



PREVIEW

Solid choice

Solid surfaces are getting more high-tech. As a prelude to next month's Surface Design Show (Business Design Centre, London, 7-8 March; www surfacedesignshow.com), we showcase the latest generation of composite products breathing new life into design **WORDS BY AMELIA THORPE**

◀ SILESTONE*

Silestone by Cosentino, a leading manufacturer of quartz surfaces, is made from 94 per cent natural quartz bonded with polymer resins and pigment. Launching at the Surface Design Show will be the popular natural and earthy River Series of colours, now available in a polished finish. Also new is Silestone's latest colour, Blanco Dali, which contains a high percentage of recycled glass. All Silestone's new ranges of products contain Microban, an in-built agent that inhibits the growth of bacteria.

Price guide: about £500 per sq m
Tel: 08700 118 788
www.silestone.com

▼ RESILICA

Environmentally friendly Resilica (formerly known as Ttura) is made of fragments of recycled glass bonded with solvent-free resin to create a hard, scratch and stain-resistant surface. The colours of the glass and resin can be specified to order, and the result is particularly spectacular when back-lit or. Made in England by Eight Inch, which has just invested in new computerised stone-working machinery, this is one to watch.

Price guide: about £400 per linear m
Tel: 01273 511564
www.eightinch.co.uk



▼ CORIAN

First introduced into the US 40 years ago, Corian by DuPont was the first to market and is still the global leader in solid surfaces. Corian is a composite material made of aluminium-trihydrate pigments and acrylic resins. Its latest development is a new technique called sublimation, which allows designers to have an image transferred under the surface by a specially developed heat and pressure colour-penetration process.

Price guide: from £310 per linear m
Tel: 0800 962 166
www.corian.co.uk



▲ VELSTONE*

Known for its solid-surface polyester acrylic blend, Velstone has just launched its homogenous 30mm thick product for kitchen and bathroom worktops. Unlike conventional solid surface worktop, which has a 12-13mm thick solid surface sheet bonded on to 25mm MDF, Velstone's 30mm product requires no MDF support, which means that it can be supplied directly to fitters in sheet form or as a finished worktop from the factory.

Price guide: £160 per sq m
Tel: 01206 764461
www.velstone.com





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▼ **PARAPAN***

This sleek, high-gloss acrylic material comes in a wide range of colours, from neutrals to citrus brights, so it's a versatile choice for any vertical surface in the house, such as kitchen cupboard doors, splashbacks, drawers and dressers, as well as cladding and cabinet fronts. Because the material is solid, the colour runs all the way through. Unlike laminates and veneers. It won't fade, rot or delaminate, claim the manufacturers, and it can also be thermo-formed into curves.

Tel: 0113 201 2240
www.parapan.co.uk

◀ **ZODIAQ**

This engineered stone is made of 93 per cent natural quartz stone bonded with polymers. Like other engineered stones it is a popular alternative to granite, because it can be pigmented. Until recently it has been available only in a polished finish, but a new range, Concrete Block, has a honed, matt surface similar to concrete but non-porous. Four new Concrete Block colours will be launched in March.

Price guide: from £310 per linear m
 Tel: 0800 962 166
www.zodiaq.co.uk



▼ **CRISTALPLANT**

This innovative new surface material is made of minerals bonded with resin to create an ultra-smooth, soft-touch finish. Architect and designer Michel Boucquillon's new fluid-shaped Strip basins and bath are created from moulded Cristalplant from one joint-free sheet or 'strip'. The bath costs £5,585 and is available, with matching basins, exclusively from CP Hart.

Tel: 0845 600 1950
www.cphart.co.uk



▶ **GLASS CASTS**

Artist Jeff Bell of Glass Casts re-forms 'standard' glass, often adding colour with enamels or cold pigments, to create beautifully undulating cast-glass surfaces with individual forms and patterns. His work, used for architectural elements including screens, basin vanity tops and wall panels, can be transparent or opaque, shiny or matt.

Price guide: from about £400 per sq m
 Tel: 020 7275 8481
www.glasscasts.co.uk