

BACCARAT: LANDMARK OF LUXURY

COMMERCIAL CASE STUDY OF THE FLAGSHIP
CRYSTAL STORE ON MADISON AVENUE, NYC



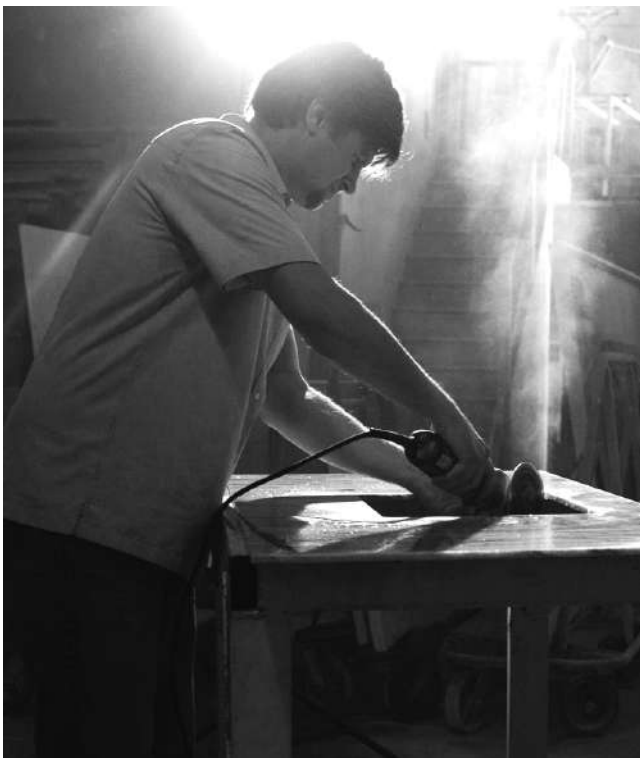
POLYCOR

Our overall inspiration for the space was the cutting of crystal and the qualities of crystal itself.

— Justin Capuco, Design Director,
Architecture-At-Large

THE PROJECT

A landmark of the luxury, glamour and prestige... for discerning shoppers to fully appreciate the brand's most coveted designs and to experience the unique Baccarat lifestyle..." - Michelle Klein, President & CEO, Baccarat



STEVE SCHRENK

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steve Schrenk is a former fabricator and installer, working with natural stone for 20 years. Now as brand manager for Polycor, Steve travels to fabricator shops and design showrooms across the Northeast and writes about all things stone on Polycor's blog.

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BACCARAT NORTH AMERICA FLAGSHIP STORE, MADISON AVE., NYC

Design Firm • Rafael de Cárdenas / Architecture-At-Large

Architect • Gensler

Design Director • Justin Capuco

Construction Firm • JRM Construction

Distributor • Stone Source

Material source • Quarry in Rivière-Pentecôte, Quebec

Material • Polycor Ultra-Thin Nordic

Black Antiqued Granite 1 cm thick

Applications • Display cases, flooring tiles, bathroom

Size • 2,500 square feet



THE CHALLENGE



TO DESIGN A LUXURY STORE REFLECTIVE OF THE TRADITION AND MODERN APPEAL OF THE BACCARAT BRAND.

Justin Capuco, of *Rafael de Cárdenas / Architecture-At-Large* was the design director on the project. He spoke with Polycor about his team's challenge to create a dynamic backdrop for a translucent product that speaks to Baccarat's reputation for elegance and craftsmanship.

“Our overall inspiration for the space was the cutting of crystal and the qualities of crystal itself. Both the spectacular effects with pops of brightness and reflection and the techniques for cutting crystal.”

THE MATERIALS

The Baccarat space is a study in contrast – warm woods carved with concave patterns, shiny polished stainless steel, grey satin mirrors, silver black plaster walls, diamond patterned wood floors, stone blocks with interior mirrors, or recessed surfaces filled with black pebbles – all juxtaposed with the brilliance of the crystal.

“The weight of the stone gives a luxury and credibility to the space, and also a sense of permanence.”

It was a storytelling tool for us, for the customer to see the same depth everywhere they looked in the store.”





The decision to incorporate stone, a material Capuco says is both traditional and on-trend, reflects a combination of luxury, approachability, permanence and modern adaptation, which he sees in the Baccarat brand.



Floating granite displays contrast with warm toned wood floors.



Display plinths, made with Ultra-Thin 1 cm Stone, are light enough to be moved throughout the store with seasonal or promotional changes.

WHY STONE FOR CRYSTAL



Capuco said his team initially considered marble, but pretty quickly settled on the Nordic Black granite.

“Holding up the sample against the crystal and seeing how it interacted with the crystal, we fell in love with it. And Baccarat fell in love as well.”



The designers chose the darker, muted pallet to make the crystal look stronger, brighter. It also grounded the space which soars up two stories with carved wood paneling veneered in Macassar Ebony and a stone inset panel providing a backdrop for the glittering crystal chandeliers.



Vases and vessels catch light thrown by chandeliers and table lamps, all sparkling, casting facets of light on the dark surfaces of stone and wood.



Capuco and his team designed the space to be an immersive experience and each aspect, from the curve in the paneling to the glint of stainless steel is well considered. Every surface gives off a visual texture.

WHY NORDIC BLACK



Using in-studio samples from Stone Source the team paired stones with crystal pieces. The small details, like the specs within the stone, Capuco said, were what moved the team to select Nordic Black.



“It looked particularly beautiful in concert with crystal. It possesses a richness, a sense of luxury and at the same time a depth, particularly on the floor.”

SOURCING THE STONE

“The question then became, ‘How much stone, and where can we get it?’ We didn’t necessarily start out looking for domestic stone when we were first looking for materials, but when we found out it was from North America it definitely played a part,” Capuco said.

