

FAQS

Are you open to the public or only to trade professionals?

We are happy to show our product to homeowners although the stone must be purchased through a trade professional, interior designer, contractor, homebuilder, or architect.

Do you carry anything in stock?

Your order is fabricated after we receive the deposit. In rare cases will we have stone products in stock.

For custom orders, what is the lead time?

Delivery times can vary depending on the project. For most of our projects, we can deliver in a 12–14-week timeframe. Please schedule an appointment well in advance of your project's needs!

Do you sell anything other than Belgian Bluestone?

We sell Belgian Bluestone *Exclusively*. It is also referred to as Le Petit Granit, Nero Belga, Granit de Flandre, Pierre Blue, Belgian Granite, Belgian Blue Limestone, and Belgisch Hardsteen.

What is the geology of the stone?

It is made up of calcareous fossils of marine organisms or [crinoids](#), cemented by limestone mud.

It is a hard, solid [limestone](#), heavy, and compact like marble or granite. It is not a marble in the petrographic sense, because [sedimentary](#) limestone is not metamorphosed, although its composition, about 96% [calcite](#), and its technical characteristics are quite close to marble.

Belgian Bluestone has many advantages for construction: resistance to bad weather, snow, hail, dirt, and pollution. It is non-porous, dries quickly, and is therefore both moisture-proof and freeze-thaw resistant.

The same stone will be different colors simply according to how its surface is worked: pale blue grey to almost jet black.

Why choose authentic Belgian Blue Limestone?

Only real blue limestone from Belgium is exceptionally resistant to wear and compression. It is impervious to water runoff, weather, and temperature

changes. It is a superior architectural stone and will last for hundreds of years. These many qualities present in the natural stone make it unalterable. 100% 'made in Belgium', the Blue Limestone of Hainaut® is an ecological choice. It is a local sustainable material.

What is the difference between blue limestone and other, similar rocks or ceramic?

The authentic Belgian blue stone is a compact crinoid limestone, sedimentary in origin. Its non-porosity and density make it more resistant than other, imported stones of similar appearance. The iolites in Asian dolomitic stone, for example, oxidize with time and create unsightly rings. Foreign stones or imitation blue stones do not have the same sparkle nor the unique properties of true Belgian blue limestone. Unlike these different stones, the Belgian Blue Limestone takes on a beautiful patina with age.

How is the authentic Blue Limestone of Hainaut® a better quality than other stones of similar appearance?

The Blue limestone of Hainaut® is a compact limestone, which spent 345 million years as part of the very bedrock underneath us. Non-porous and highly resistant to wear and compression it is impervious to water runoff, bad weather, and temperature changes. Adapted to our harsh climate, the Belgian stone can withstand repetitive periods of freezing and thawing. Its many qualities, present in its natural form, make it an unalterable stone and unmatched durability.

The entire operation of the Blue Limestone of Hainaut® is approved by the technical certificate issued by the Belgian Union for Technical Approval in Construction (ATG). The quality standards at Carrières du Hainaut® exceed European requirements. The statements of performance (EC) for finished products are available on request.

Where can I find a worktop, a table, a bench, or other custom-made pieces?

Your natural stone professional, stonecutter, or stone mason is the person to speak to about custom pieces. They alone have the expertise and know-how needed to work blue limestone. Whether you need a bench, a table, a shower, a basin, or a vanity unit ... your stonemason is where you'll find the passion and inspiration you need to give life to your project.

Can one use soap to clean and maintain blue limestone?

It is perfectly OK to use a very small amount of soap to maintain your blue limestone, though regular cleaning with clear water should be enough. Every third cleaning or so, use slightly soapy water to clean your blue limestone. Avoid using too much soap. It doesn't help clean any deeper, and excess soap risks leaving unsightly marks on the surface of the stone.

What is the best soap to use?

If you want to use soap when cleaning, choose a neutral pH soap, such as Marseilles soap flakes, or environmentally protective Carolin cleaning products ... avoid cleaning or maintenance with products using acids, chemicals, or descaling agents for sanitary use! The blue limestone is compact and therefore reacts badly to descaling agents.

For outside use, regular maintenance is not in and of itself necessary - the weather will take care of that for you. Once a year you should remove vegetation build-up after the winter with water and bleach, or with a product from the Lithofin stone care product range.

If you use a natural stone cleaner, take care to follow the manufacturer's instructions. Measure out the product correctly and test it first on a hidden part of the stone.

