

...want the perfect stone

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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snbstone

INTERIOR TILES | EXTERIOR TILES | PAVERS & COBBLESTONES | STEPS & POOL COPING | MODERN SURFACES

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Do we work solely with trade or do we sell to the public?

Whilst you come in and choose your stone from us, we usually only sell slabs directly to stonemasons. Tiles, pavers etc. we can sell to everyone as they are a finished product.

Where do you source your material?

We employ inspectors in several locations throughout the world & they and our Directors continually travel, sourcing & inspecting material and production standards. All materials are inspected and rated according to a strict set of SNB Stone guidelines. Where the material is sourced is actually less important than the technology used to process it.

What are the return conditions and fees?

15% return fee on all authorised returns. Not all material may be returned. Terms & Conditions should be read & understood.

What are the Indent ordering and Shipment times?

If the size, finish or quantity is not available in any branch, then we can consider importing the material from overseas. This will depend on the quantity requested and the availability of the material from our supplier. Also the time can be affected by the time it takes our inspector to inspect; often he will go on more than one occasion. Every country varies but it is common to say approximately 12-16 weeks.

Is stock available in NSW and QLD?

Stock is often available in both branches. If there is a requirement, stock can easily be shipped from one state to another (at customer's cost).

What is the procedure for reserving tiles and slabs?

Tiles can be held for only a short period until we receive a deposit. If materials are to be held for a longer period of time, we require full payment.

Slab selection conditions are as below...

- Material specified by client remains the property of S&N Bros Pty Ltd until material is purchased.
- Material will only be reserved with a confirmation via a fax order by the fabricating company with an indicated quantity & date of pickup.
- Material once confirmed will only be reserved for a minimal period of time without payment or deposit by purchaser. S&N Bros reserves the right to choose to trade any material inspected by any customer if it decides that it has not been purchased.
- Due to the intricacies of warehousing, slab inspected may not be the exact slab picked up at the time of pickup but from the same batch indicated by the block number.
- Natural stone is a product of nature characterised by its unique beauty and naturally developed birthmarks.

INTERIOR FLOOR & WALL TILES

What are the main differences between stone tiles, concrete paving, vitrified and Porcelain?

Stone will always look better!!! Easy for us to say but we believe it!. Unlike stone, man made products have a determined shelf life (usually about 10 years for the better products).

What sizes and thicknesses do tiles come in?

Thickness ranges from 10mm to 20mm. All sizes can be used for floors and walls. There are considerations however, for wall tiles... will the wall substrate (material) be strong enough to hold the weight of tiles? Check with your builder or manufacturer of the wall materials - they will be able to advise the weight the walls are capable of withstanding per m2. Or for floor tiles, will the tiles be the same level as my carpet, same height of existing tiles etc.?

What surface finishes are recommended for different areas?

Non-wet areas including bathrooms other than the actual shower walls & floors:

Walls...All finishes

Floors....All surface finishes depending on the required location and use.

Showers walls and floors:

Smother stones Honed or Polished, Brushed.

Stone tiles may often be seen for much less elsewhere... Can you justify the difference in price?

There can be many reasons why the same material of the same name can vary in price. When natural stone is imported you can purchase it in a number of quality grades with the best being First quality. Unlike others, SNB Stone concentrates on importing first quality products.

What are the differences in grade?

Calibration will not always be perfect (or to agreed tolerances). In lower grades stone may be more or less busy (especially marble)

Consistency of colour within the same batch of natural stone will vary more dramatically than expected (bearing in mind that stone is a natural product and will always have variation)

Travertine will have a larger amount of and much larger holes (either filled or unfilled) in lower quality grades.

Also the quality of tiles depends greatly on the manufacturer and their equipment. Certain countries have limitations and others may have expensive Italian engineered manufacturing lines.

Arised edges (Bevelled) or straight cut? What are the benefits?

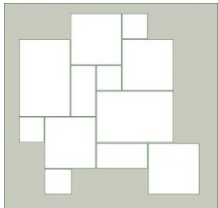
Fewer chips exist with arise edged tiles and when they are laid the grout join appears slightly larger than non-arised tiles. Non-arised tiles will have minor chips on the edges that are unavoidable due to the fine cutting of the edge. The non-arised tiles may create a tighter join.

Can tiles be selected in the warehouse prior to purchasing?

No. Tiles become damaged due to extra handling, and individual selection of tiles is not practical. We can however remove a few tiles randomly from the crates for inspection prior to purchasing.

