

natural stone countertops



classic and beautiful tough stuff

By **Lindsey Getz**
Bill Cartledge, Photographer



There's nothing more classic than beautiful natural stone to complete a kitchen's look—and fortunately, a local company has one of the widest selections around.

Colonial Marble & Granite is a full-service supplier of natural stone materials for both residential and commercial customers.

"We are able to offer customers the finest in materials, like granite, marble, onyx and more," says James Freeman, vice president of sales and marketing. "Not only can we offer these superb products, but we also fabricate the project in its entirety at our in-house production facility."

It's Colonial Marble & Granite's wide selection that really makes the company stand out, not to mention its impressive showroom. Colonial boasts something quite unheard of in the industry—an indoor slab yard. So no matter what the weather conditions, your shopping experience can be enjoyable. "Our product selection and

Top: This view is looking over the island at the countertop in the Smith family kitchen. Both slabs are crema bordeaux granite.

Above: This close-up of the Smith's island features double lamination with a cove Dupont edge rolling into an ogee edge.



For his countertops and island, homeowner Michael Tawadros selected juparana romance, a piece of granite known for its rich hue.

quality make us different," adds Freeman. "I can say, with no doubt, that the inventory in our showroom is unmatched." According to Freeman "nobody has a slab selection like we do. We house over 3,000 slabs in over 400 different colors in-house every day. We also carry a large selection of exotic stones priced at levels that will still fit within your budget."

HAPPY HOMEOWNERS

Chester County homeowner Barbara Smith says that it was Colonial's indoor slab yard that first attracted her to the company. She was seeking granite for the countertops and island in her new home. "They had a really great showroom with great lighting," she says. "While other showrooms we visited had poor lighting and weren't willing to move slabs around for better viewing, Colonial's salespeople were excellent. They did not hesitate to move slabs out of the way so that I could clearly see what the ones behind them looked like."

Smith also says she felt that Colonial had the best selection of granite in the area. She ultimately chose a crema bordeaux granite slab for her kitchen countertops and island. "This particular piece of granite is an industry standard," explains Freeman. "She also chose to do double lamination on the island, with a cove Dupont edge rolling into an ogee edge. This gives it a double-stacked appearance, which is a very soft and appealing look."

"I really liked the color and the movement in it," Smith says, regarding what attracted her to crema bordeaux. "I've had the new countertops since August and have found that the granite wipes down very easily and is durable, too."

Michael Tawadros of Montgomery County is another homeowner



The work station in Tawadros' home also features juparana romance granite.

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Tawadros uses this artisan sink bowl in the island for food preparation.

who has been extremely satisfied with his new granite kitchen. Tawadros has a large kitchen and does a lot of entertaining, so he wanted a functional island, as well as granite countertops. "I was looking for the perfect piece of granite to match my maple cabinets and rosewood floor," he says. "I looked at a lot of places but just couldn't find a really distinguished color."

That is, until he found Colonial. Tawadros ended up selecting a stone called juparana romance. "It's definitely a unique stone that is not as common a pick," says Freeman. "It's perfect for homeowners who want a deep and rich color. It's a beautiful stone."

Tawadros says what impressed him most about Colonial was its customer service. "From a service standpoint, the company was just phenomenal," he says. "The salespeople were really low pressure in the store and offered a fair price. Plus, I was impressed by how quickly they were able to turn it around."

Those are three key points that Colonial prides itself on with every customer, adds Freeman. "We definitely take a low-pressure, easy approach to selling," he says. "It makes the experience more enjoyable for the customer, as does the fact that our prices are not only competitive, but fair. And we offer a one-week turnaround time from template to installation—something that's really changed the industry. Many companies take several weeks to get the job completed."

And the customer always comes first. "We do everything we can to keep the customer happy," says Freeman. "Colonial takes the time to make every aspect of the job personal. The customers' needs are always our top priority."

Colonial Marble & Granite is located at 201 West Church Road, King of Prussia. The company's entrance is off Henderson Road. For more information, visit www.colonialmarble.net or call 610-537-8918.

H&H

wrought iron mania

By **Alvin Stauffer**

What is it about wrought iron that always gets the attention of passersby and visitors? Is it the Old World charm of an elegant fence, or the romantic gracefulness of a Juliet balcony? Perhaps, it is the imposing security of an estate gate. Whatever the attraction, wrought iron, a centuries old craft, is making a roaring comeback in popularity.

"This 'mania' is appearing more and more, not only on homeowners' primary homes but also on their summer or shore homes," notes Amos Glick, proprietor of Compass Ironworks, who is a custom iron and aluminum specialist.

"The explosion of demand for iron has prompted some companies to produce imitation products like the mass produced aluminum fencing sold at garden supply stores. We have also seen where an amateur with a welder has tried his hand at making wrought iron," Glick points out. "Even if the homeowner is pleased with his purchase initially, in a year or two problems begin to emerge. Paint may peel, rust sets in, and the project may have to be done over. Often, that's where we come in."

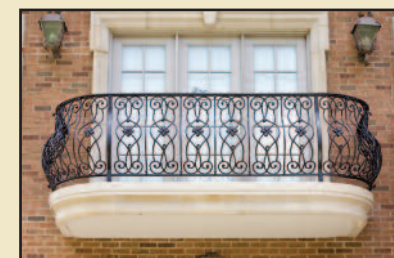
According to Glick, true wrought iron quality cannot be duplicated...at least not for very long. "It's all in the details," he insists. "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." The focus on building client relationships is why Compass Ironworks is in such high demand in the mid-Atlantic area and is the reason why clients eagerly offer referrals to their friends and neighbors.

"We do not mass-produce our products," Glick continues. "Each item is assigned to one of our craftsmen, who will go to the jobsite himself and take any number of measurements necessary while making templates and snapping photos. Back at the shop, this artisan will then build the project. When finished, the same craftsman will oversee the installation at the jobsite."

The time between the building and installation of an item is a complicated multi-step finishing process. This means doing everything necessary to ensure rust-free iron for a very long time. Depending on the project, this includes sandblasting, e-coating, galvanizing and a baked-on primer and top coat.

The end result? When the ironworks is in place—in balance and in harmony with the setting—clients are delighted with the custom results, and the artisans at Compass Ironworks take pride in a job well done. This precise attention to detail may help explain the ecstatic response from the company's clients: wrought iron mania!

Compass Ironworks is located at 1406 W. Kings Highway, Gap, PA. For more information, to discuss your ideas, or to schedule a free consultation with owner Amos Glick, call 717-442-4544.



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