

УДК 336.76:553.5(73)

## USA NATURAL STONE MARKET TRENDS AND FORECAST

I. Nykytiuk, Y. Nykytiuk

*e-mail: Iraniks19@gmail.com, andreyniks2@gmail.com*

Zhytomyr National Agroecological University,

Staryi Blvd 7, Zhytomyr, 10008, Ukraine

*The paper presents results of the research about nowadays trends and forecasts in the USA natural stone market. After analyzing recent reports, articles and statistics in the natural stone and design industries, it was possible for me to find some essential drifts in the US's, as one of the biggest importers, demand.*

*The most significant one is the change of the number one market material from granite to quartz. Moreover, it is possible to use engineered quartz to replicate many other natural stone patterns, which leads to the greater request for quarts all over the world. Other reason of involving quartz more into the industry is the ability of using new textured surfaces like matte, honed, leathered, and cement-like and others – quartz fabricators are now providing a unique style of their products beside the traditional polished finish.*

*As for color palette, homeowners prefer natural and realistic looks of the neutral colors often with a twist: sprawling thin white and light grey veins. Which is an inverse to the bold, dark veins, which are present in many of the quartz patterns, which flooded the market in past years. Stone integrated sinks are also a new fashion in countertops market.*

*Popular in recent years subway tile backsplash kitchen is still in favor, though with a few added points such as multi-colored tiles or bigger size subway tiles. Although the countertop and the backsplash are quite different in styles, they are complementing each other surprisingly well in the newer designs. The key point is to put the countertop tones down to highlight the backsplash.*

*Landscaping products market demand did not get many changes in styles. However, the request for the last year trend products keeps rising and is not expected to fall these years.*

**Keywords:** *natural stone, countertops, tiles, trends, quartz, market, demand, surface, USA.*

### Problem statement

Humanity has used natural stone as the main building and memorial material for thousands of years. Monuments built of it more than 4,000 years ago are still standing today, which is a testament to natural stone's persisting beauty and strength.

Natural stone does not lose its importance and value these years too. Moreover, the worldwide demand for stone continues to rise, so does the competition between its exporters.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey [1], the United States is one of the world's leading markets for dimension stone. Thus, it is crucial to understand USA natural stone industry's features, trends and forecasts.

### Review of recent researches and publications

Materials and reports of the National Kitchen & Bath Association, The Kitchen & Bath Industry Shows and Universal Granite and Marble review of the new trends in the natural stone market in the USA gives the preliminary information for the study. As well as other online magazines and periodicals related to the natural stone and design industries.

### Research results

According to the researched materials, one of the greatest changes in the industry is the increasing demand for quartz. The National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) reports that while granite is less desirable these days, the use of quartz is on the rise. [2]

Quartz is introduced as a high-end alternative to granite. In 2018, Quartz manufacturers will continue to impress customers with manufacturing improvements to keep this countertops option king. Not just for this year, but for quite some time to come. Furthermore, the engineered quartz can now replicate many natural stone patterns, including Italian marble, with extreme accuracy; the benefit is that these duplications have the durability of engineered quartz, which allows using the material in applications where marble might not be appropriate. The low maintenance required with quartz provides a perfect solution for homeowners who are seeking that marble-look for their kitchen surfaces [3].

There is also a new trend for a natural and fresher look for the house designs, which brings honed and leather surfaces to the market. Which

becomes another reason for using quartz instead of other natural stones. When materials like quartz are designed to resemble slabs of natural stone, such as marble or granite, it involves creating veins in complex patterns swirled into the countertop slabs. If the owner wants something more realistic then there is no need for a polished piece – honed and leathered finishes have the durability needed for the kitchen but have a drastically different look in the space.

Even though polished is still the most popular one, there are advantages to the two others mentioned above.

Honed finish is a matte finish with little to no shine. Honed finishes work well with marble, since its lack of shine conceals any flaws or scratch marks more readily.

Leathered finish is a newer style of treatment that has become more popular in recent years.

