

marrakech DESIGN

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Product description - handmade cement tiles

Cement tiles are made using a process developed in Southern France in the second half of the 19th century. Today, however, Morocco is the major production center. Cement tiles are made by hand with the help of metallic molds and hydraulic presses. The raw materials are Portland cement, sand, marble powder, water and color pigments. Contrary to ceramic tiles, cement tiles are not exposed to firing but gain their strength from curing. The pigment layer is about 3-4 mm which gives the tiles a long lifespan.

Each cement tile is individually made and variations in thickness, size and color as well as imperfections like irregular edges and corners as well as pattern contours being partly blurred are inherent to the manufacturing process. These characteristics add to the tiles' natural appeal and do not compromise performance.

Pigments and salt present in the cement will deposit onto the surface of the tile. This produces a varied (sometime almost blotched), chalky look similar to limewash. The variations are particularly evident in solid color tiles and tiles with a not so busy pattern. A large part of the variations and salts present on newly installed tiles will disappear over time and with cleaning but not entirely – this is perfectly normal.

The tiles have to be sealed in order to protect them from dirt and water. There are multiple methods for sealing and treating the tiles depending on the particular circumstances and what look you desire – for further information see our separate section on *installation/maintenance*. Please note that depending on which method is used the treatment in itself may affect the appearance of the surface of the tile. For example different types of soap and wax do not only permeate the pores of the tile but also create a layer on top of the surface that may be visible in certain type of light – it may look a little blotched.

In summary then our cement tiles are not “perfect” and are not meant to be. They have a certain patina from day one and only become more beautiful with time.