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Concrete Countertop Update



Buddy Rhodes is contributing to the concrete craze by creating beautiful kitchen countertops like this one here.

It is well known by now that concrete has become the new material of choice for designers and homeowners across the United States. Leading the charge in the concrete craze are concrete kitchen countertops. In this article we will show you why they are so popular, where you can get trained on how to build concrete countertops, and available mixes on the market if you choose to not make your own countertop mix. [*Continue >*](#)





Why the Popularity?

All it typically takes is one look - whether it's in a magazine, at a restaurant, on a home tour, a television show, or in someone's home —and you're hooked. Even at trade show booths- at the recent World of Concrete trade show, visitors gawked and ran their hands across countertops displayed by Fu-tung Cheng, Buddy Rhodes, and FormWorks. You can't walk past concrete countertops and not want to reach out and touch them.

Few materials are as versatile as concrete. You can mold concrete into any shape, color it to match virtually any hue, and you can make it smooth or rough. Its versatility lends to a range of design styles from contemporary to classic. Metal, glass, or other objects can be imbedded in the concrete to create fabulous effects.



A beautiful concrete kitchen countertop by FormWorks.



Concrete countertops can be left looking natural to complement materials like wood, stone, and brick. Or, concrete can be treated with chemical stains, coloring pigments, aggregates, and epoxy coatings that allow concrete to mimic popular materials like marble, granite, and limestone.

Be advised that building concrete countertops for a customer's kitchen or commercial application is a whole different animal than most concrete contractors are used to.

A Word to the Wise

It can be easy for a concrete contractor to mentally make the leap from seeing concrete countertops to wanting to build them for a profit. But be advised that building concrete countertops for a customer's kitchen or commercial application is a whole different animal than most concrete contractors are used to. Often contractors will be attracted to the very low cost of product to build countertops and the very high (sounding) sales prices that concrete countertops sell for in the marketplace. They don't take into account the demanding work of being center stage of a homeowner's kitchen remodel- the countertops are needed on a specific day and they had better fit perfectly.



A contractor who is going to create highly custom and detailed countertops needs a much different mindset than a contractor who wants to blow in and out, build a foundation or a driveway and turn in his invoice. It's unlikely a concrete company will be able to use the same crew to build countertops as is used to build sidewalks.

A contractor who is going to create highly custom and detailed countertops needs a different mindset than a contractor who wants to blow in and out of the job.

Because each piece is usually made to order, customers can be a part of the creative process- which doesn't fit well with every concrete contractor. Many contractors who are used to the only choices offered to the customer being "light or medium broom finish?" won't ever be happy building concrete countertops.

If highly detailed work and lots of customer interaction doesn't scare you off, pages 5-7 of this document list some international countertop classes and workshops around the Country, and pages 8-9 give a list of mixes available on the market.



Instructional Countertop Classes and Workshops.

Buddy Rhodes Studio-San Francisco, CA (\$800)

877-706-5303

www.buddyrhodes.com

Learn how to make one-of-a-kind cast-in-place and precast countertops, with Buddy Rhodes Concrete Mix products. Along with the familiar Ground and troweled BRS surfaces, the Seminars teach the Buddy Rhodes signature “hand-pressed” technique, which creates a veined marble-like effect.

Cheng Design-Berkeley, CA

510-849-3272

www.concreteexchange.com

Fu-Tung Cheng offers a 5-day Advanced Concrete Countertop Design training and 1-day Essentials Workshop by Cheng Design Concrete Countertops. (Full Day, 8 hours)

The advanced course adds kitchen design, advanced mold making, and Cheng Design’s trademarked Geocrete finish.





Decosup-Dallas, TX (\$1050/\$1500)

214-607-4084

www.acidstainsolutions.com

Two-day training and five-day training classes offered. In the five day class, you will learn acid staining application methods as well as tips and tricks of cleaning, scoring, and concrete engraving.

Concrete countertops encompass the rest of the training.

The Stamp Store-Oklahoma City, OK (\$650)

888-848-0059

www.thestampstore.com

Advanced class covers on-site use of admixtures, step retardation and mix designs. The modules include Stamped and Stenciled Concrete, Concrete Countertops, Decorative Stains, Surface Prep for SLICK'em micro topping, Stamped and Stenciled Overlays and vertical stamping.





Tom Ralston Concrete-Santa Cruz, CA (\$1000)

831-426-0342

www.tomralstonconcrete.com

Decorative seminar with industry leaders-Glen Roman of Brickform Rafco, Gary Jones of Colormaker Floors, Bob Harris of Decorative Concrete Institute and reps from HTC and Key Resin.

Topics include polishing and maintaining concrete countertops, sawcutting, acid stain, sandblast stenciling, and floor resins.

Decorative Concrete Institute-Douglasville, GA (\$800-\$1000)

770-489-4787

www.decorativeconcreteinstitute.com

Offers individual classes on polished concrete with stains and dyes; concrete countertops with Buddy Rhodes mix; seamless texturing with sandblasting; overlays and microtoppings; acid stains; skim coats, stains, and dyes; and floor and wall treatments.

