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timeless beauty of natural stone.

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Nikos Papadopoulos,
president of Colonial
Marble & Granite

Setting the PACE

by **Bill Donahue**
photos by **Jeff Anderson**

Regarded as an industry trailblazer, **Colonial Marble & Granite** excels at helping homeowners enhance their living spaces with the ancient and timeless beauty of natural stone.

To Nikos Papadopoulos, a slab of natural stone is like a work of art. One might even go so far as to refer to him as a *curator* of natural stone—someone with a keen eye for color, veining, and other intricate details that make a top-grade stone truly remarkable.

As the president of Colonial Marble & Granite in King of Prussia, Papadopoulos travels the globe to procure the most distinctive, awe-inspiring slabs of granite, marble, onyx, and soapstone, among others. He spends time in the quarries, where massive stone blocks are carved out of the earth, and the decisions he makes there have an immeasurable impact on homeowners half a world away.

In Papadopoulos's mind, enhancing a living space through natural stone—a countertop, a fireplace, flooring—is like capturing a precious moment in time and preserving it forever. He adds, "Natural stone isn't just a trend in 2024; it's a timeless masterpiece connecting us to nature's art. It anchors us to authenticity among a sea of fleeting fashions."

As the largest fabricator in the Northeast, Colonial Marble & Granite is regarded as a leading regional destination for natural stone of the highest quality and almost every other

aspect of a home renovation. With Papadopoulos at the helm, the company has also earned the title of trendsetter.

"Stone is both ancient and timeless, a luxurious symphony of elegance and sophistication," says Sandra Phillips, executive vice president of marketing and design for Colonial Marble & Granite. "When you choose a natural stone slab from our yard, there's not another slab like it anywhere in the world. Nikos is hand-selecting these stones two years in advance from places throughout the world—Brazil, Italy, India, China. He's playing a key role in determining what the trends coming down the pike will be."

The stone yard at Colonial Marble & Granite's sprawling flagship location features thousands of natural stone slabs that have been shaped and reshaped over the millennia. In addition, the stone yard boasts a broad selection of American-made quartz, an engineered stone known for its high quality, durability, and low maintenance. The stone yard is in a state of continual evolution. In this regard, Phillips likens the yard to a living, breathing organism.

"If somebody walks through the yard today and then comes back two months later, they're going to have a completely different experience," she adds. "That's the beauty of what we're doing here. It's ever-moving and ever-changing, so nobody's ever going to have the same stone you have."

"We have every stone imaginable, in every color you can imagine—peaches, pinks, neutrals, whites, grays, blacks, reds," she continues. "Nature is what creates the colors and patterns, but we have a say in what portion of the stone is being cut. It's 'God's art gallery,' as Nikos calls it. God's creating the stone; we're the ones who are hand-selecting it from the gallery, and that's an art in itself."

'Daring and Bold'

In Colonial Marble & Granite's business, some trends come and go. Others never go out of style.

While many homeowners still prefer all-white or mostly white kitchens, Phillips is excited to see more homeowners "jumping out of their comfort zones" by opting for "daring and bold" options in terms of color, pattern, and texture. On the color front, darker colors that pair well with rich woods—hunter green, cobalt blue, and gentleman's gray, among others—have increased in popularity. In terms of texture, homeowners appreciate the subtleties of honed, leathered, and matte finishes, though polished stone has seen a resurgence.

Phillips, who honed her skills in high-end residential and commercial design while working in Manhattan, says incorporating stone as a central element in the renovation of a kitchen, a bathroom, or another living space is an art that requires delicate balance; respecting client preferences is key, but the



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disparate elements must exist in harmony. For example, when projects combine different kinds of stone, she says they must complement one another in order to add richness, depth, and distinction.

“By skillfully mixing and matching stones,” she adds, “we can create a tapestry of texture and color, crafting bespoke spaces that whisper-tell of timeless beauty and unparalleled refinement.”

Phillips has noticed several other trends taking hold, including unique shapes for stone table bases apart from the standard round or square options; curled or oblong bases add playfulness, while stately columns beneath add an air of classical sophistication. She’s also seeing more homeowners opting for the clean, seamless look of stone countertops that have integrated sinks.

Colonial Marble & Granite welcomes prospective clients to visit its King of Prussia showroom to discover what’s possible. Whether a homeowner prefers classic or contemporary, the company’s in-house designers will guide them through the process of creating a compelling and customized design that stands the test of time.

“No matter your budget, your preferences, or the size of the project, we can create something beautiful and unique for your home,” she says. “Whether you’re coming here for the \$1,499 special or you want to tackle a project with multiple phases that might run tens of thousands of dollars, you can expect the same service and attention to detail.



“Come in and take a look,” she continues. “Our designers will take everything into account when you’re choosing a stone—color palettes, maintenance, where you are in your life—and walk you through the decision-making process. Their passion comes down from the top, so it begins with Nikos. He truly loves what he does, and I think the rest of us feed off that passion.” ■



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When you choose a natural stone slab from our yard, there’s not another slab like it anywhere in the world.”

— SANDRA PHILLIPS, COLONIAL MARBLE & GRANITE