

## ***Outdoor kitchens.***

Advice for choosing durable counters.

We love the creativity customers bring to backyard relaxing and entertaining.

There are man-caves in the sun, with beer taps, bar seats and, of course, a grill that has more features than a Tesla. Kitchens with simply a prep counter and eating area so families can have the convenience of lounging more and running back and forth into the house less. And elaborate kitchens that are an addition to the house minus the walls.

You do you. These tips will help with a few major decisions.

### **OUTDOOR CONSIDERATION #1 : TYPE OF STONE?**

Granite is the most recommended stone for outdoor counters. It will maintain its look and be easiest to care for across the years.

Manmade stone like quartz is the least recommended. The colors will fade due to sun and weather, with exception to a specialty brand or two, and the resins used to make it will likely turn yellow.

Quartzite and marble are in the middle. Think of them case by case, and consult with your fabricator about the specific stone you like, your setting, and your tolerance for a not-new look. How is the stone expected to age, to patina, over time? Is it likely to discolor and etch? Will you find regret or beauty in that imperfection?



*Randolph Indoor & Outdoor Design*



*Brown Jordan Outdoor Kitchens*



*Francesco Lagnese*

## OUTDOOR CONSIDERATION #2 : HOW MUCH SUN?

If your counters will be exposed to lots of weather, now's the time to think about:

### a) A light-colored granite.

Black stone bakes in the sun. More than you think.

### b) Your plan for shade.

You have a huge range of options. Pergola? Shade sail? Retractable awning? Greenery? Shady spots have the added bonus of keeping your master grill chef cool and calm.



*The Little Corner*



*Joel Dessales Design*

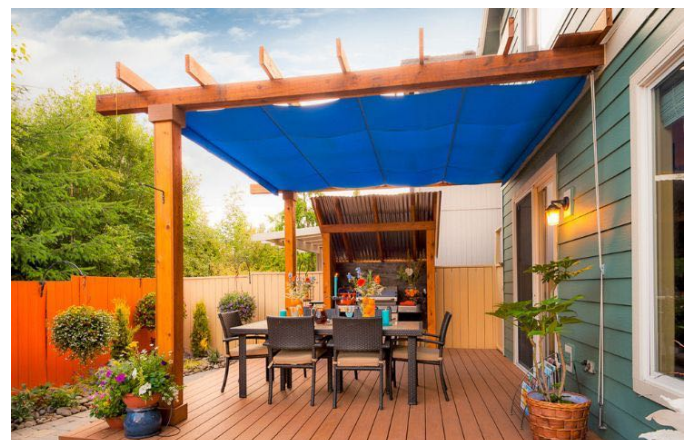


*Landscaping Network*

*The Spruce*  
**Stylish Shade Ideas for Your Outdoor Space**

*WooHome*  
**Stunning Ways to Bring Shade to Your Yard**

*RenoGuide*  
**50 Awesome Pergola Design Ideas**



*Homedit*



### OUTDOOR CONSIDERATION #3 : A PLAN FOR WINTER?

Colorado is notorious for our freeze/thaw cycles, and they can be hard on outdoor counters. Natural stone has pores and fissures. Moisture soaks into them. Moisture turns into ice and those air pockets expand. Ice melts and they contract. Repeat that cycle over and over, and a weak point in the counter can turn into a crack.

Applying an annual coat of seal protects the counter. (It's easy to do yourself.) A cover helps, too. There are a number of companies online that sell custom-cut covers.



*Jean's Canvas Products*



*Covers & All*

### OUTDOOR CONSIDERATION #4 : WHAT'S THE RIGHT SLAB?

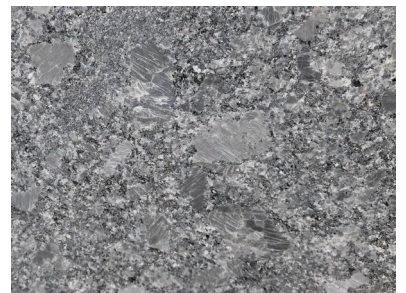
- **Inspect your slab carefully before it's cut.**

See below for details.

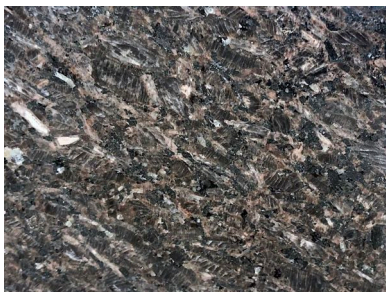
- **Dense is best.**

The minerals in the stone are tightly packed and the pattern is consistent. With that said, it's fine to consider granites with more veining; **our advice will always be to talk to your fabricator before making a final decision.**

Ask if the stone you have your heart set on will work.  
What's necessary to make it work?



*Silver Pearl*



*Cafe Imperial*



*Giallo Fiorito Dark*



*Valle Nevado*



**- Texture is good.**

We carry many slabs with a leathered or caressed finish. Both have a rugged feel. Leathered is a matte surface, while caressed has a sheen on the high points.

Texture is popular for outdoor counters due to its natural look; it also masks rough spots that can occur on a polished finish.

(Most slabs get a coat of resin after quarrying to fill minor pits and fissures and bring out color. In direct sun, resin breaks down, leading to uneven patches over time. They can be repaired but best to avoid in the first place.)

Texture adds about 25% to the stone cost. For aesthetics and maintenance, the extra amount can be well worth it.

**- Inspect your slab carefully.**

Transparency and quality mean a lot to us. For outdoor kitchens, it's good to bring your fabricator when you pick your exact slab to see if there's an issue that affects layout.

**Remember, no slab comes out of the ground perfect.**

Wherever you buy, ask to be advised of any structural flaws, or if there are larger divots that the manufacturer filled with clear or color-matched resin to make the surface smooth.

Don't rule out a slab because it has fill; instead, consider how much there is, how the stone can be cut and placement.



*Uba Tuba, polished*



*Uba Tuba, caressed*



*Cafe Bahia, caressed*

**STONE TABLE IDEAS** Have fun dreaming up your new space. Here's inspiration if you have extra stone.



*Granite Center VA*

