

Quartzite

Quartzite has become very popular as of late. A true quartzite is very durable yet some can look more like marble but without some of the issues of durability when used in a high traffic area such as a kitchen. It is very important to understand however that not all quartzites are the same and that while more durable than marble, quartzite is not indestructible.

Quartzite is a metamorphic rock made almost entirely of the mineral quartz. This not only makes it a tough stone, but it also makes it easy to tell quartzite from imposters. Quartz is 7 on Mohs hardness scale. This means it is harder than glass and harder than a knife blade. If a rock that is labeled as quartzite is soft then it is mislabeled. Recently the term “soft quartzite” has been adopted to explain why a particular quartzite is not performing like expected. This is incorrect. A stone that has soft spots and is prone to etching should be classified as a marble or a dolomitic marble and not a quartzite at all. A true quartzite will not etch from acids like lemon juice or vinegar like marble does.

There are differences in porosity however. Some quartzites like Taj Mahal have been highly metamorphosed, and the minerals are bonded together tightly. White Macaubas and Calacatta Macaubas have been exposed to less intense pressure, so they are more porous. It is important to have all stone sealed as this is hard to know from looking at them. We will always seal your tops before we bring them to your home. Sealing is not a guarantee but a deterrent to staining. Sealing is not however a deterrent to etching. If your quartzite is actually a marble it can etch when exposed to acidic materials.