What is a traditional French Pattern in tiles?

Tiles cut in specific sizes and laid in the below pattern...



Travertine internally, should it be filled or unfilled?

It can be either unfilled or filled, this is the option of the client. It is common to use filled travertine for indoor areas, especially in bathrooms although some customers prefer to use the stone in its natural unfilled state as a feature.

If using Architectural floor waste (long grills) what tile sizes can be used? What about normal waste pipes?

With architectural waste grills, large tiles can be used. Achieving a fall to these grills is easier than the traditional waste pipes (small round) particularly if the bathroom floor is small.

How are natural stone tiles cared for?

We strongly recommend ALL natural stone should be sealed with Dry Treat Stain Proof or Meta Creme

Basalt, Granite...Most household cleaners

Marble, Travertine, Quartzite and Limestone...A clean, damp cloth or, for stubborn stains a weak bleach solution, or a PH neutral detergent

How do I clean soap off my shower floor and walls and are some stone tiles easier to maintain?

As you know, is difficult to remove a build up of soap suds even from glass. It will require scrubbing and strong cleaners to remove. The same occurs with ceramic, porcelain and natural stone. The best method to prevent long term build up is by cleaning regularly and hosing or using a squeegee on the tiles after showers.

Can floor tiles be re-polished or re-honed?

Yes. Even after decades these stones can be brought back to looking like new.

Can the same stone be used indoors and out?

There are many stones that can be used indoors and out. Some tiles come in different finishes, eg honed, polished and acid washed. It is important to be aware of the slipperiness of tiles and select the best finish for the required usage.

Are Tiles/Pavers under a pallet load sold are charged at a higher rate?

Yes. All pallet quantities vary. It is always better to buy a few extra tiles (say 10-15%) to allow for wastage.

EXTERIOR FLOOR & WALL TILES

What thickness do external tiles come in?

Thicknesses range from 10mm to 20mm. All sizes can be used for external floors and walls.

*See Price list for tile size availability

Do Marble, Travertine, limestone and sandstones weather outdoors?

Yes. Over time, these stones achieve a slightly rougher surface texture and lighter appearance due to the heat, rain and other external factors.

What surface finishes are recommended for outdoor areas?

Honed & Flamed Sandstones, Acid Washed Marbles, Acid Washed & Flamed and some Honed limestone, Flamed, Bush Hammered, Sandblasted and Sawn cut Granites and Basalts.

Travertine externally - should it be filled or unfilled?

Either can be used. When it is unfilled it will darken in the holes due to dust and dirt, but give a slightly different character.

How are natural stone tiles outdoors cared for?

We recommend all natural stones be sealed with Dry Treat:

Hosing with water on most occasions and sweeping up dust.

For build up of dirt and grime...

Basalt, Granite and Quartzite...Most household cleaners

Marble, Travertine and Limestone...A clean, damp mop or, for stubborn stains including bird droppings and leaves use a weak bleach solution, or a PH neutral detergent

What about stone around a swimming pool?

Natural stone is a great product to use around swimming pools. A look can be achieved that is not possible with man made product. Sandstones are very common and so is Travertine. Marble has increased its popularity around pool areas and is now available in many more colours and acid washed finishes. Soft stones such as Himalayan Sandstone require protection from salt attack and efflorescence from salt water in swimming pools. Dry-Treat 40SK™ as well as Stain Proof™ is recommended to protect and enhance the performance of the stone around salt water pools.

Can the edge of a tile be glued and profiled for steps or pool coping?

Yes. Stonemasons or some tilers can profile the edges of tiles by doubling the thickness of the edge and honing it to the desired shape. Note that not many can flame the edge to match a flamed surface finish.

POOL COPINGS, STEPS AND RISERS, PAVERS & COBBLES**Pools come in usually Salt water and Chlorinated, do these chemicals affect natural stones?**

Yes. Salt can attack softer Marbles, Sandstone and Travertine. Chlorine does not have a serious effect on natural stones. For protection for some types of these stones Dry-Treat 40SK and Stain Proof is recommended.

What is the benefit of longer pool coping in comparison to say 400 x 400 coping?

Less joins. It also distinguishes the coping from the rest of the pool. It is visually more appealing.

Can long coping pieces be used for curved swimming pools?

Yes. The tiler trims them to size.

How is pool coping sold?

It is sold Per Piece, not m2.

What is the common pool coping width?

