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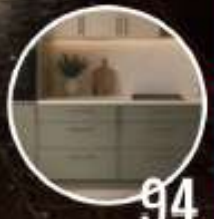

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THE WORLD'S OLDEST SURFACE IS FUTURE STRONG



From classical columns and Renaissance palaces to contemporary residences, hospitality interiors and sculptural furniture, marble has moved from one design era to another without losing its relevance.



▲▼asia pacific marbles

Its appeal today, however, is not simply nostalgia. In an age of engineered surfaces, digital fabrication and increasingly convincing replicas, marble offers something technology cannot quite reproduce. In fact, marble is identified as the fastest-growing product segment in India's natural-stone market. The global natural-stone market was valued at an estimated US$41.82 billion in 2025 and is projected to reach US$56.31 billion by 2034, according to IMARC. The Asia-Pacific region alone accounted for around 30% of the global market in 2025, while India's natural-stone market generated an estimated US$751.5 million in revenue the same year and is projected to grow at 7.4% annually between 2026 and 2033.

The numbers point to a growing market. An even more interesting story centers around why marble continues to command attention, and how architects, designers, manufacturers and clients are changing the way they see it.

For Gaurav Agarwal and Saurabh Agarwal, Managing Directors, Asia Pacific Marbles, Kolkata, marble's enduring appeal lies precisely in its resistance to repetition. "Marble is timeless because it doesn't follow trends – it absorbs them."



Gaurav Agarwal



Saurabh Agarwal





a-class marble

That may be the most succinct way of describing the material's staying power. Color palettes evolve, furniture styles change and spatial typologies are constantly reinvented, yet a compelling slab can move effortlessly between them.

For A-Class Marble, the explanation lies deeper. Rather than simply being a surface material, marble is a "living, geological medium" formed over millions of years. Every slab carries the imprint of heat, pressure and mineral deposits, creating variations that cannot be replicated exactly.



Ramesh Bhandari

"Every slab carries an authentic, unrepeatable narrative written by Earth's heat, pressure, and mineral deposits," says Ramesh Bhandari, Director, A-Class Marble, New Delhi. "No two quarries, blocks, or slabs are ever alike, meaning every installation becomes an inherently bespoke artwork," he adds.

The reason is embedded in the material itself. Natural marble is formed through geological processes that cannot be reproduced on demand. Its veining, movement, tonal variation and subtle imperfections are not defects to be eliminated but characteristics that establish identity.

"We live in a time when so much around us can be replicated instantly," says Saurabh Agarwal. "Marble offers the opposite, it is naturally limited, inherently individual and impossible to reproduce exactly."

For him, that is the true definition of luxury. Not merely that marble looks expensive, but that it cannot be replicated.

This individuality also gives marble an unusual relationship with time. Unlike synthetic surfaces designed to maintain a consistent appearance, natural stone often acquires a softer patina as it ages. When selected and cared for appropriately, its evolution becomes part of its character, allowing a space to record the life lived around it.

Beyond the marble of the moment

That idea of individuality is also reshaping what designers are choosing. The era of one universally coveted "marble of the moment" appears to be giving way to a broader appetite for geological character. The enduring classics, such as Calacatta, Statuario and Arabescato, remain relevant, but contemporary projects are increasingly embracing stronger movement, colour and visual drama.

Calacatta Viola and various Breccia marbles are finding favour alongside Brazilian quartzites such as Taj Mahal, Cristallo and Patagonia. Their appeal lies not merely in color but in depth, translucency and geological complexity.

A-Class Marble sees the same movement towards highly expressive stones. Dramatic black-and-white marbles such as Panda White and Grand Antiquette are being used as visual anchors, while jewel-toned stones, emerald quartzites, Sodalite Blue and luminous onyxes are bringing stronger connections to nature into contemporary interiors. Exotic stones such as Patagonia and Alexandria Quartzite, with their translucent quartz, crystal formations and dramatic veining, are increasingly being specified for feature walls, kitchen islands and powder rooms.

Travertine, meanwhile, is experiencing a notable revival, particularly in warmer beige and cream tones. Its return corresponds with a wider design movement towards tactile, earthy interiors and materials that feel connected to nature rather than excessively polished or clinical.



a-class marble



classic marble company (cmc)

The common denominator is not a particular colour or stone name. It is personality.

