

ENVIRONMENT

Natural Stone: Discovering New Forms of Art

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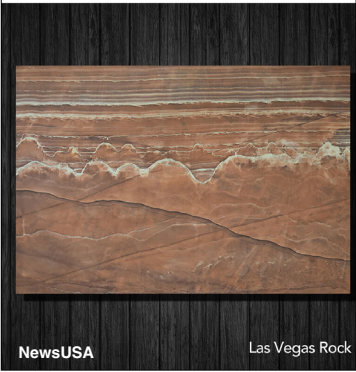
(NU) - Art can take on many different shapes and sizes in a variety of media. From watercolor paintings and bronze sculptures to still-life photographs and wood carvings, art can become the focal point of any interior living space. But, what if art could become part of a home’s architecture in unexpected ways? The answer is yes, it can, and it comes in the form of natural stone.

Perhaps it’s the allure of the exotic location from which it originated, or an unusual texture or uncommon color – representing that single event in time illustrating when and how the stone was created. Whether it’s a rare stone that is one in a million or one that was uncovered from the depths of the earth, natural stone can truly make a beautiful and exotic piece of art.

“Mother nature definitely has defined and shared her art with us through her supply of natural stone,” says Tom Harty, director of procurement at Stone Source, a company that specializes in curating natural stone and a member of MIA + BSI: The Natural Stone Institute. “The beautiful and creative veining found in natural stone is like a painting on a canvas.”

Whether natural stone is used to draw attention to a fireplace design, or is carefully selected as a standout countertop in a bathroom, the ways in which it can be used are endless. Some homeowners even enjoy mounting stone slabs on interior walls as pieces of art.

Chris Schulte, president of Las Vegas Rock, Inc., a quarry that concentrates on extracting metaquartzite stone and also a member of MIA + BSI, explains that the company’s “rainbow gardens” offer a multitude of natural stone colors ranging from purples and reds to yellows and browns. Some of these stones are so beautiful, they can stand alone as art. “We have many customers who have purchased slabs as wall art,” he says. “In fact, in the cities of Henderson, Nevada and Las



Vegas, government buildings have slabs of metaquartzite displayed on the walls.”

Onyx is another type of exotic natural stone that can be used in artful ways. “The translucent character of many onyxes lends them to be backlit and incorporated as decorative pieces,” says Harty. In fact, popular uses of onyx include bar backsplashes, built-in wall cabinets, bathroom countertops, staircases, and fireplaces.

Those who find beauty in nature might see natural stone as more than just another building material; they see it as a unique piece of fine art. For more information about natural stone, visit www.usenaturalstone.com.