They range from 300 up to 450mm.

Can slabs be used for pool coping?

Yes. Slabs can be trimmed by a stonemason and edge profiled to the required look. They can then be laid by the stonemason or the tiler.

Can I use Pavers for step, coping and pool coping?

Yes. The edge requires profiling to create the desired look.

Do I require concrete slab for pavers or are they laid using traditional paving methods?

Pavers can be laid on compacted road base, sand or concrete. Speak to your builder for specific recommendations.

Can I use pavers and cobbles on a driveway?

Yes. Due to the thickness of these it is possible. If the Driveway has concrete, then 20mm cobbles can be laid using flexible glue after screeding a bed of mortar. The same method can apply for pavers. Thick pavers can be laid on road base without a concrete slab. Speak to your builder for specific recommendations.

What are permeable surface requirements?

Local councils may place restrictions on the outdoor areas when building or renovating by stating that a certain amount of area must be permeable i.e. allow water to drain into

the ground and not into the storm water. Unlike concreted surfaces, pavers laid in road base allow the water to drain through the pavers and not just be directed along the surface to storm drains.

What grout joint size is commonly used?

Some outdoor tiles such as the Himalayan Sandstone are processed in remote areas and using older technologies to keep the costs of the product lower. These stones will require larger joint sizes as they tend to be out of square. Commonly tiles laid outside have larger joints than indoor tiles. Speak to your tiler for specific recommendations.

TILE ADHESIVES & LAYING TILES

Can normal tile adhesive and grouts be used when laying natural stones?

Like all natural materials, natural stone (i.e. limestone, travertine, marble, slate and granite) requires a level of flexibility and movement. As such it is highly recommended that you use flexible adhesives and grouts. SNB Stone are suppliers of quality Ardex Tile Adhesives. Please discuss your requirements with us or your tiler so that you can determine the right natural stone installation products for your project.

What tile adhesives do we recommend and are the glues suitable for all stones?

Ardex X77 Premium polymer modified wall and floor tile adhesive with double slump resistance. Indoor and out.*See Ardex Catalogue for more information

Ardex X10 Non slump polymer cement based wall and floor tile adhesive. Indoor and out.*See Ardex Catalogue for more information

Some tiles react differently, therefore always test in a small area before using on whole job .

What is Screeding and when is it used?

Screeding (levelling a bed of mortar with a flat board) is used on almost every occasion to level the concrete flooring indoors and out. Mortar is used and levelled over the surface using a flat board (screed). It also used to achieve the floor levels required for correct fall towards the waste pipes. Once it has set, tiles are laid directly onto it using tile adhesive.

What is lipping of tiles?

This is when tiles are laid unevenly at the joints and can also be caused when the tile is bowed or badly calibrated.

What is spot fixing?

Tiles are to be trowelled on using a 10-12mm trowel. The whole area where the tile is laid is to be trowelled correctly and the tile pushed into the adhesive. Spot fixing occurs when blobs or spots of adhesive are applied to the surface and the tile pushed onto the substrate. This is not what is recommended by the Australian Standards for fixing tiles and tile adhesive manufacturers. Spot fixing results in drumming of the tiles, cracking as well as spot marks showing through moisture sensitive tiles etc.

Can the floor tiles be ground back to produce a flat surface?

Yes. This is often done with large tiles that are harder to lay completely level without lipping. The floor is then re-surfaced (honed or polished) using a machine. It is also beneficial as it grinds the tiles at the same level of the grout joints creating the appearance of a seamless floor.

How high can tiles be laid on walls?

Tiles or panels can be laid to great heights. City buildings are successfully clad using techniques to pin the tile to the supports of the building. Tiles that are being laid up to 3m high can be laid using normal tile adhesive. Over 3m in height, tiles require fastening pins as well as tile adhesive. Large heavy panels use both pins and adhesive even at lower than 3m in height.

Can tiles be laid on timber floors?

Yes. The tile adhesive must be flexible. Boards are primed prior to using a premium flexible adhesive *see Ardex Catalogue

What size grout joints can I have?

The normal joint width is around 3mm. No butt joining of tiles is permitted unless there are expansion joints based on Australian Standards recommendations.

What wastage factor or extra tiles do you suggest to be purchased?

Generally 5-10 percent based on the type of tiles and the shape of the rooms. If more cuts are required you may require up to 15%.

