

# STONE BUSINESS

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**showrooms**

import trends  
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# stone, for a change



**D**ES PLAINES, III – When the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) acknowledges some of the best projects of the year, it's a cinch that stone makes plenty of appearances.

With this year's Contractor of the Year (COTY) awards from the remodeling trade group, many of the winning kitchens, bathrooms, interiors and exteriors featured stone – so many of them, in fact, that paring down the list to fit in the next few pages made for some hard work.

Contractors from seven regions around the country vie for the COTY awards on an annual basis. All projects submitted for judging must be an improvement or an addition to an existing structure in order to be considered. (New construction projects aren't eligible.)

In addition, competing projects must have been completed between July 1 of the previous year and

November 30 of the current year (a 17-month time period) and cannot have been submitted in prior NARI

National contests. An impartial panel of judges, considered experts within the industry and associated fields, selected winners based on each entrant's "Before and After" photography and project description. Judging was based on problem solving, functionality, aesthetics, craftsmanship, innovation, degree of difficulty and entry presentation, with 25 national winners and five national honorable mentions for 2005.

NARI, based in Des Plaines, represents a select group from the approximately 800,000 companies and individuals in the U.S. identifying themselves as professional remodelers.

(Unless otherwise noted, all photos are courtesy of NARI.)



## CG & S DESIGN-BUILD, AUSTIN, TEXAS

**Award:** Residential Kitchen, more than \$100,000

**Job Location:** Northwest Hills area, Austin, Texas

**Stone Fabricator:** Austin Stoneworks, Austin (slabs); Hopf Monument Co., Austin (granite for light fountain).

Husbands usually don't drive a simple job into a large project – unless that spouse happens to be a geologist, and the work went from replacing kitchen countertops to extensive stonework throughout several rooms of the house. The kitchen countertops and message center are 3cm Emerald Pearl, with the 8'-diameter island cut from a single slab of 3cm Volga Blue; other countertops in the project are a 2cm Dionysius in the TV/media center and the wine center, and a 2cm Black Galaxy in the powder room. New flooring inside the house is a Vintage Classic filled and polished travertine, with honed and unfilled Nuovolato Gold set on the walls in random shapes and left ungrouted.

The "light fountain" (not shown) is a 1,200-lbs. piece of Bahama Blue scribed and recessed into the two-story stair wall. Natural light shines through the slab, giving it a fountain-like effect.

