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GRANITE MARBLE SANDSTONE

Natural Stone – Disclaimer

Granite

Igneous rock is formed by volcanic action or intense heat, which liquefies rock deep in the Earth and which solidifies upon cooling. Granite, the most common igneous rock, is millions of years old and has a crystalline, granular structure, with a range of colors and consisting mostly of quartz and feldspars, accompanied by one or more dark minerals such as mica. The color of igneous rock depends mainly on the color of the prevailing feldspars. The granite offered for residential and commercial applications comes from open pit quarries found all over the world. There is a large assortment of granites available to suit specific tastes or design applications, ranging from consistent grain structures and colors to multicolored stones with veins or movement resulting from the uneven distribution of minerals. "Consistency", when applied to natural stone, is a term of relative value that needs to be understood in the context of the origins and composition of the product. Because of the way granite was formed millions of years ago, it is synonymous with quality, strength, permanence, solidity and hardness. These characteristics make it an ideal choice for a kitchen countertop surface.

Most granite used for countertops is polished to a high-gloss finish giving it a mirror-like appearance. On closer inspection however, many granites have certain natural characteristics such as "pitting", "fissures" or "dull spots" that may at first cause some concern. It is important to understand the geological reasons for these characteristics to fully appreciate the beauty of stone.

A characteristic referred to as "pitting" is normally due to the fact that granite is a natural product that has a crystalline structure, sometimes resulting in small spaces between the varying mineral crystals. In some cases, certain tiny crystals may also be removed during the polishing process, causing the pits to become more visible. Various steps are taken during the finishing process to reduce the visibility of these pits, but they cannot be totally avoided in all granite types. Pitting will not become worse with regular use or with the passage of time.

Many types of granite have small "fissures" or hairline cracks on the surface of the slab, usually more visible in the larger quartz crystals. These surface fissures should not be confused with structural cracks that permeate the entire slab. Fissures are a natural result of the heating and cooling of the stone during its formation millions of years ago. Fissures will not grow or expand over time.

The final appearance of the polished surface of each type of granite is determined by the specific composition or "mix" of quartz, feldspars and other minerals. While the overall appearance will be that of a high-gloss finish, some components within the granite may not accept the same level of polish as the rest of the crystals, which can result in "dull spots" or "watermarks." Often these spots are visible on the darker crystals present in some granites. The hardness, composition and any other characteristics are taken into account during the polishing process and all efforts are made to achieve the highest level of gloss possible for each specific material.

While the type and specific composition determines the amount of pits, fissures and dull spots, some granites exhibit these characteristics more than others, and they may also be more or less visible depending on the lighting conditions present in a room. Lighting plays an important part in the overall appearance of a finished granite countertop surface.

Pits, fissures and dull spots do not compromise the integrity of the stone in any way; they are natural characteristics of stone and will not impair the function or durability of the material. They are an expression of nature and add to the allure of the stone, which sets it apart from man-made surfaces.

MARBLE

Marble is formed from the re-crystallization of limestone under intense pressure and high temperatures within the Earth. During this process, other minerals are introduced into the structure, which produce the beautiful colors and veining that characterize marble. Its color varies from white to black, being sometimes yellow, red and green, and frequently beautifully veined or clouded

Marble used for countertops have either a polished or silk finish and provide a cool, sophisticated ambiance to any kitchen. Due to the natural characteristics of these stones, marble countertops require some special care and maintenance. Your marble countertop will be sealed after installation and a sealer should be applied annually. With marble, there is always a possibility of scratching and staining, as the stone is not as hard as a granite surface. Polished marble is especially susceptible to acids and any spills should be immediately cleaned up. Should a stain occur, it can usually be removed with a stain-removing poultice. Marble should be cared for as you would a fine wood finish. Using coasters, and cleaning up spills immediately, will help preserve its beauty. After regular use, your marble countertop will develop its own unique patina and personality.

Heritage Stone strongly recommends that the client inspects the stone prior to finalising an order to ensure that all aspects of the natural qualities are fully understood