SLIP RESISTANCE TESTS FOR STONES**Who requests Slip test results?**

Designers and architects often refer to the 'HB 197-1999 Pedestrian Flooring Guide' and are specifying stones for residential and commercial flooring using this as a guide. If you require testing to be done on your behalf, SNB Stone can assist you in organizing the test.

Which surface finishes are less prone to slipping?

Generally in this order but it depends on the type of stone...Flamed, Bush Hammered, Tumbled, Flamed and Brushed (Pepper finish), Honed, Brushed and Polished
But the slipperiness can depend on the type of material as well for example marble in a honed finish is more slippery than Sandstone in a honed finish.

Are there any products that can reduce the slipperiness of the tiles?

There are liquid chemicals that can be applied but they are quite expensive.

What is an R rating (Ramp Test) in regards to slip resistance?

An R rating is a method of classification based on a slip test done on a ramp. Tiles are laid on an angle and oil is poured on to them. Two people wearing work boots are made to walk the tiles and are measurement is determined when they slip. This can be a very inaccurate way to measure a tile and classify it. There are many factors such as age of the experimenters, their posture, their skills of balance etc that may affect the test result. This test is commonly used for determining surface finishes for commercial ramps. The R rating is commonly misunderstood in the industry and there are considerations that affect the slipperiness of wet tiles eg environmental factors (weathering) and the implementation of devices that can reduce the risk i.e. mat to dry feet at entry points of foyers etc.

What is a wet pendulum test?

A wet pendulum test is a universal procedure based on AZ/NZS 4586 Wet Pendulum Test. It requires 5 samples 150mm x 150mm to be tested using water on them and a Pendulum designed with a specific rubber. The pendulum is swung and measured as it passes over the sample. The 5 results are averaged and a letter of classification is given. Under the Booklet HB 197-1999 Pedestrian flooring Guide, there is a guide explaining the classification of the letter.

SLAB INFORMATION**What is the best stone to use in the kitchen?**

It comes down to which is more suitable for the look you want and the required usage. Many who love a Marble look can use it in a honed surface. Or, Granite's available colour palette and strength may appeal. Granite & Quartzite are some of the hardest stones available.

Can Marble, Limestone, Travertine or Sandstone be used in a kitchen?

Yes, we recommend a Marble with a honed surface sealed only with Dry Treat Stain Proof™. Honed surfaces do not show up the etching from acid stains as much as polished Marble. Marble surfaces will scratch & mark over time, but that forms part of the character of natural stone (it is similar to the wear & tear you expect to see in timber floors, stainless steel products etc). Most Limestone can be used as kitchen benchtops in a honed surface. Travertine can be used as long as the surface finish is Filled and Honed and sealed with Dry Treat Stain Proof™. We do not recommend Sandstones for food preparation surfaces but it can be used for vanities and many other applications.

How are natural stone benchtops cared for?

Seal with DRY-TEAT Stain Proof™ or Meta Creme™

Basalt, Granite...Most household cleaners

Marble, Travertine, Limestone and Quartzite...A clean, damp cloth or, for stubborn stains, a weak bleach solution or a PH neutral detergent

A distinction should be made in regards to staining and marks. What is meant by the following?

Staining... Non acidic liquids that have been absorbed into the surface of the stone

Etching... A chemical reaction due to acid contacting calcium in the Marble which results in dull spots

Scratches...Damage caused to the surface by using sharp objects

There is an easy solution for all:

Staining... When sealed with Dry Treat Stain Proof,™ these stains can be easily removed.

Etching... Honed surfaces display etching (dull spots) less than polished surfaces due to the reflective surface of a polished surface. Use a cutting board to prepare food.

Scratches...Use a cutting board when cutting and take care with scraping sharp products.

Minimal care is required when using Marble for benchtops, but like floor boards and stainless steel, some scratches and marks are inevitable and are an accepted feature of the product. Traditionally it is the patina of the stone that adds character to Marble.

Does marble require to be re-honed after using for some time?

Natural stone can be repaired and re-polished/honed but usually people using Marble do not feel the need to have it re-honed.

How are streaks removed on Plain Black Granite benches?

Buff the counter top with a clean white soft cloth or paper towel.

Can natural stones be repaired if they are scratched or chipped or cracked?

Yes. This is required to be done by an experienced stonemason, unlike re-constituted stones which cannot be repaired

In natural stones what is a crack? And what determines a fissure (seam)?

A crack is more usually a natural or accidental breakage of the stone.