As advances in the art of manufacturing quartz continues to evolve, exciting new textured surfaces have begun to hit the market. With many new colors becoming available in finishes like matte, honed, leathered, and others- quartz manufacturers are now providing a unique touch to their product outside of the traditional polished finish. Cement-like and industrial colors are growing in popularity as honed and matte finishes add an interesting element to this design [3].

Beside the drift in the most popular material, there are new tendencies in the color palette. Straight lines, light, dark, or a combination of the colors will be in favor.

Instead of a bright blue or jet-black countertop, you are more likely to find soft grey, white and beige tones in kitchens in 2018. There is more focus on highlighting captivating individual components using neutral backgrounds. So you might find a beige (or the new greige – grey + beige) countertop, with a ceiling-high mosaic pattern backsplash standing out against it.

However, some sources are standing on the point, navy and blue the biggest trend in kitchen and bath right now, and that it is an apparent trend in everything from cabinets to appliances [4].

Some of these slightly different quartz colors include dull browns and light blues (almost gray). Other than that, more and more homeowners are opting to stick to off-whites, ashy grays, and neutral beige.

Quartz surfaces with light veins are also getting more popular. Although neutral colors are still

looking to be dominant in 2018, there might be an added twist: sprawling thin white and light grey veins. This delicate quality is an inverse to the bold, dark veins, which are present in many of the quartz patterns, which flooded the market in past years [3].

Chrome and satin still reign supreme if you want to keep it classic however, shiny brass is back in a big way. Yet another trend is rose gold.

There is also another related to the countertop trend. While traditional porcelain will always be a classic, a stone sink is a new design hit. The favorite look for homeowners is a sleek continuous style from the countertop and down into the sink. The integrated sink with countertop has become another trend in kitchen countertops for 2018.

Another point that should draw exporters' attention in the upcoming years is backsplash tiles. In 2018, stone industry experts expect backsplash tiles to remain the most popular choice as homeowners seek a backsplash style that stands out more. They are seeing the disappearance of that 4" piece to make way for decorative tiles only. It seems to be the go-to style in recent years.

The traditional subway tile backsplash kitchen is still popular though with a few twists such as multi-colored tiles or larger size subway tiles. Tiles with exotic finishes resembling wood, marble, brick or natural stone have also gotten popular as homeowners look for something different from the ordinary.

The difference in style between the countertop and the backsplash has a surprisingly harmonious result. The countertop tones down to highlight the backsplash, with both complementing each other perfectly [5].

Landscaping tendencies do not have as many changes comparing to the past few years. Nevertheless, the demand for the last years' trends is continuing to grow. Flagging, natural stone steps, walls, and wall caps. There is also more request for stone to be used as landscaping products, functional and decorative, than ever before.

### **Conclusions and prospects of further research**

The most significant shifts in the USA demand for natural stone is a switch from granite to quartz as a number one product in the market. Honed and leathered surfaces are stepping into the game and will if not replace the polished surfaces then at least be as popular as the latter. Exporters should look into the neutral colors this year. Soft grey, white and beige tones, dull browns and light blues (almost

gray) are looking to be dominant in 2018 – 2019. Stone sinks are getting more and more common in the new home-designs, as well as multi-colored tiles or larger size subway tiles.

Trends in landscaping do not seem to be changing much, but the requests for the landscaping products are rising.

As a biggest importer, US often dictates the fashion. Which makes other countries adjust to changes slower. Thus, the trends described in this article will stay actual for at least couple of years.

However, tendencies in natural stone industries change almost every year, so further research is always crucial to be made.

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### ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ ТА ПРОГНОЗ РИНКУ НАТУРАЛЬНОГО КАМЕНЮ В США

**І. НИКИТЮК, Ю. НИКИТЮК**  
*e-mail: Iraniks19@gmail.com,*  
*andreyniks2@gmail.com*

Житомирський національний  
агроєкологічний університет,

бульвар Старий, 7, Житомир, 10008, Україна

*Дана стаття презентує результати досліджень теперішніх тенденцій та перспектив розвитку ринку натурального каменю в США. Завдяки аналізу останніх доповідей, статей та статистичних даних в*

індустрії натурального каменю та дизайну, стало можливим визначити кілька важливих змін попиту в США як одного з найбільших імпортерів. Найсуттєвішою стала переміна матеріалу № 1 на ринку з граніту на кварц. Більше того, стало можливо використовувати інженерний кварц для реплікації багатьох інших натуральних каменів, що призводить до більшого запиту на кварц по всьому світу. Ще одною причиною для масштабнішого залучення кварцу до індустрії є можливість застосовувати нові текстуровані поверхні, такі як матова, горна, шкіряна, цементна та інші – виробники кварцу тепер надають унікальний стиль своїй продукції у порівнянні зі звичайною полірованою продукцією.

