



RIAD TILE

ZELLIGE TILE APPLICATION AND INSTALLATION

About Zellige

Zellige is a traditional Moroccan tile handcrafted with non-refined natural clay from the Fez region. It is a low-fired terracotta that may be used for all applications, including floor/wall, interior/exterior and water treatments (such as pools). Zellige owes its distinctive appearance to slight variations in size, color and other imperfections.

Each Tile is Unique

Each Zellige tile is unique, with color variation between each tile. This variation is due to the ancient glazing process in which raw materials are in use. The process of firing Zellige tiles often causes crazing on the surface of the glazed tiles. Crazing is a common occurrence in handmade tiles that produces an intricate network of small hairline cracks. Zellige tiles are hand chiseled and therefore size variation is common. Be prepared for some variation in width, length and thickness.

Imperfections

Due to the raw materials and timeless methods of making Zellige tiles you will receive tiles that are pitted through the glaze and about 20% of which will contain cracks, crazing and edge-chipping. These tiles are perfectly fine to be installed and will give the traditional Zellige finish. If you don't wish to have these imperfections, we recommend ordering 20%-30% more tile.

Installation

Upon receiving your tiles, carefully inspect your order, keeping in mind that Zellige Tile's signature appearance comes from color variation and chipping. Riad Tile can't be held responsible for tiles that have already been installed.

DO NOT install from unblended boxes. Zellige tiles from many different boxes should be mixed to achieve the best overall blend of color and imperfections.

1. Sort – blend all boxes for shade variation
2. Soak – soak each tile in water for 1-2 minutes
3. Prep – level walls and clean off any dust or debris
4. Trowel – apply one layer of thinset on the wall
5. Butter – apply another layer of thinset on the back of the tile
6. Place – set tiles into the wall adhesive one at a time
7. Space – Zellige's uneven edges require the use of wedge spacers
8. Cut – Either snap with a tile cutter or slice with a wet diamond blade
9. Grout – grout with Mapei Ultracolor Plus FA (grout to also fill pits, chips and cracks)
10. Clean – remove excess grout and grout film

Zellige on Floors

Zellige tiles can be laid on floors, in light traffic areas where the tiles would not be exposed to heavy impacts. Particular attention should be paid to the application of the adhesive on the floor and back of the tiles to ensure perfect bonding between Zellige tile pieces and subfloor.

Zellige In Wet Areas

For surfaces in direct contact with water (such as swimming pools, shower floors and walls, fountains) ensure the surface the tiles are laid on is waterproof, stable and rigid prior to the installation of the Zellige tiles. Use adhesive cement and grout fit for these wet spaces.

Grout

We recommend Mapei Ultracolor Plus FA grout.

Zellige should not use a grout joint (should be butt jointed). Wedge spacers can be used to allow for variation in the butted tiles.

Maintenance

Minimal maintenance is required on Zellige tiles. Mild soaps or neutral cleaners should be sufficient for most cleaning.

Durability

Zellige will wear over time depending on site conditions. This wear should be expected and give the tiles a beautiful look.