Many stones naturally come with fissures (open seams) which are repaired by most overseas manufacturers during the polishing process of the stone. These are widely accepted around the world and are characteristics typical in different types of stone. Slabs with more open cracks in the stones can most often be cut around to suit your requirements.

Can a polished marble slab be selected and honed by a stonemason?

Yes. Any Marble can be honed by a quality stonemason. What must be remembered is that a skilled stonemason is required to manufacture Marble and Granites.

What about Honed Granite and Granite in the 'new' Pepper finish for use in a kitchen?

These unique surfaces are highly recommended and are becoming a new trend in the high end benchtop market. They are suitable for kitchens as long as they are sealed with Dry-Treat.

What is the difference between Natural stone and reconstituted product?

Natural stone is a beautiful product of nature. It is not a chemically processed product that is formed into a benchtop material. Stone forms over 60% of the earth's crust and is available in thousands of different types and colours. Reconstituted stone suppliers market only about 10-20 colours and many of the darker ones scratch easily. They contain large amounts of chemicals and resins. Many natural stones possess better properties and perform better than reconstituted products in kitchens.

Some Kitchen Companies and Stonemasons say not to use Marble and some say not to use Granite but only to use Reconstituted stone. Why?

There are a couple of reasons; firstly, there is not as much skill required to install man-made products. Secondly, marketing has influenced the sale of engineered products and the buyer's perceptions. Many consumers are now aware however that Granite is scratch resistant, heat resistant and when sealed with Dry Treat™, is stain resistant. Granite, through experience has proven to be one of the best products to use. Its demand currently is much higher than reconstituted stone around the world. Marble has been used for centuries on kitchen benchtops and a variety of other applications and remains extremely popular in Europe and many countries. Its use in Australia has been increasing due to high quality sealing products.

Are there pit holes in marble slabs?

Even in the most expensive Calacatta and Carrara marbles, pitting is a natural occurrence and does not determine the purchase cost. These holes are sometimes filled by the Supplier during the polishing period of the stone. Otherwise, they can be filled by the stonemason prior to installing the kitchen. Some holes are so tiny they cannot be filled. Some Granite can also have minor pitting.

Which are the hardest stone slabs?

The hardest stones are Quartzite, Granite and Basalt. Marble, Travertine Limestone and Sandstone are softer. There are various densities in all of these stones, and a Limestone can be as hard as some Marbles. Some Sandstones are also much denser than other Sandstones.

Can hot items be placed on stone benchtops?

Natural stone has a resistance to heat. Although many stones can resist very high temperatures, we recommend hot items are placed on heat mats.

Do slabs chip easily?

It is not easy to chip natural stone. If chipping does occur, it will normally be around under-slung sinks (this also occurs with reconstituted material). We recommend you take care of hitting heavy metal objects on the sides of the sink edges.

What about Book matching slab panels?

It is possible to match the veins in a "Book match fashion" on some stones that have been polished on opposite sides from overseas. Some stonemasons have the experience to re-surface the back side of slabs to achieve the book matching of panels. The most common materials that come already booked match are Calacatta and Statuario Marble.

Should I use 20mm or 30mm stone slabs for a kitchen?

Whether it is Marble or Granite, all stones can be utilised in both thicknesses. They are all strong enough, yet many times cupboards should be designed with extra supports. 20mm thick stone can be utilized as simply a 20mm edge or the edge is doubled giving you a 40mm edge. 30mm thick slabs are usually left as 30mm and both 20mm and 30mm can be mitred.*See Edge Profile diagrams

What is the recommended overhang on kitchen benchtops?

Unsupported 30mm thick stones up to around 300mm. Unsupported 20mm thick stones up to 200mm depending on stone type although it may be best to support softer stones. Supported 20mm stone is not an issue.

What stone slabs can be used for kitchen splash backs?

What can be used for the bench tops can be used for splash backs as well. 20mm slabs are the norm, but 30mm can be also used. Tiles can also be used and may be a cheaper option.

What stones can be used for vanities and bath surrounds?

Any natural stone in a polished, honed or pepper finish is suitable. It is not a food preparation area therefore it does not have to be honed if it is a marble.

If a small vanity is required, can a slab be selected for it?

Yes. There may be a lot of wastage, but you can achieve the exact look and colour. If price is a factor then selecting an off-cut from a stonemason is a better option.

What type of stone slabs can be used on reception counters?

