



around the HOUSE

GOOD TO KNOW

On August 25, 1939, Judy Garland gave the phrase "There's no place like home" new popularity with the release of *The Wizard of Oz*.

No-Stain Stone

New granite countertops that don't require sealing

PUT DOWN A HOT SKILLET, scale a fish, shatter a glass, your granite countertop can take it. But forget to wipe a little spilled red wine or fail to rinse a peanut-butter-slathered knife before setting it down, and your precious stone can stain.

Untreated granite—impervious to heat, bacteria, and chipping—is notoriously vulnerable to discoloration from dark or oily foods. But not anymore. A new stain-resistant granite called Stonemark debuts this summer. Before the polished stone even reaches the home center (let alone your kitchen) it's impregnated with a water-based solution that's guaranteed to ward against unsightly marks for 15 years.

Until now, the best defense against staining has been to catch spills before they penetrate the porous stone. Periodic treatments with a surface sealer extend that response time and make cleanup easier, but homeowners often fail to keep up with the maintenance, says Fred Hueston, director of the National Training Center for Stone and Masonry Trades. "Granite is one of the most expensive countertop materials," says Hueston. "You don't expect to have to treat it."

Stonemark is currently sold at 500 Home Depot stores in 12 states; stay tuned for more locales. It comes in 60 colors and looks and feels the same as other granite. And at \$50 to \$90 a square foot installed, it costs about the same, too. Visit stonemark.com for details.

—AMYR HUGHES



A tipped can of tomatoes on white granite used to send cooks dashing for a sponge. Now they can take their time and stir the sauce.

SPEAKING OF COUNTERTOPS...



EVERYBODY MUST GET STONE

The U.S. imported \$1.2 billion worth of granite in 2005, up from just \$372 million five years earlier. About a third of it came from Brazil, according to *Stone World* magazine.



MEASURE TWICE

To determine how much stone to buy, measure the length and width, in inches, of your existing countertop, and multiply the numbers. Divide the total by 24 to get the square footage.



MOUNT RUSHMORE

In 1927, the faces of presidents Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt started to take shape on a 1.7-billion-year-old swath of granite in South Dakota's Black Hills.



INNOVATIVE
STONE