the middleman saving time and money.

The top 5 most popular granite stones are Azul Platino, Santa Cecilia, Black Pearl, Ice White, and Blue Night.

[Azul Platino](#) granite is a consistent granite, featuring an ever-present pattern of bluish-grey speckles on an off-white background.

[Santa Cecilia](#) granite is one of the most popular natural stones in the world. This granite has a consistent pattern with a mix of yellow, gold, black, and burgundy bursts.

[Black Pearl](#) granite is a consistent black natural stone that has a very versatile style.

[White Ice](#) is an elegant and beautiful granite that is a grayish-white stone with light veins, quartz deposits, and burgundy garnet flecks.

[Blue Night](#) is a majestic, black Brazilian granite with an abundance of white veining.