



INSIDE

DESIGN

Artfully shaped interior spaces in Northeast Ohio & the people behind them



Solid Performer

Durability, versatility make porcelain slabs a strong choice for interior surfaces

By Carol Payto
Mont Granite

Porcelain can be traced back centuries to China's Han Dynasty. In the 1700s, its advancement to porcelain terrazzo for use in religious buildings and important homes spread its popularity throughout the world.

Porcelain is still popular today as technological advances have evolved to allow for large slabs that can be used for interior and exterior applications, such as floors, ceilings, steam showers, fireplace surrounds, murals and even exterior cladding.

Today's architects, designers and consumers are seeking more beautiful, durable, versatile and high performing surfaces for their surroundings, and porcelain has become an optimal solution as it can easily be incorporated into a myriad of spaces.

The evolution of porcelain

Design traditions for ceramic tile and, later, porcelain slabs have developed over time to go beyond ornamental to

utilitarian uses. While mosaic tiles were commonly used as ornamental décor during the Roman Empire, today porcelain surfaces adorn homes and public buildings across the globe, transforming living and work spaces to extraordinary works of art.

The terms "ceramic" and "porcelain" are often used interchangeably, but each has its own unique characteristics and advantages.

Ceramic is made of clay mixed with several minerals and water, which is then processed with heat to create a solid substance. Because ceramic is porous, it requires a sealed glaze over the top surface, which provides its color, design and texture. Depending upon the quality of

the glaze, ceramic can be highly resistant to scratches, burns and moisture.

Porcelain is composed of finely ground sand. Unlike ceramic, processing porcelain involves pressure and extremely high temperature, resulting in a very dense material with an absorption rate of less than 0.5%. Porcelain's density and composition allow it to be used in a variety of interior and exterior applications that can withstand the most extreme weather conditions.

Today's highly engineered slabs

The porcelain slabs of today feature the latest advancements in surface technology and offer even more unique design possibilities, coupled with last-

SURFACE STYLES Ink jet glazing is used to recreate specific designs, such as concrete or marble, on the durable, versatile porcelain products available today.

ing beauty, extreme strength and versatility, ease of installation and high performance.

Today's porcelain product – available at Mont Granite in Solon – is exceptional because it comes in oversized slabs (five-foot by 10-foot) and reduced thickness (1/4-inch), allowing for large, seamless application and continuity between indoor and outdoor applications.

The porcelain slabs are dust pressed to 7,500 PSI to guarantee extreme strength. Offered in 15 dazzling colors and patterns, the slabs are available in a honed or polished finish to guarantee not only an incredible aesthetic quality but also a high resistance to stress.

Being through body, these slabs are a stronger compound for commercial flooring applications, and cuts and fabrication are straightforward. Ink jet glazing is used to recreate specific designs (marble looks, wood, concrete, metal, etc.) and a level of flexibility allows the slabs to be installed on flooring, pre-existing or new construction.

Technology in modern surface design has evolved from the mystique of ancient clay to the lasting beauty and high performance of today's contemporary porcelain slabs. Now, with the added benefit of being oversized and extremely durable, porcelain slabs enable designers to create spaces that are unique and timeless. **P**

Carol Payto is the marketing director at Mont Granite, a wholesale supplier of fine surfaces. With over 25 years of experience, Mont Granite is recognized as one of the Midwest's premier wholesale suppliers of fine surface materials for commercial and residential projects. Maintaining an extensive inventory of natural stone (granite, marble and onyx), porcelain slabs, quartz and recycled glass in each of its seven divisions, Mont Granite provides architects and designers the ability to specify the perfect surface material for their projects. Mont Granite is headquartered at 6130 Cochran Rd. in Solon and is open to the general public. You can also browse its website at www.MontGranite.com.



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