"Less perfection, more personality," says Gaurav Agarwal, describing the direction he sees emerging across the market. This is significant because it shifts the designer's relationship with stone. Instead of selecting a surface simply to complement a predetermined interior palette, the stone itself can become the starting point for the design.

From surface to statement

This shift is perhaps the biggest change in marble's contemporary story. A decade ago, marble was predominantly associated with familiar applications – flooring, countertops, bathrooms and wall surfaces. Today, architects and designers have made it part of the architectural vocabulary.

A dramatic slab can frame a single powder room, wrap a fluid kitchen island or become a backlit wall installation. Instead of covering every surface, contemporary architecture often pairs expressive marble with quiet, minimalist materials, allowing the stone's natural movement to become the narrative anchor of the space.

The appetite for individuality is also changing the way marble is curated and specified. White marble remains central to the offering, but the selection process increasingly goes beyond identifying a recognised variety. The focus is on blocks with the right background, movement, translucency and character – qualities that can determine how a stone ultimately shapes a space.

Classic Marble Company (CMC), for instance, offers more than 5,000 varieties sourced from over 40 countries, with new options added regularly. Rather than identifying a single definitive signature stone, Amit Shah, Founder & MD, CMC, sees the company's strength in the breadth of choice across exotics, whites and greys. Among the consistently sought-after stones is Namibian Crystal White, while its 9th Avenue collection focuses on rare marbles suited to high-end, statement residences.

The underlying message is clear: the luxury marble market is becoming less about standardisation and more about curation. The stone is no longer simply selected to complete a design; increasingly, the design begins with the stone.



classic marble company (cmc)



Amit Shah

classic marble company (cmc)





classic marble company (cmc)

The tactile turn

The changing role of marble is accompanied by another important shift: the move from mirror-polished surfaces towards more tactile, low-sheen finishes.

While polished marble will always have a place in classic luxury architecture, A-Class Marble observes a growing preference for honed, leathered, brushed, matte and fluted finishes. These treatments diffuse light rather than producing hard reflections, creating softer and more atmospheric interiors while bringing out the stone's physical depth.

Textured finishes can also reveal the natural peaks and valleys within the stone, making marble something to experience as much as to look at. From a practical perspective, honed and matte surfaces can be more forgiving in high-traffic areas, helping conceal minor everyday wear, etching and micro-scratches.

It reflects a broader change in the definition of luxury. Perfection and high gloss are no longer its only markers. Tactility, authenticity and the ability to age gracefully are becoming equally important.

Technology meets geology

Marble may be millions of years old, but the way it is quarried, processed and specified is increasingly technology-driven.

Advanced gang-sawing, diamond-wire cutting and vacuum-resin systems allow fragile and exotic blocks to be processed with greater precision while preserving their structural integrity. At A-Class Marble, proprietary StrenInn technology is used to reinforce slabs without altering their natural appearance.

Digital technology is transforming specification as well. High-resolution imagery, digital documentation, visualisation and live video from yards and factories allow designers to examine actual slabs remotely and make more informed decisions. High-resolution 3D mapping and digital dry-lay tools can also help architects visualise veining patterns and bookmatching arrangements before a slab is cut.

Technology, in this context, does not attempt to replace the material's natural individuality. It helps professionals see, manage and preserve that individuality more accurately.

classic marble company (cmc)





▲▼a-class marble

CMC takes this technological approach further into processing. Shah cites Forza360, described by the company as an Industry 4.0-certified processing technology, alongside adaptive process control and a 16-step quality protocol. For CMC, technology has become "the spine" of the business, supporting automation, consistency and standardisation, while its R&D and innovation efforts include process improvement, quality checks involving NABL-accredited laboratories and high-standard certifications.

This creates an interesting paradox. The more sophisticated the technology surrounding marble becomes, the more important its natural irregularity can appear.

The future is sculpted

The next chapter may take this idea even further. Marble is increasingly moving beyond being applied to architecture and becoming architecture itself. Custom-carved stone furniture, monolithic vanities, sculptural forms and integrated lighting made from translucent onyx are expanding the material's role from surface to object and, increasingly, to experience.

For A-Class Marble, the direction is towards "biophilic luxury paired with functional art" – a future in which natural stone becomes increasingly sculptural, tactile and integrated into the architecture.

As design continues to prioritize authentic materials over synthetic and disposable trends, marble's imperfections may become even more valuable and timeless. ifj





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