

Interior design with quartz

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The image shows a contemporary dining space. The upper half of the frame is dominated by a wall covered in a grid of circular plates. These plates feature various blue and white patterns, including floral motifs, stripes, and geometric designs. A large, white ceramic sculpture of a bird, possibly a crane, is mounted on the wall, partially obscured by a string of warm-toned, spherical pendant lights. Below the plate wall, a curved, upholstered bench with a blue and white floral pattern serves as a backdrop for a round, white dining table. The table is set with several place settings, each including a glass, a plate, and a small bowl. Three chairs with white frames and blue upholstered seats are positioned in front of the table. The floor is a light, neutral color, and the overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

Furniture with quartz



Resistant and sophisticated furniture with quartz

Quartz is a highly regarded material at design studios for two different popular uses: surfaces and furniture. We will be looking at some highly interesting examples of the latter (albeit slightly less widespread in architectural design), such as tables that incorporate technological quartz.

First though, it is worth taking a moment to look at the properties inherent to technological quartz and the value added it brings to furniture manufacturing. For example, quartz offers high resistance to knocks, acid from certain foods and scratches. Moreover, another key aspect is the material's uniformity: even after

the material being cut, the grains in the design can still be appreciated at the edges. This is a hugely prized quality when designing spaces that is not offered by other surfaces and materials.

In terms of furniture incorporating technological quartz, one highlight is the Arik Levy-designed table in Punt Mobles BAY collection, inspired by the meeting of the oceans and continents. This symbolic encounter is materialised through the fusion of the quartz top and wooden legs—a seemingly simple merger but one that brings to together in a single piece the plant and mineral worlds. Another great example of quartz furniture



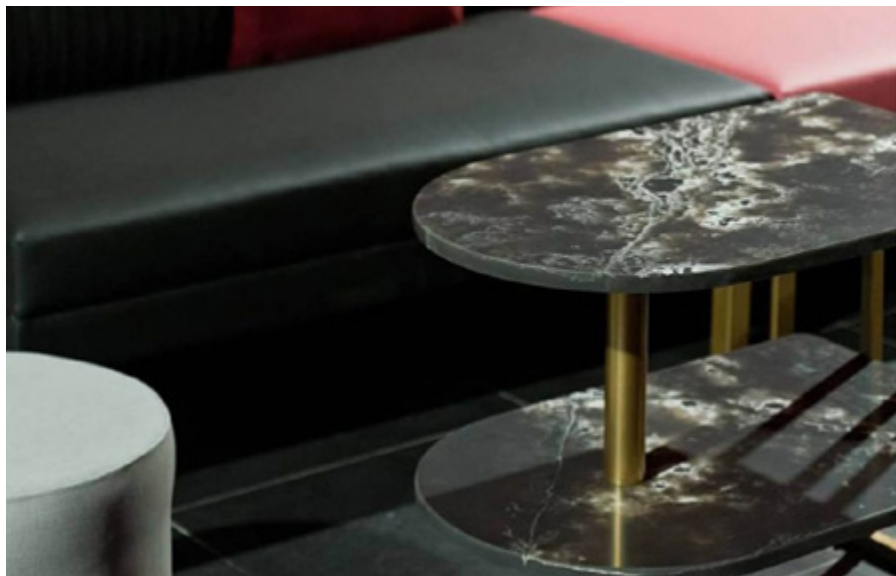
is the tables shared by customers at Bámbola Bar in Valladolid—a space inspired by the magical qualities of Art Deco. The project was designed by Guillermo Ortega and Ruth Santos from Doos Interiorismo, and combines textures and materials, including technological quartz in the tables spread throughout the premises. The material is also used on the bar counter to add continuity. In this way, the sophistication of the quartz underscores the elegant glamour of the roaring 20s in a setting designed to savour the romantic lingering sensation of nostalgia.

Finally, one last example: visitors to the beautiful Palau Alameda in Valencia will notice the tables on the lower floor include Ice Black technological quartz from the Ice of Genesis collection by Arik Levy. These tables are fully sculpted from the material with metal clamps used for assembly, creating a unique atmosphere where quartz-lined walls and tables make









for luxury design in pursuit of excellence. In short, technological quartz is a marvellous material for furniture design, highlighting the elegance and sophistication of any domestic, leisure or professional setting.

Combining
quartz and
marble with
other materials





Combining quartz and marble in interior design

Quartz and marble are highly multipurpose materials when combined with other textures. A good example of this is the work done by Janfri & Ranchal—a renowned Spanish architecture and interior design studio with lots of experience in using these materials.

Bathrooms

Janfri, director of interior design, creates projects combining quartz and marble in different ways depending on the room to be decorated. For example, he often uses deeply veined quartz in bathrooms alongside coloured glass to create a harmonious effect. 'We take Calacatta and

combine it with coloured glass doors so that the veins and transparent glass hues come together', the designer explains.