Concrete Countertop Institute-Raleigh, NC (\$1795)

888-386-7711

www.concretetopinstitute.com

Learn the craft of concrete countertops from Jeffrey Girard, licensed Professional Civil Engineer, founder of FormWorks Concrete Countertops, founder of the Concrete Countertop Institute and pioneer of high quality, low maintenance concrete countertops.





Available Mixes on the Market

Buddy Rhodes Concrete Mix

Buddy Rhodes Concrete Mix is a refined combination of sand, cement and their own special ingredients that have given Buddy's pre-cast concrete its unique quality and success rate for over 20 years.

Available in 70 pound bags yields about 5 cubic feet (and 5,450 psi is achieved after a 56 day cure cycle)

1-877-706-5303

www.buddyrhodes.com

Cheng Concrete Exchange

NeoMix Pro-Formula and NeoMix Original System Products are packaged to yield three cubic feet of concrete countertop mix when added to six bags of sixty-pound sacked concrete (5000 PSI) and water. NeoMix Pro-Formula is also available in a one cubic foot size for use with two bags of sixty-pound sacked concrete.

510-849-3272x217

www.concreteexchange.com





EnCounter (The Stamp Store)

EnCounter is a professional grade countertop mix that includes limestone rock and well graded aggregates for a unique admixture of minimal shrinkage and high strength. EnCounter can be used for cast-in-place or precast countertops. Available in 50 pound bags in gray or white.

www.thestampstore.com

888-848-0059

Milestone

Milestones offers: Fiberflex spray cast Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete; PolishCast countertops made of premixed Fiber Cast Self-Consolidating Concrete (SCC) material; Fiber Cast Self-Consolidating Concrete Countertop mix, which is a high strength two-part premix that is loaded with alkaline resistant high strength fibers and densifying agents; and the Thin Cast Concrete Countertop Mix

888-381-9660

www.milestones-online.com





Sherpa info

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Sherpa info

SUMMIT DATE

This document reached the summit (was created) on June 1, 2005 and is based on the best information available to the Sherpa at that time. To check for updates please click here <http://www.ConcreteSherpa.com/counters>.

NAVIGATION & USER TIPS

You can move around this guide by using your mouse or keyboard arrows. Left mouse button goes to the next page, right mouse button goes to previous page. Click on the right arrow (→) for the next page and the left arrow (←) to go the previous page.

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Zoom out	[Ctrl] [-]	[⌘] [-]
Full screen/normal screen view	[Ctrl] [L]	[⌘] [L]

ABOUT THE CONCRETE SHERPA

The Concrete Sherpa is a team of people that represent the experience, teaching and learning of our team members and other industry leaders *on a mission to make life better for the concrete contractor*. We are an idea center striving to deliver thought provoking ideas based on “Concrete Advice for Business and Life” to stimulate you to reach new heights. As a user, you should remember to consider all information you receive, here at the Concrete Sherpa or elsewhere, not as a *cast in concrete* recommendation, but rather as an idea for you to consider and ponder.



Sherpa info

THE JOURNEY LEADING TO THE CONCRETE SHERPA PROJECT

The Concrete Sherpa Project (A [Sherpa](#) is a “guide”) was born at The Concrete Network in mid 2004. Here is how it happened:

The biggest surprise, or gift, since starting The Concrete Network in 1999 has been the concrete contractor friends from around the country we’ve made and witnessing the passion they have for what they do. These people include Dave Pettigrew, up in the San Francisco Bay Area, or the Verlennich brothers in Minnesota, or Bob Harris in Georgia, the list goes on and on. It’s quite inspiring.

We were once asked, “How are you so excited every day about concrete?” Well the answer is simple, it is impossible to not be excited about concrete when you have the job we do—interacting with hundreds of concrete contractors from every state in the country.

The thing we’ve learned about concrete contractors is that most are passionate *craftsmen*—they are often less passionate and experienced in the “office stuff”. Human nature channels us to do what we are most comfortable with; learning how to use a new saw-cutting tool is comfortable; learning and implementing a new estimating strategy, or job management tool, is not so comfortable.



Sherpa info

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

So Sherpa was born to provide FREE and easy to use information on topics many contractors are not too comfortable with.

- Concrete Sherpa is here to provide help to contractors who are often ‘Lone Rangers’ and don’t have anyone to get solid business advice from.
- Concrete Sherpa is here to provide help for contractors who have to work too hard and too many hours in their business, and one day realize they need to work *on their business, not in their business*.
- Have fun with Concrete Sherpa and go faster towards reaching success than you might have on your own.
- To skeptics who think something free can’t be valuable, or there must be a trick- visit Concrete Sherpa and decide for yourself.

We hope you make great use of the Concrete Sherpa and it helps you to become an awesome success for yourself, your family, your church, and your community.

VISIT THE CONCRETE SHERPA

To visit the Concrete Sherpa click here <http://www.ConcreteSherpa.com>.