



BAPTISTA TILE  
& STONE GALLERY

## Slab Selection Guide

### **What is a fissure?**

A fissure is not a defect, so don't panic when you spot one! A fissure is a natural junction or line of separation within a single intact mass of stone. The fissure was formed when two separate flows of liquid hot magma merged into a single mass. The fissure was there when it was quarried, it was there when the factory cut the block into a slab, and it will always be there. If there is a strength issue in the fissured area we will reinforce the underside of the stone and epoxy the surface to make the piece even stronger than when it was formed. Fissures are commonly found in granite. If you are sensitive to perceiving fissures as cracks, then you may want to consider changing your selection to a more consistent material or even an engineered stone.

### **Can I have a slab sample?**

Having a sample of a slab is a blessing and a curse. It is so easy to become fixated on the little piece of stone in your hand. It is tangible after all; fits in your car, you can drag it around while picking out your other finishes ... It sounds ideal. More often than not these stone chunks lead to soap-ointment. People will stand in front of the slab, looking back and forth between the sample and the slab, and say "That does not look anything like what I expected!"

So if you have a piece of slab in your hand (which are not available in all stones) keep these things in mind"

- Most of the slabs that we work with are coming from out of town. Be cautious, selecting color swatches, tiles, curtains, flooring, etc. with the slab sample alone. If these selections need to happen before you order your slab and a general idea of the slab will not work for you, it is your responsibility to travel to Portland, Seattle, Vancouver, or whatever to see your actual slabs. We can always obtain a photo of your slab if you need it before it is shipped here to Bend.
- What one must keep in mind is the reason why you were drawn to natural stone in the first place - it is natural! Each piece is unique, varying in color, shade, crystal size, speckles and so on. So with all of this variation, the best a sample can do is give you a general idea of the stone. Nothing more.
- A piece of stone often varies from one end to the other. Your sample might be from your exact slab but only represent the colors and patterns of that area. Having a photograph of the slab and the sample is your best bet to keep an accurate memory of your slab intact.

The process of selecting the perfect materials for your house can be challenging at times but is exciting. The Baptista Tile team is dedicated to your ultimate satisfaction. We will work with you from the beginning of your project to the end, perfecting the design, selection, fabrication and installation of your countertops. Your home should be as unique as you are, each element reflecting your own style and personality. After all it is all the little things that make your house your home!

Selecting a slab can be intimidating experience, but if you are prepared can also be extremely rewarding. Hopefully this brochure will give you the information you need to make this process both fun and successful.

## General Information About Slabs

- Stone slabs are sold in two thicknesses 2cm(3/4") or 3cm (1 1/4") although not every stone is sold in both formats.
- An average granite slab size is 9 to 10 feet wide and 5 to 6 feet tall.
- Although the average square footage of slab is 50sf, many times it may yield only 35sf of counters. The size of the slabs can affect how many seams end up in your kitchen counters and where they must be placed.
- If you need multiple slabs for your project, you will want to choose them from the same bundle. Granite slabs are quarried, tracked, and shipped as sequentially labeled stones in bundles of 6 or 7 slabs. Each slab in a bundle has comparable color and pattern to its neighbor. Slabs that come from different bundles don't always look alike nor do they have similar colors. They can have slight shade differences that become obvious at seams in finished counters.
- Stone suppliers offer you the ability to look at slabs, give you details about the stone, and make selections. You typically cannot buy granite slabs wholesale. Wholesale pricing is reserved for the fabrications who make the countertops.

## The Process

When you are ready to start selecting the materials for your project, the best place to begin is in our showroom. The in-house designers are ready to help you. There are several ways to begin. The best way to be accurate is to have a current cabinet plan. If this is not available, a simple sketch of the area with detailed measurements can work as well. If you are not comfortable with measuring on your own, we can have someone come out to the house and measure for you. This information will help us to determine about how many slabs will be necessary to complete your project. This is just a jumping off point as the quantity of slabs could change if the slabs you select are extra large or extra small. It will also help determine the parameters of our slab search. Example: "We need at least 119" to cover the island..."

Material can be selected in several different ways. We occasionally have the perfect material here in our slab yard. This is great as you can see the material first hand. If we do not have anything here, then we can start shopping for you. Most of the slab

warehouses that we work with are in Portland, some are in Seattle, and there are several that we occasionally use in California. We will acquire photos to start with and can sometimes get a slab sample (see FAQ for details). For many people, this is where the selection process ends. For others, this is a starting point as they want to hand select the material themselves. This is certainly an option and is encouraged, especially for exotic materials and those who need the visual for their investment.

If you are selecting the slabs yourself there are several things that you should be aware of to make an informed decision. If we order the slabs through photos or sight unseen, our suppliers are responsible for looking for the material. If you are selecting the slab yourself, it becomes your responsibility to check over the slab with the supplier to make sure you are aware of the condition and suitability of the material. Keep in mind that once slabs are shipped, it is very difficult and costly to return them, so choose carefully.

### **Things to Look for When Selecting a Slab**

- Reflection. Examine the surface of the slab for pits, dull polish, voids or other inconsistencies. If there are inconsistencies make sure they are something that you can live with. We generally are unable to alter the surface of the slab.
- Cracks. A crack in a slab is different than a fissure. See FAQ on fissures. Looking at the back of the slab will help you identify the crack. It will go all of the way through and usually has been reinforced with resin and mesh. Some less stable materials have resin and mesh coating the entire slab. This does not mean they are cracked, just a little more delicate until installed.
- Slab number. Make sure that there are enough slabs that are in the same bundle to do your project. It is always safer to put an extra slab on hold until a new bid has been done with your selected material. Take into consideration if the slabs are smaller than average, tack another on to your hold until the exact number need has been determined.
- Motion and color. Keep in mind the layout of your area. If the material is directional it will dictate how the slab can be used. Again, put an additional on hold just to be safe.