

INTERIOR TRENDS SHAPE STONE MARKET



ISABEL PINTADO

As a core consumer of stone products, the size and strength of the regional interior design market will continue to shape stone trends for interior projects.

Dominated by the spending power of Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar the MENA region's vibrant interior design sector is expected to be worth some \$8.2bn in 2016 according to figures in the Dubai Design Outlook 2015 report.

It is a market seeing a resurgence in the use of marble, a rise in the number of refurbishment projects and strong demand for innovative floor and covering products, according to designers based in the UAE.

"There has been an enormous resurrection of the use of marble in a contemporary way," said Isabel Pintado former Managing Director, Interior Design at LW Design Group.

"Over the last couple of years marble has been used to create a luxurious contemporary feel. Everybody is striving for a cleaner look."

"It's also quite rare nowadays to see more than two marbles being combined on a floor, but there tend to be a lot of geometric patterns using the same marble, so designs play more with the veining and cut of the stone."

"There are loads of designs coming up around the region that are playing with shades and patterns, all with the same colour stone and that's what is making them so special."

"Refurbishment projects are becoming more predominant. It becomes a more mature market when people realise properties can have a little bit of a reincarnation and that's what we're seeing."

Pintado feels this kind of detailed work with stone and inlaid patterns is one of the advantages of working in the Middle East, compared to markets such as Europe and North America, where the cost of such detailed finishing would be prohibitive. Refurbishments are playing an increasing role in design portfolios too, which demonstrates the increasing maturity of the market in the UAE.

**Find out how you can be a part of Middle East
Stone taking place from 22 – 25 May 2017 in Dubai**