

## A Deeper Look at Quartz Surfacing

Quartz surfacing, a type of engineered stone, while not historically having the regal reputation of natural stone, is nonetheless one of the fastest growing materials used in the countertop industry. In many cases, quartz surfacing can meet or exceed the ratings of granite on just about any level, except for unique, natural beauty and, perhaps, heat resistance.

Engineered quartz provides a nonporous and easily cleanable surface that requires no sealant, so it is very sanitary, and has a strength of two to four times that of granite. It is rated a 7 on the Moh's Hardness Scale and is resistant to scorching from high temperatures (although not scorch proof) and chemical etching.

Quartz surfacing is also scratch resistant; however deliberate cuts can penetrate the surface. As well, the hardness reduces chips and cracking, but in extreme circumstances both can still occur. The consistency of quartz surfacing goes all the way through and thus allows for edge design of practically unlimited choice beyond the usual straight, beveled, bullnose and ogee styles. It is also often used in vertical applications, which allows for high matching backsplashes.

The colors and patterns in engineered quartz are uniform across the surface with many options available. Some quartz surfacing also uses recycled glass or other pre- or post-consumer waste, so more "green" versions are available.

The uniformity of color and pattern has both an upside and downside. In some instances, seams may be more visible between sections, but a busy design it can help to hide them. As well, some homeowners desire the unique patterns offered by granite that are just not available with engineered quartz and some say the quartz simply does not look as "real."

Quartz surfacing generally comes in 2 or 3 cm slabs, depending on the fabricator and the region of the country. Quartz will also support both topmount and undermount sink options.

Pricing for engineered quartz, in most cases, matches or exceeds that of natural stone. Generally speaking, quartz surfacing is one of the costlier countertop surfaces available. The final price, though, is dependent upon region, brand and color/pattern choices. Almost all quartz manufacturers offer at least a 10-year warranty though, to help protect the investment.



Get more information about ISFA Certified Professionals & Fabricators by visiting [www.ISFANow.org](http://www.ISFANow.org)  
(877) 464-7732 • [info@isfanow.org](mailto:info@isfanow.org)  
COPYRIGHT 2009 - ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.