Відносно кольорової гами, домовласники надають перевагу природнім та реалістичним виглядам нейтральних кольорів. Часто з певною родзинкою: тонкими продовгуватими білими та світло-сірими жилками. Що є контрастом до товстих, темних жил у кварцових моделях, які переповнювали ринок останнім часом. Кам'яні інтегровані раковини також стали новою модою серед стільниць.

Популярні останнім часом частини кухонних стін із плиткою «під цеглу» не втрачають своїх позицій, та з декількома поправками. Наприклад, різнокольорові плитки та більший розмір кухонних плиток-цеглин. Незважаючи на те, що стилі подібних стінних вставок та стільниць досить різні, вони на диво вдало доповнюють одне одного у нових дизайнерських ідеях. Секрет – у затемненні стільниць на кілька тонів для підкреслення цегляної стіни з плитки.

Попит на ринку ландшафтної продукції майже не зазнав змін у стилях. Однак, запит на популярні в останні роки продукти продовжує зростати, і, відповідно прогнозам, не збирається спадати.

**Ключові слова:** натуральний камінь, стільниці, плитка, тренди, кварц, ринок, попит, поверхня, США

#### ТЕНДЕНЦИИ И ПРОГНОЗЫ РЫНКА ПРИРОДНОГО КАМНЯ В США

**И. Никитюк, Ю. Никитюк**  
e-mail: Iraniks19@gmail.com,  
andreyniks2@gmail.com

Житомирский национальный  
агроэкологический университет,  
бульвар Старый, 7, Житомир, 10008, Украина

Данная статья презентует результаты исследований нынешних тенденций и перспектив развития рынка натурального камня в США. Благодаря анализу последних докладов, статей и статистических данных в индустриях натурального камня и дизайна, стало возможно определить несколько важных изменений спроса в США как одного из крупнейших импортеров.

Наиболее существенной стала перемена материала № 1 на рынке из гранита в кварц. Более того, стало возможно использовать инженерный кварц для репликации многих других натуральных камней, что приводит к еще большему увеличению запросов на кварц по всему миру.

Еще одной причиной для более масштабного привлечения кварца в индустрию является возможность применения новых текстурированных поверхностей, таких как матовая, горная, кожаная, цементная и прочие – производители кварца теперь придают уникальный стиль своей продукции по сравнению с обычной полированной продукцией.

Что касается цветовой палитры, то домовладельцы предпочитают природные и реалистические виды нейтральных цветов. Чаще с определенной изюминкой: тонкими продолговатыми белыми и светло-серыми жилками. Что является контрастом к толстым, темным жилам в кварцевых моделях, которые переполняли рынок в последнее время. Каменные интегрированные раковины также стали новой модой среди столешниц.

Популярные в последнее время части кухонных стен с плиткой «под кирпич» не теряют своих позиций, но с некоторыми поправками. Например, разноцветные плитки и больший размер кухонных плит-кирпичей. Несмотря на то, что стили подобных стеновых вставок и столешниц расходятся, они удивительно удачно дополняют друг друга в новых дизайнерских идеях. Секрет – в затемнении столешниц на несколько тонов, чтобы подчеркнуть кирпичную стену из плитки.

Спрос на рынке ландшафтної продукції почти не претерпел изменений в стилях. Однако, запрос на популярную продукцию последних лет продолжает расти, и, согласно прогнозам, не собирается спадать.

**Ключевые слова:** натуральный камень, столешницы, плитка, тренды, кварц, рынок, спрос, поверхность, США.