“We knew we wanted this stone. We knew we could make the timeline for the project. What we were concerned with was the lot quality, having never worked with Nordic Black before.”





Capuco hopped a short flight to the Quebec quarry to personally see the blocks as workers cut them from the mountain, a perk that comes with sourcing domestic stone. With a heavy snow falling, quarry workers pulled out a series of blocks of the raw black granite.

They demonstrated how the stone would be cut using 30 wires to saw cleanly through the massive block. Seeing the consistency of the material and its subtle qualities sealed the choice for Capuco.

“We could see the level of veining, and level of detail in the stone, even a slight fossilizing.

The veining was thin and elegant. It wasn't hard and black.”



Clockwise from top left: Quarry in Rivière-Pentecôte, Quebec. Block of Nordic Black granite sourced for slicing into slabs. Veining visible prior to cutting. Finished material.

WATCH HOW STONE IS QUARRIED, CUT AND DISTRIBUTED [HERE](#).



WHY ANTIQUED FINISH



The stone choice wasn't just aesthetic. The site is after all a high traffic, commercial installation in Midtown NYC.

Capuco knew the specs and variation in stone could hide the inevitable tracking in of winter weather and street grime, and at the same time maintain a luxurious appearance. The finish of the stone was as much a consideration as the color, and so he chose an antiqued surface (also called brushed or leathered).

“We didn't want a shiny floor, but even antiqued the Nordic Black still has shiny components within the granite that play with the light, yet it does not distract from the crystal.”


WHY 1 CM THICKNESS



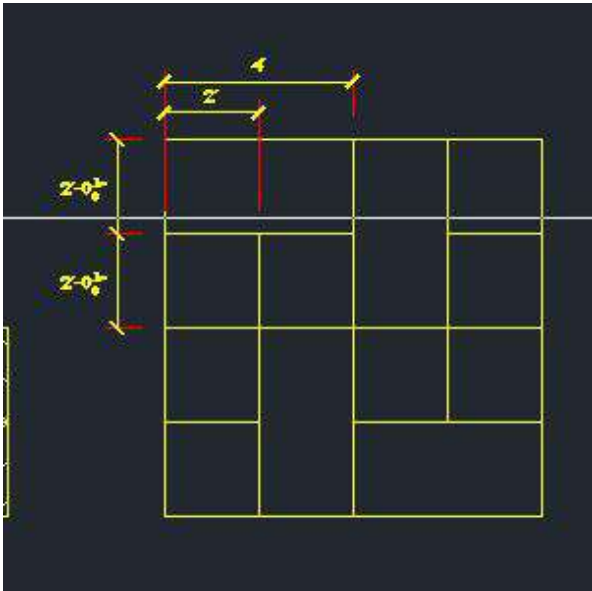
There are different reasons designers choose 1 cm stone - installations where weight is a concern or where the design demands a sleek and thin modern aesthetic. Here the thin natural stone helped the team overcome a construction problem – an uneven transition in the floor from street level to the store interior.



From the street it's two steps down into the showroom, where the dark, weighty stone material gives way to warm toned wood flooring.



Traditional 2 or 3 cm stone wouldn't have kept a flush threshold with the sidewalk. But digging down wasn't an option.



To keep the smooth transition the firm chose 1 cm tiles in 24" squares and 24"x48" rectangles in a pinwheel pattern.

PLINTH CONSTRUCTION



To showcase crystal pieces of different scale, color and style, the design team chose to construct a series of movable plinths of various heights.

Here Capuco paired the Nordic Black granite with grey satin mirrors and glass tops.



Ultra-Thin 1 cm stone can be cut and mitered to build custom cabinetry.



Boxes all have mitered corners to give them a monolithic appearance. They were built without mechanical anchoring, epoxied to a plywood substrate. Each box is freestanding, designed to move and grow with the store.



FUTURE PROJECTS



The Baccarat store was Capuco's first time using Ultra-Thin Stone, but he said, it won't be his last.

"With 1 cm I see new possibilities. Stone is such a massive material, heavy both in weight and appearance. That's something I'd like to play off in the future, maybe in a floating shelf, a lightweight display using material seemingly heavy and massive."

[See how Thin Stone is fabricated in this video](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Composite-backed Ultra-Thin Natural Stone is a third of the weight of traditional slabs with 10 x the flexural strength.

1 CM SLABS ARE IDEAL FOR:

- Countertops
- Full back splashes
- Full wall fireplace surrounds
- Showers
- Tub surrounds
- Desks
- Tables
- Full slab floors



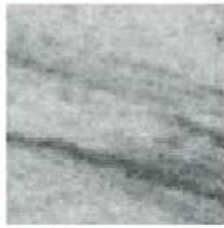
ULTRA-THIN STONE VARIETIES

1 cm is available in all of Polycor's marble and granite in honed, antiqued or polished finishes.

MARBLE



Solar Grey



Pearl Grey



White Cherokee



White Georgia



Caledonia



Cambrian Black



Kodiak Brown



Laurentian Green

GRANITE



Nordic Black



Saint Henry Black



Titanium Pearl



Picasso

And More.

BECAUSE ULTRA-THIN 1 CM SLABS ARE NATURAL STONE, DESIGNERS CAN USE IT ANYWHERE MARBLE OR GRANITE IS CALLED FOR. FROM KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS TO FURNITURE AND RETAIL DISPLAYS, THIN STONE WORKS FOR:

- MODERN AND TRADITIONAL DESIGNS
- LARGE FEATURE WALLS
- WEIGHT-RESTRICTED INSTALLATIONS

[Download the 1 cm Thin Stone spec sheet here.](#)



POLYCOR

www.polycor.com