All types as long as they are sealed with Dry-Treat Stain Proof or Meta Crème, either polished, honed or pepper finish can be used. Marble becomes a feature in commercial environments and some designers like to book match the front and top of counters.

What thickness slabs are used for tread and risers?

Both 20mm and 30mm are suitable – it just depends on the required look. 20mm for both the tread and the riser, 30mm for the tread and 20mm for the riser or 30mm for both.

What slabs can be used for fire places?

All types of natural stones can be used for fire places. Surface finish can be polished, honed, pepper finish or flamed. 20mm is a very common thickness, but 30mm is also often used. The floor in front of a fire place, the 'hearth' is usually done in one piece of stone.

What slabs can be used for feature walls, internal cladding?

All natural stones can be used. They should be sealed with Dry-Treat Stain Proof or Meta Crème and are suitable in any surface finish. Slab panels are usually pinned to the wall using a fastening method as well as epoxy adhesive for strength and safety.

Can slabs be book matched on walls and floors?

Yes. Book matching is a visual advantage including less joins compared to tiles. The cost of this type of work and the material is more expensive than using tiles. In luxurious and high-budget jobs and commercial applications, this is a common procedure to achieve a higher and unique standard in appearance.

DEFINITIONS OF DIFFERENT STONES

Stone reflects the origins of its creation and as each type of stone is formed differently, each has the ability to feature differences in strength, colour, texture and composition. Until recently, natural stone was the preserve of the wealthy, who were attracted by its dramatic qualities and simple elemental beauty. Now, thanks to our global sourcing, it is within the reach of many. It is so versatile you can use it in any room of the house, but durability and easy maintenance make it a great choice for heavy wear areas like hallways and kitchens. It is now an integral building material in the higher end of the Australian residential and commercial market.

Marble occurs naturally as the result of extreme heat and pressure being applied to Limestone. The distinctive crystalline structure of Marble allows it to be polished to a high gloss giving an illusion of depth. Polished Marble is the more traditional and commonly recognized form of Marble and creates an opulent finish for the premium bathroom or living area. Marble is also available in a honed (smooth) finish, which is used widely for kitchen benchtops and flooring.

Travertine falls between Limestone and Marble, separated by approximately 20 million years of rock formation, where dissolved Limestone has been allowed to mix with steam under enormous pressure. Travertine occurs with directional vein as well as cross cut patterns showing a cloudy or swirly pattern. When the block is turned around and cut in the opposite direction, it then shows the veins in direction. Travertine flooring and other travertine products can be successfully treated to produce several different looks such as tumbled, filled, unfilled or honed. Travertine, like other natural stones is being used for kitchens, bathrooms and also many external applications.

Limestone is a popular version of Marble formed over millions of years from sediments on the sea floor. The result is a smooth natural stone often with deep set fossils creating fantastic visual interest. SNB Stone offers limestone tiles and slabs in a number of different sizes. Each type is cut specifically to incorporate as few or as many fossils as possible, giving a smooth and clean or rustic and classic overall look.

Sandstone is a classic sedimentary rock that forms from the cementing together of sand sized grains forming a solid rock. In Australia, Sandstone has been used over the centuries in houses and buildings of distinction. Sandstone is a very stable product and as such can be treated to provide several different uses other than flooring and is especially good as an architectural stone. Sandstone offers an ideal material for creating relaxing patios and swimming pool surrounds. Sandstone is also used as a luxurious indoor natural stone floor or applied to walls.

Basalt is a very hard volcanic rock that can easily be compared to Granite. Basalts mostly have a uniform grey shade and are becoming increasingly popular with those who are looking for something different to fit perfectly with modern and sometimes minimalistic décor. Basalt has traditionally been used as an external material, often for cladding purposes, however modern tastes are increasingly bringing this beautiful stone indoors. Whilst Basalt has been renowned for being an expensive stone usually associated with the Italian Basaltina, recent quarrying has increased the range to include Magnus, Megha Black and Vesuvius™, all beautiful and affordable natural stones. SNB Stone imports these stones in a number of finishes including honed, flamed, natural split, etc.

Granite is a tremendously strong, versatile and durable natural stone, and many of the structures in which Granite has been used over the centuries are still standing. Granite is an igneous rock that cooled at depth in the Earth's crust with the slow cooling causing the main minerals of Granite to grow to easily visible sizes. As such, Granites come in a multitude of often unexpected colours and there is virtually no limit to its uses. SNB Stone is able to offer Granite slabs and tiles in a number of finishes including highly polished, honed and also our new Pepper Finish range of Pepper Stone™. Newly quarried exotic Granites are now commonly being introduced into architecturally designed homes and commercial applications.

