



Natural Stone Descriptions & Disclaimers

ALL NATURAL STONES are unique in their own ways, aesthetically & structurally. All natural stones are porous, some more than others. The finish of a natural stone can make a difference in not only its aesthetics but also in its structural integrity when considering a type of stone and the daily usage of that stone. In example, a type of stone that can etch easier than others is marble. If the marble has a polished finish, it will show etching easier than if it had a honed finish (matte finish). This same example can be used for scratching. In many cases, the finish of the stone can increase or decrease its structural integrity. Natural stones are mined from mountains or from the ground in blocks. These blocks are then cut into slabs. The slabs are then split-up into lots & bundles. Each "lot" is an identifier of the stone's color/shade, vein movement and other defining characteristics so fabricators can use slabs from the same lot to make a project come together, especially if seams are involved. A "bundle" is just multiple slabs of the same lot that are closest to one-another in characteristics.

FCMG takes slab matching very seriously when putting a job together so the best results can be achieved. In some cases, even though the slabs are from the same lot, color-matching at a seam may be difficult because the colors throughout the slab can vary in shade as it is a natural material and no one has control over the uniqueness of the material. This is also why many people use natural stone for countertops, it is another way to bring God's creation into your home not only for its beauty but also for its function. FCMG recommends sealing any natural stone every 6 months to 1 year for better protection against staining. Some stones may be recommended to be sealed even more frequently, depending on the homeowner's usage and daily care methods. Sealing natural stone does not prevent against etching.

GRANITE is a very durable natural stone that can hold up against scratching, heat and staining if maintained properly. Some granites consist of many different types of minerals that do not polish the same as the other minerals within the stone which can sometimes be felt throughout the stone. Some stones may be coated with resin from the manufacturer to strengthen the stone which can fill voids and be visible on the stone. FCMG does not re-polish surfaces of stone – the stone will be installed as is.

QUARTZITE is very dense and consists of many fissures (internal cracks/microcracks) throughout the stone. FCMG will not fabricate or install a countertop with a structurally compromising fissure/crack in it. In some cases, fissures may appear to be cracked (open crack) but actually is not. This is the nature of quartzite and the stone will be installed as is.

DOLOMITE is a sub-category of marble. Although it is under the marble category, Dolomite is a very strong stone that is commonly used in kitchen & bathroom projects. Unfortunately, in the stone industry, many dolomite stones such as Super White & Brown Fantasy are mis-categorized as quartzites because they register high on the Mohs Scale (scratch test) but because they have calcium carbonate in their mineral makeup, they are technically dolomite marbles. The only major usage difference between dolomites and quartzites are that dolomites have a slightly higher chance of etching.

MARBLE is a very soft and porous stone that can scratch, chip, stain and/or etch easier than other types of natural stone. FCMG recommends using marble in bathroom/vanity or fireplace applications. Polished marbles can show scratches easier whereas honed marbles can stain easier.

CALCITE is a very soft and porous stone that can scratch, chip, stain and/or etch easier than other types of natural stone. FCMG recommends using calcite in bathroom and vanity applications. Polished calcites can show scratches easier whereas honed calcites can stain easier.

SOAPSTONE is a very strong stone that cannot stain however it does require a lot of very easy maintenance depending on client's liking. This material can scratch very easily but can be "repaired" with simple fine-grit sandpaper. FCMG installs soapstone "dry" and the client may seal the material with mineral oil or dry wax. FCMG does not provide mineral oil or dry wax. Mineral oil should be applied to the client's liking and overtime the mineral oil will saturate the stone's surface leaving a longer lasting "wet" look.

DISCLAIMERS:

PERFECTION: There is no such thing as a perfect natural stone. Each stone has its strong points and weak points. Consult with your sales representative to best determine the right type of stone for you.

NATURAL LIABILITY: FCMG cannot be held liable for the natural characteristics of any natural stone during any step of the fabrication & installation process, this includes post installation, as well. FCMG is responsible for assisting the customer in selecting a stone, measuring, fabricating & installing the stone.

VIEWING: FCMG highly recommends customers view the slabs in-person prior to ordering/purchasing.

CUSTOMER INSPECTION: Natural stones can consist of inclusions, blemishes, minor fissures, voids and many other natural characteristics that cannot be avoided when doing the slab layout. Customers should inspect the stone prior to fabricating to ensure that they like the overall surface of the stone as FCMG does not re-finish the surface of the stone. Of course, major blemishes/defects such as a random spot in an overall consistent colored slab and/or cracks will be avoided as best as possible.

FCMG INSPECTION: FCMG performs inspections of all slabs prior to production and any red flags will be presented to the customer prior to moving forward.

HEAT & THERMAL SHOCK: Natural stones can take extreme amounts of heat but FCMG always recommends using a trivet or heat pad rather than placing extremely hot items on the surface. Even though stone can take an extreme amount of heat, it cannot handle a rapid change of temperature. This rapid change can cause thermal shocking to the stone which can result in cracking of the stone due to the pressure of the stone releasing at any point of the stone, typically at corners.

