

## **Cultured Marble Facts**

### **What is cultured marble?**

In layman's terms, cultured marble is a mixture of fiberglass resin and crushed limestone. A more technical description is as follows: Cultured marble belongs to the family of cast polymers. Cast polymers are a mixture of an unsaturated polyester resin, highly filled with inorganic particulates and pigments. Fillers used are engineered calcium carbonates (for cultured marble), aluminum tri-hydrate (for cultured onyx) and aluminum tri-hydrate with a suspension of specialty formulated color chips for cultured marble granite.

### **How is cultured marble made?**

Cultured marble is a precise blend of polyester resin, catalyst, fillers and pigments, thoroughly mixed and placed into open molds which are coated with a clear gelcoat. The gelcoat is especially formulated to as produce a tough, durable, non-porous and shiny surface, very stain resistant and easy to maintain.

The shape of the products depends on the molds used. The colors and veinings of the finished product depend on the specific formulation and the techniques of the manufacturer/pourer. As such, each manufacturer produces his own specific colors and finish.

The catalyst used will cause a chemical reaction and make the resin polymerize and harden, bonding the matrix together in a hard strong mass. After some hours of chemical curing, the products are de-molded, trimmed, ground, polished and finally inspected before going out to be installed.

### **What are the advantages of cultured marble products?**

Cultured marble products are generally coated in the mold with a clear or colored gelcoat. This outer layer provides the ultimate strength to the bonded matrix. It also makes the final product water proof, durable and resistant to chipping. Depending on the finishing process used, the gelcoat also provides the shiny surface that adds luster to the final product.

Because the final objects are cast in mold, the installed product has minimal seams and when installed properly, using mildew resistant 100% silicone, it becomes virtually leak proof. Tubs are cast with the deck attached to the tub bowl in one solid piece. In residential construction, vanity tops typically have the bowl cast as an integral part of the vanity deck, avoiding potentially unsightly seams between bowl and vanity deck. Cultured marble shower panels are typically only seamed where panels meet in the corners. Cultured marble products are very versatile and find applications in residential construction, multi-family housing as well as commercial dwellings. Over the past 10 years, raw materials and manufacturing techniques have improved dramatically which will allow you to enjoy your cultured marble products in their original luster for many years to come.

### **What products are made of cultured marble?**

Typical products presented in cultured marble are bathtubs, with and without a whirlpool system, shower bases, vanity tops, wall panels, commode plates, planters, desk accessories, etc.