Quartzite is often described as a type of Granite because it has seemingly similar physical characteristics. Granite is an igneous rock where Quartzite is a metamorphic rock. It is a very hard, tough, chemically resistant natural stone, predominantly made of silica (an even higher percentage than Granite).

Slate is a metamorphic rock, i.e. it has been changed within the earth's crust by heat and/or pressure. This change is what causes the minerals to grow in one plane, so that the resulting slate is similar in structure to the leaves of a book that have been tightly stuck together. It is this feature that makes slate so useful for splitting into sheets. Slate is available in a naturally split finish as well as a honed finish. Slate tiles are used for interior and exterior floor tiles and is also cut into large slabs for various applications.

DIFFERENT SURFACE FINISHES FOR STONES

Polished Finish

This is a high gloss and reflective surface finish that brings out the colours in the stone. The surface is polished with fine abrasives, with the degree of polish determined by the natural stone's mineral elements and texture - not all natural stones can be polished. Usually recommended for floor, wall and benchtop coverings, polished stones are not usually recommended as external stone flooring due to their tendency to be slippery when wet.

Smooth or Honed Finish

A smooth matte to light sheen surface finish (depending on the stone). Created using different grades of abrasives under factory conditions, honed Marble is commonly used and recommended for internal floors and kitchen benchtops.

Antique Finish

The antique finish is achieved by acid etching the surface of the stone to produce a popular finish used often for outdoor areas but able to be used indoors. Other methods which can be used for creating an Antique look include brushing the surface finish of the stone with special polishing pads.

Flamed Finish

A finish mainly associated with the hardest wearing natural stones (Granite and Basalt), these natural stones are exposed to high temperature flames whilst wet causing the eruption of the grains on the surface. The resultant texture is beautifully slip resistant and contemporary.

Chiselled Finish

Finish achieved using chisels. The appearance of this type of natural stone finish can be likened to a linen texture with the fine grooves positioned closely together and parallel to the edges.

Pepper Finish

The natural stone is honed, followed by the flaming process before being brushed. The resultant finish is a smooth, flamed look without the roughness. This finish allows easy maintenance of benchtops whilst creating a unique surface appearance. Stone tiles in this finish have slip resistance and are less prone to scratches.

Bush Hammered Finish

A natural stone finish achieved by the application of a hydraulic bush hammer to the surface. The appearance of the bush hammered finish is industrial, with a large number of close and small indents.

Tumbled Finish

This has a lightly rough texture which is easily maintained and again less sensitive to scratches. It is the process of sawing or honing and then tumbling the natural stone that gives a worn look with a natural patina from day one.

Natural Split Finish

Normally associated with Sandstones, Basalts and Slates, a natural split finish is the finish which highlights the surface texture of the natural stone.

Diamond Sawn Finish

The natural stone is sawn using a diamond blade. The surface appearance of this stone finish shows typical saw cut markings parallel with each other in the direction taken by the saw.

Sandblasted Finish

The natural stone is first sawn or honed, then sandblasted resulting in an appearance that is slightly rough in texture which creates a slip resistant surface suitable for outdoors.

Hydro Finish

This new innovative system applies extreme water pressure, which removes particles deep in the stone giving the slabs a very rough and unique appearance without changing the colour of the stone.

Natural Features in stones

- Veins - Natural movements in the formation of the stone
- Pits - Small holes (Common in white Marbles)
- Blotches- Noticeable irregular markings
- Glossy and duller areas- Variety of harder and softer minerals in the stone
- Scaling - Vein movements that can be quite deep into the surface (Common in Pietra Grey)

Additives and manufacturing procedures for stones used by overseas suppliers

- Epoxy filling - Used to fill larger voids or seams
- Resin - Used to fill small pits and seams
- Oil - Used to darken stone
- Colour - Used to darken or change the colour of the stone. SNB Stone does not stock material treated in this fashion.
- Cement/grout filling - Used to fill Travertine holes
- Stone chips with glue - A method of filling stones
- Fibre Glass netting - Used for strengthening the stability of the stone
- Timber & Epoxy coatings around the edges of slabs - Used for strengthening the stability of the stone
- Vacuum sealing - Wrapping epoxy around the slabs and removing the air from within the stone (Strengthens the stability)

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