EXPANSION & CONTRACTION: Natural stones expand & contract throughout the year just as most items do. If items press against the stone while expanding and if the stone is also expanding, the pressure can cause cracking.

LIQUIDS: Any liquids left on the surface of a stone can penetrate the stone, even if sealed.

OILS: Oil can stain any natural stone, even if sealed.

DENSITY: In most cases, the lighter the natural stone is in color, the softer it is. The same goes for the opposite - the darker the color, the more dense it is. There are a few exceptions to this, it depends on the type of stone that is being considered. The density of the stone can determine the strength of the stone when considering scratching, staining, etc.

ABSORPTION: Stones can absorb water during the fabrication process. This may take days, weeks or months to dry. Water absorption can also occur after the stone was installed while being used. In example - near/around the sink, stove, etc. FCMG has no way of telling if a stone will absorb water prior to ordering/cutting/fabricating/installing and cannot control this natural characteristic of the stone if it occurs. Water absorption is most common in quartzites and marbles.

THICKNESS VARIANCE: Stones can have variances in thickness throughout the stone which in some cases may be unforeseeable as the variance is in the very middle of the stone and cannot be measured prior to cutting. This issue is a result of a bent blade/wire on the gang-saw that is used to cut stone blocks into slabs. If this occurs, FCMG will be required to mill the thicker stone down to the same thickness as the thinner stone.

FISSURES: Fissures are minor cracks or microcracks that are a result of pressure within the stone being released due geological reasons. If a stone has a very long fissure that extends from one end of the slab to the other or if it starts from the edge of the slab, that fissure may need to be avoided because the countertop section cut from that piece will have a fissure that runs through the counter making it an extremely weak point and can crack/break at that point. In most cases, this type of fissure will be found & red flagged prior to moving forward with production.

RESINS: Many natural stones are coated with resin to give the surface a more smooth and aesthetically pleasing appeal. Many stones have voids in them that resin will fill. However, the resin does not polish the same as the stone does and can look different when light is reflecting on the stone. FCMG can do nothing about this.

REMOVED DEPOSITS: Small deposits of the stone can become removed during the cutting/fabrication process. If the piece of stone that became removed is found and is large enough, it can be adhered back onto the stone. This typically occurs along the edge of the countertop where the blade cut through the stone.

BLEEDING: "Bleeding" can occur when the stone absorbs resins or other products used to join two pieces of stone together at seams or joints, including miter joints. The area around the seam/joint will be slightly darker as the resin bleeds into the pores of the stone along the edges of the stone where joined. This typically occurs with softer stones but can occur in any type of stone, it is mostly unforeseeable and FCMG has no control of this from occurring.

BLOSSOMS: "Blossoms" can occur when the stone comes in contact with certain chemicals or products used during the stone fabrication/installation process. Blossoms are discolored areas, typically greenish or bluish in color and is a reaction between the stone's minerals and the chemical/product used. This typically occurs with some lighter white/creamy colored granites. This is mostly unforeseeable and FCMG has no control of this from occurring. There are products that can remove the blossoms to a certain extent, FCMG will present the customer with which product to purchase and how to use the product. FCMG is not responsible for removing blossoms.

SEAMS: Natural stones may require seams in the layout to prevent cracking/breakage during any part of the process, including post installation.

EDGING: The sharper and/or thinner the edge of a stone product, the easier it can chip. It is recommended to have a beveled edge or rounded edge – minimum 1/8" radius (eased edge and/or pencil edge).

OVERHANGS: The maximum unsupported overhang for standard 3CM (1 1/4" thick) stone countertops is 12" - 14" so long as the counter has 2 parts supported for every 1 part unsupported. In example: a counter with 24" supported can have a 12" overhang. Support brackets may be required in many cases to have larger overhangs.

WEIGHT: Applying excess weight or standing on the countertops can cause the countertop to rack and/or break.

SETTLING: Stone can crack from settling of the house foundation, floor joists or cabinets

SEALING: All natural stones are recommended to be sealed every 6 months to 1 year. The amount of time really depends on the customer's usage and care methods. If the area is used daily and being cleaned daily, it is recommended to seal the stone every 6 months or sooner, if required. To tell if your stone needs to be required, perform a water drop test. See the care & Maintenance guide for more details.

DAILY CARE: FCMG recommends just using water & Dawn antibacterial dish soap (3-1 ratio mixed in a spray bottle). Other dish soaps will work fine, Dawn is recommended due to its gentleness on human skin which reflects its gentleness on the stone (see our Care & Maintenance guide under the resources tab for more information).

DAMAGE: Natural stones can become damaged from daily usage/accidents such as dropping a pan, impact to the edge, dragging items, etc. FCMG can only do its best to resolve the issue for the customer. FCMG is not responsible or liable for the natural characteristics of any stone or for the customers usage of the stone.