There's a white veil or film on the surface of my blue limestone. What should I do?

If you've used too much soap in cleaning, a white film, rings or cloudy traces may appear on the surface of the stone. Relax! All you have to do is clean the limestone a couple of times with clear water. For a thorough cleaning, add baking soda to the bucket of water or use a multi-cleaner product for natural stone (Lithofin).

How do I protect my blue limestone?

The hardness and non-porosity of blue limestone naturally protect against external aggression. Everyday accidents may leave traces on the surface but they will not penetrate the stone and, with time they fade into the patina. Blue limestone is a natural living material – don't be afraid if it gets a couple of marks or scratches! It will only add to the character and charm.

A simple cleaning with a very small amount of soap nourishes the stone, helps protect and blurs any micro-scratches. Caution: *Again avoid using too much soap.* An excess of soap can create an unsightly film on the surface of the stone.

How can I speed up the patina effect on my stone?

Blue limestone is a natural and living stone, it evolves and develops a patina over time. Think of churches and castles of centuries past. Regular cleaning with very little soap will effectively darken the stone and accelerate the patina effect.

How do I know my stone is from the quarry in Belgium?

Les Carrières du Hainaut® ensures the origin and absolute quality of each of their finished products by issuing a certificate of origin - issued when they are purchased - and validated by a unique code and stamp.

How can I be sure that Belle Bloo LLC is offering authentic blue stone from Carrières du Hainaut®?

At certain distributors, the blue stone offered is clearly labeled 'Carrières du Hainaut®' and presented on displays bearing our name.

In addition, you can always request the Carrières du Hainaut® certificate of authenticity from your distributor.

Which finish do I choose?

Each finish gives the stone a particular color. The combination of finishes, installed in patterns, will create a new harmonious look. If the choice of finishes is mainly aesthetic, some technical constraints sometimes impose certain limits. So, to make an appropriate choice, take into account the application or daily use of the area in concern and the recommended ideal thickness.

Important:

For **floor coverings** in damp rooms or places of heavy traffic, favor finishes slightly structured or rough on the surface, such as Flamed, EnoSkin®, EnoStyl®... They not only offer an aesthetic advantage but more importantly, add a non-slip feature while remaining pleasant to bare feet.

The high gloss finish should be *avoided* for floors and will therefore be reserved for interior wall applications and countertops to retain its beautiful original gloss appearance.

More coarsely textured finishes, such as Chiseled, Gradiné, Sclypé, Old Cut, Piqueté or other Bush-hammered finishes, with highly sought-after decorative effects, are perfect for **wall applications**. Particular attention will be paid to the minimum thickness to be observed for these finishes and an account will be taken, if necessary, of an appropriate installation system. They are also suitable for the floor, but in this case, the wearing of shoes will be recommended to ensure optimal comfort.

What thickness to choose for exterior purposes?

The installation technique depends on the application and the support on which the blue stone will be placed. This influences the choice of the thickness and the format of the stone. Your place of residence also influences the required thickness. Thus, for **facade** applications, in Belgium, the standards impose a covering of 3 cm minimum. In France and the Netherlands, 2 cm is accepted. Check the building code for the city in which you are building or remodeling.

Is blue stone suitable for dressing a swimming pool?

Water pearls on the surface of Pierre Bleue du Hainaut®. Its non-porosity acts as a natural shield. Not surprisingly, the blue stone draws its origin from the depths of the sea, when our regions were bathed in a tropical and warm sea.

For your pool copings or submerged steps, choose slightly textured finishes, such as Flamed Blue, EnoSkin®, EnoStyl®... Non-slip, you will appreciate the safety. Soft to the touch, you will also enjoy the comfort.

Is blue stone suitable around an open fire or barbecue?

The authentic Pierre Bleue du Hainaut® also has its place by the fireside. Resistant to heat and high temperatures, it elegantly adorns the fireplace. However, avoid placing it in direct contact with the flame.

Does blue stone fear frost and extreme cold?

The authentic Belgian blue stone is compact and non-porous. Water does not penetrate it. These intrinsic characteristics make it unalterable, not fearing temperature variations or repeated periods of freezing and thawing.

What setting material do I use for natural stone?

We recommend a Latex-Modified White Thin Set for the installation of natural stone. Your builder or contractor will know which setting material is appropriate for the installation of natural stone.

Thank you for your inquiries!