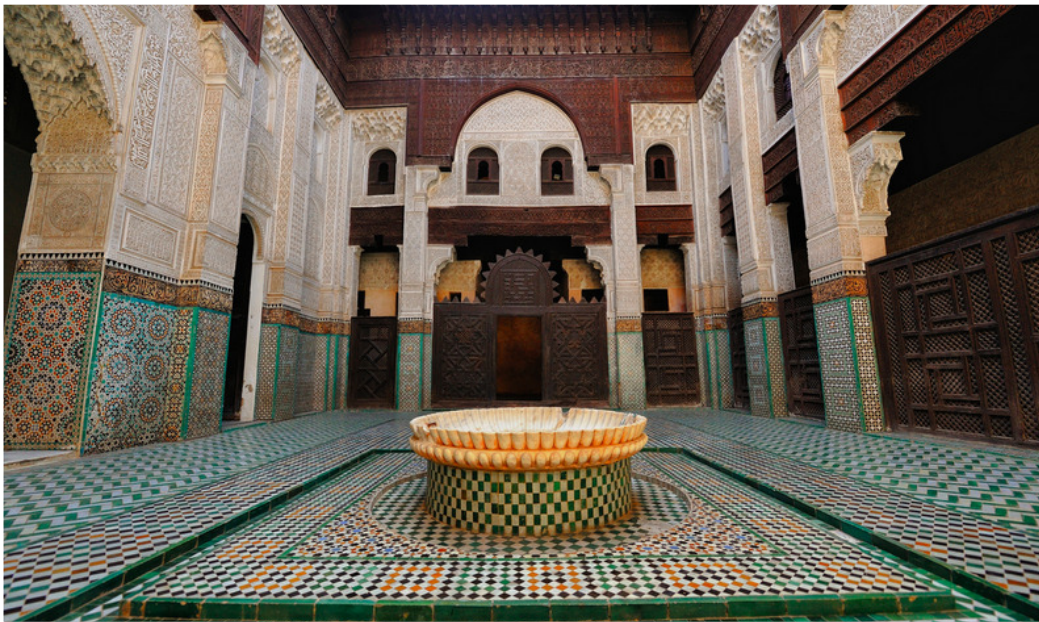


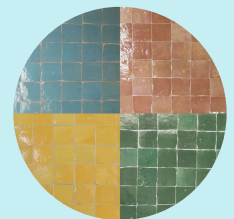
# Zellige Tile

## History, Fun Facts & Technical Info



### Zellige

refers to individually hand-chiseled tile pieces glazed in different colors.



The Arabic word "zillaj" (زليج) is derived from the verb "zalaja" (زَلَجَ) meaning "to slide," in reference to the smooth, glazed surface of the tiles.



### Olive Pit Kilns

The low temp firing distributes heat unevenly, creating imperfections.

## Ancient History

Bou Inania Medersa (pictured above) is a Mosque in Fes, Morocco built in the 1350s. The ancient installation technique consisted of setting each individual tile in wet plaster.

Some of the oldest fragments of Zellige tile have been found at sites in Tunisia from the mid-11th century, but developed into widespread use during the 1300s in Morocco and Algeria.

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### THE REAL DEAL

To be considered a true Zellige tile, the clay that makes up the terra cotta body should be from Northern Africa not containing lime or iron.

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### A DYING ART

The art of making zellige is passed from generation to generation in Morocco; master craftsmen are called maâllems. But even as it's having a resurgence in interiors, the knowledge is fading.

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### BEAUTIFUL GEOMETRY

Depictions of living beings is prohibited in the Muslim religion, hence the intricate geometric designs used to adorn sacred spaces.

## Professional Installation

It takes a skilled installer to get that perfectly, imperfect look.

### COLOR VARIATION

zellige glaze colors vary from tile to tile, some more than others. these variations are intentional, resulting from the use of ancient glaze production methods and use of raw materials.

### CRAZING

crazing refers to the hairline cracks which may occur in the glaze surface of zellige after firing and is common in hand crafted tile. to minimize the possibility of staining use a penetrating sealer or grout release.

### SIZE VARIATION

all zellige are hand chiseled to size. this creates obvious size variation which is part of the zellige effect. please anticipate size variation in width and length, based on this chiseling. due to shrinkage from wet to fired clay in the firing process, tiles are subject to size variation in depth, as well.

### BLENDING BEFORE INSTALLATION

DO NOT install from unblended boxes. zellige from several different cartons should be mixed to achieve the best overall blend of color and surface imperfections.



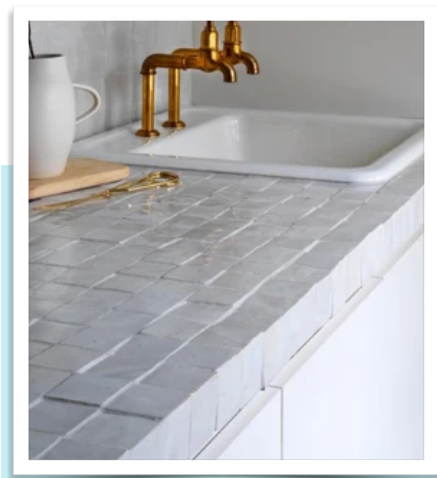
### PITTING, CRACKING, EDGE-CHIPPING & MORE

again, based on the archaic methods of the mining and firing of the terracotta zellige clay body and the impurities found in the raw materials used for the glazes, zellige will contain tiles that are pitted through the glazes to the clay body, as well as have a percentage of about 20%-30% that will contain cracks, crazing and edge-chipping and iron spots. should your project not want as many tiles containing these imperfections - order at least 20%-30% more tiles, to allow your installer to cherry-pick these imperfections out.

### IMPORTANT

Zellige tiles cannot be placed where heat is directed onto them (inside fireplaces, pizza ovens and oven venting). To install Zellige behind a stove range/oven vent, at least a 4" metal splash (provided by the range manufacturer) is recommended between the tile and the vent to deflect heat from directly onto the tiles.

If installing next to something very hot like an industrial pizza oven, you should install the tile at least 6" away.



### TRIM INFO

Trim is not part of Zellige. Trim, in general, is not a tradition for tiles outside of the U.S. and specifically for tiles that have an ancient history.

For jobs requiring a finished edge—the traditional craft of trimming tiles is recommended.

For turning corners and finish edges, mitering provides a beautiful corner finish.