This composition leads to gradation through lighting thanks to a cove ceiling concealing the LED strips that spotlight the vertical panels of the material. 'As the transparent glass is coloured, the combination usually works exceptionally well. The LEDs in the ceiling have a warm temperature and really highlight the colour, providing an extraordinary hue', he adds.

As a final flourish, the room can also have hardwood counters and taps in the same





tone, combining the Calacatta design with aged brass that helps to underscore the simplicity of the design. 'We can do all this with either quartz or marble. When we use marble, we like to open-end it so that the vein has a sense of continuity'.

Living Areas

This versatility in the bathroom can also run to the living area, where quartz and marble can act as unifying elements for a large amount of materials. 'In this type of space, we have recently been using overlays. In turn, when we get a spectacular quartz or marble for the walls—the real protagonist of the room—then we try to also incorporate it into the furniture, for instance in tables combined with metal', states Janfri.

Tables are not the only items that can incorporate the material—it also goes well with open-backed shelving. 'The metal in the shelving, as well as brushed brass or nickel, work really well with a quartz or marble backdrop', he underlines.

Kitchens

In a spirit of including all possible spaces, the designer offers some tricks to pair these two materials in kitchens. Here, he tries to use lighter examples, mixing worktops and backsplashes in the same material. 'All this alongside metal flourishes and some wooden edges ensure that the material doesn't come across as cold'.

Colour

The advice and possible combinations offered so far essentially represent a dialogue of texture between the different materials but, what about colour? How do

colours combine? 'We generally adapt to what our clients want and their personality in terms of chromatic mixes. As a general rule, we could say that men prefer more sober colours and women tend to opt for lighter tones. Singles incline more towards elegant hues and families with children ask for brighter tones more that do not show the dirt as much', concludes Janfri, whilst adding a final insight into his work: 'We are often asked for elements with deep veins and a brutalist design, which fits really well with what we tend to do'.

Professional kitchen design





Professional kitchen design: temperatures and resistance

David Pallás, a benchmark master chocolatier in the pastry world, passes on his cocoa-flavoured knowledge at his school in Granollers (Spain) whilst taking his love for chocolate beyond the shores of Spain in different formats. In addition to running courses and workshops, he organises tastings and demonstrations at schools and bakeries in different European countries; he also travels around and runs courses and masterclasses every weekend for professionals and even children.

This craftsman is a top-notch communicator with his own programme on a speciality cooking channel and once starred in his own show on state television.

We noticed how in one video on a social networking site broadcast to thousands of followers he spread a huge sheet of chocolate on a worktop. This led to us asking ourselves a question that whilst seeming obvious at first, has much more to it. When designing the kitchen of a master chocolatier, what features should you look for in a work surface?

‘For me the worktop is the most vital part of the kitchen. For chocolate and pastry in general, the table where we work is the most important section’, states the confectioner, ‘it’s all about texture and temperature’. Pallás explains that in order to work a product such as chocolate,





‘you need a non-porous material that does not heat up quickly and tempers the product’. This is why quartz—and for David specifically, the Unique Venatino collection by COMPAC—is the best tool. ‘Many people have switched to stainless steel but you soon realise that it’s no good when cooling a cream, as steel conducts heat and quickly warms up. It’s not like stone, which cools down quickly’, adds Pallás.

Temperature is key in confectionary: ‘for example, if you have a lemon cream and need to reduce the temperature, there are only two options: putting it in bowls or Tupperware and placing it in the fridge, or spreading it on the worktop where it tempers in five to ten minutes’, he underlines, adding that ‘flipping it with the scraper cools it down. If the ambient temperature is 20 degrees, the stone is 20 degrees’. As well as being practical, quartz’s hygienic nature is a key feature. Only a neutral pH soap is needed to clean stone and it is ready to be used again.

When refurbishing, listening to the chef is key

Nicolás Román completely agrees on how suitable quartz is for professional kitchens. Román is executive chef at the Átic Restaurant in the Palau Alameda in Valencia (Spain)—a benchmark for fresh produce and rice dishes, as well as for traditional cuisine with a standout creative flair.

Román highlights the elegance of quartz worktops both from a visual and a functional perspective. Palau Alameda was completely renovated by Parolio Estudio, who chose Ice Black from the Ice of Genesis Collection by Arik Levy for the kitchen.

‘It means you can work with chocolate, it’s easy to clean, basically non-porous and ideal for temperature control’, explains the head chef at Átic Palau Alameda. In the kitchen, ‘you need resistant products as they get intensive use: you have to be able to put a frying pan on a worktop without any concerns’. This is why when refurbishing a kitchen, it is important to listen to the chef and not just be swayed by professional architectural criteria.



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