

ABOUT / SEALING / MAINTENANCE / TYPES OF STONE



NATURAL STONE

238 HIGH STREET, PRAHRAN VIC
03 9078 2811



BYZANTINE
DESIGN

SALES@BYZANTINEDESIGN.COM.AU

LEARN MORE ABOUT: NATURAL STONE

The timeless beauty and quality of Natural Stone is evident in many of the ancient ruins we can still enjoy today were constructed using Natural Stone such as travertine. The natural colours, textures and patterns vary from surface to surface, making each instalment unique. With this exceptional natural beauty and variety of subtle shades and tones. Natural Stone is almost suitable for any application, residential or commercial, and is extremely durable and can last centuries if properly maintained.

Natural Stone is quarried from all over the world and is categorised in three general rock or stone categories that recognises them according to their mode of origin. This is a generic classification and it not only states how and under what general conditions a stone was formed but also implies a general compositional range.

The basic stone groups are:

1. Igneous Rock-Granite
2. Sedimentary Rock
3. Detrital Sedimentary Stone—Limestone, Shale, Sandstone and Conglomerate
4. Chemical Sedimentary Stone—Onyx and Travertine
5. Metamorphic Rock—Marble, Slate, Schist and Gneiss

The beauty of Natural Stone is it can have many textural finishes and visual characteristics, making it possible to be as creative. Our Natural Stones comes in many finishes, such as; Honed (Satin-smooth), Soapstone (Velvety), Sandblasted (Matte-textured) just to name a few. The honed surface is satin-smooth surface which helps reflect the least amount of light. This finish is mostly for internal use, walls and floors, whilst the sandblasted finish is for external use, has a slightly textured to help keep the colour as close as possible to the honed finish, to create the indoor/outdoor flow. The soapstone finish has a velvety finish with a slight surface movement that give the stone a soft and antique feel.

Colour variation is expected in Natural Stone. The colour variation is determined randomly depending on which mineral content and this makes up each batch when the marble is formed. A trial tiling layout should be done on site by opening all boxes to see the range of colour variation and the best way to install it.

Samples and images are a great tool for ensuring the Natural Stone you are interested in is what you're really looking for. But one must always remember variation is an inherent property of Natural Stone in terms of both colour and surface pattern. This means that the colours you see in a sample or on our website is a very general guide of the Natural Stone and should be viewed in the broadest terms only.

Sealing, Care and Maintenance is the best way to ensure Natural Stone retains its original look for as long as possible.

Sealers are necessary as Natural Stone is mostly a porous material, which means that any liquids which spill onto the surface tend to leech into the body of the stone if not cleaned quickly. This can negatively affect how the stone will look over time. A sealing product will help resist penetration of most spills on the surface of the stone, until it is cleaned off, of course. When using sealing products, always read the labels, take safety precautions where necessary, and follow the instructions carefully. Sealing products can be found in our Products menu.

The best way to keep stone clean is removing all dirt, grit, and other materials that is carried in from outdoors. Many of these substances are abrasive and can cause minute scratches on the surface of your stone which can become noticeable over time. Regular clean is best, using a damp cloth, soft broom, or vacuum. Even if the stone is sealed, clean up liquid spills immediately, particularly if they are acidic in nature. Fruit juice, red wine, coffee are particularly problematic and have tendency to stain. Bleach, vinegar, or any harsh acidic-based cleaners should never be used on Natural Stone, as these will degrade the surface of your marble over time.

When a stain is unavoidable, the procedure to removing stains is fairly straightforward. The same reason Natural Stone is susceptible to staining is the same reason it's a straightforward process to remove them – Natural Stone is porous. The 'poulticing' procedure is a great way to remove stains by literally drawing the stain up from your marble and into another porous material. A mixture of a reducing agent soaked into a cloth or paper towels is the most basic variety of poultice. More information on cleaning and maintenance of Natural Stone can be found in our Resources section.

It is important to become familiar with industry terms. There is a misconception of Natural Stone on the market, that if it looks the same, it is the same. Natural Stone is available in different grades. While there is no industry standard name for the grades of Natural Stone, most suppliers use the names: Premium, Standard, and Commercial. To ensure you choose the correct grade of stone most appropriate for your purpose and budget.

