



CHENG DESIGN

TRAINING SPOTLIGHT

BY JULIET FARMER

Cheng Concrete Exchange™ (www.ConcreteExchange.com/workshops/adv.jsp)

A division of Cheng Design™, Cheng Concrete Exchange offers Advanced Training and Certification, as well as the Essentials Workshop. The Advanced Training is an intimate training environment enabling students to tap into their inner creativity. After several days of direct step-by-step instruction led by Fu-Tung Cheng, principal of Cheng Concrete Exchange and author of the bestseller *Concrete Countertops*.

The design portion of the Advanced Training is structured to empower participants with insights into the thought processes and essential terminology necessary to effectively communicate with architects, kitchen designers and homeowners. Participants have the opportunity to watch Cheng blend colors to create subtle effects before trying it themselves. Cheng also shares with participants several trade secret

processes associated with achieving the distinctive glass-like finish of the Cheng line of Geocrete™ countertops.

"What began as classes to gauge the amount of interest on the narrow subject of concrete countertops, has progressed and evolved into a movement toward good design, creativity, and craftsmanship for the whole home environment," says Fu-Tung Cheng, principal of Cheng Concrete Exchange and author of the bestseller *Concrete Countertops*.

Cheng's goal with the Advanced Countertop Design Training is to offer exclusive concrete design education for contractors, to elevate the level of craftsmanship within the concrete industry, and to introduce tools for design understanding and appreciation to an otherwise technical industry. With the design and technical knowledge gained from this training, participants will expand their portfolio of services and business opportunities.

According to Cheng, "Everything that we teach in class about drain-boards, sink sizes, sink types, joints, mosaic inlays, countertop thicknesses, dropped edges, cutting boards, and even wall supports, we teach with 'good design' in mind. Without this holistic understanding, an understanding of the principles of good design, I feel that the students will produce imitations, work that may be limited in scope and handicapped in creativity...My goal is to graduate a creative partner through this exchange, not simply a technician or a misappropriated artist."

"Those taking this Advanced Training know how to use tools and pour concrete," adds Cheng. "Our intent is to add design principles to their technical foundation. This elevates their quotient both on the design and expertise levels. Undoubtedly, it will enable their creativity and differentiate them from the competition."

The Concrete Countertop Academy (www.ConcreteCountertopInstitute.com)

The Concrete Countertop Institute's Concrete Countertop Academy offers in-depth, hands-on training on every aspect of making concrete countertops—from templating, forming and wiring, to casting, curing and processing, to sealing and installing. Academy graduates receive a diploma and a comprehensive written manual on how to make concrete countertops.

"Our training focuses on the fundamentals of concrete countertop fabrication," explains Jeffrey Girard, P.E., president of the Concrete Countertop Institute. "Our training is engineering based rather than design driven. We stress the importance of knowing what, when and why things are done. We believe that it's important for students to understand the entire process of countertops, and our classes are