Premium grade, also known as first grade, is the pick of the crop. A Natural Stone that is carefully chosen to be consistent in quality and colour. The stone tile that is perfectly cut and has a uniform thickness, size and finish throughout.

Standard grade, or second grade, will have a little more colour variation and may also be some fissures and small pores, however will be perfectly cut with a uniform thickness, size and finish.

Commercial grade, also called third grade, is not selected or sorted, has lots of colour variation, including stain-look marks. Additionally, the tiles will not have a uniform thickness, may not be perfectly cut on all sides, cracked and/or broken edges.

Basalt

Formed from rapid cooling lava, Basalt is the most abundant igneous rock. In fact it is the most common rock in the Earth's crust. Almost all oceanic crust is made of basalt and basalt is a common extrusion from many volcanic regions around the world. There are numerous varieties of basalt and the colour varies from grey to black. Bluestone is a common name for any blue-grey, fine-grained igneous rock, typically of basaltic composition. The Bluestone term is not a geological term but a popular name given to several different basalt stones from different parts of the world. The popularity of basalt has grown in the past decade due to its muted grey tones and compatibility with all design types. Honed, brushed, sandblasted and/or flamed are the most common finishes and some applications include interior, exterior flooring and wall cladding for both residential and commercial projects.

Granite

Granite is named for its "granular" appearance and has crystals that tend to be easily seen, although some are generally small. Granite is a Natural Stone that has been used as building material for centuries, such as the pyramids of Egypt together with limestone. It has a superior strength, versatility and is even in texture and colour. The impact, heat and abrasion resistant qualities, allows granite to be trusted for flooring or wall cladding material and has long-term endurance. Applications from residential kitchens tops, to commercial hallways and foyers makes this Natural Stone very versatile. The sandblasted or exfoliated finish granite is a great option of external courtyards, terrace and balconies just to name a few.

Limestone

Great sources of limestone are from reefs, subterranean water systems, and beds of ancient oceans formed over millennia. Limestone has gained popularity due to the refined beauty and pleasing soft texture that makes a unique decorative statement in a variety of settings, indoors and out. Limestone comes in many finishes including honed, polished, sandblasted and/or tumbled.

Castles, forts, and cathedrals in the medieval period (many of which stand today), were constructed in limestone making it a reliable building material for thousands of years.

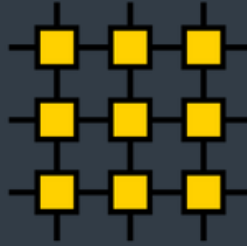
Marble

Rivulet veining in subtle colours, varied background tones and ornate feel is the reason marble has been a symbol of affluence for centuries, exuding sophistication and an air of artistry. Marble was a common feature in the Roman and Greek spas of the ancient world, to Renaissance courtyards in Europe, all the way to world renowned Barcelona Pavilion, marble has always been a popular Natural Stone for architects and designers. Marble is great for floors, wall cladding inside-out and usually has a finish of honed, polished, soapstone

and tumbled. It can also be used for vanity tops, but it is not recommended for kitchen bench tops. Minute crack-like patterns in marble are a feature of the stone, otherwise, referred to as the veining. What appears to be liquid-like patterns, is veining due to formed by underground water sources and various minerals that have become trapped in the body of the marble over millions of years and, this in turn is what makes marble such a unique and attractive product.

Travertine

Travertine is possibly the most common Natural Stone type known to the general public. Classic and timeless with its subtle beauty and smooth textures, travertine has been used for both residential and commercial spaces. Travertine has a proven stability and long-lasting performance history, as it was a material used to build one of the most famous buildings in the world, the Colloseum. Today, in addition to being an excellent flooring material, travertine may also be used as pavers, bench tops, stair treads and even bathtubs or surrounds. Travertine can have one of four major finishes, honed, brushed, sawn and tumbled. The type of finish given to the travertine is usually determined by its application. Travertine is a form of limestone with unique porous veins that gives the stone its character. Due to the inherent characteristics of the bedding planes in most travertine, dramatic different looks can be created by simply choosing a cut type. There are two cut types used when cutting travertine: Vein-Cut and Cross-Cut. Vein-cut is a cut made against the bedding planes, or along the vein. This gives the travertine a linear pattern. Cross cut, is a cut made parallel to the bedding plane or across the vein. This exposes a random pattern that is often cloudy, floral or circular.



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