

ONWOOD TILES · BARINGA · BATCH ONE

KILN

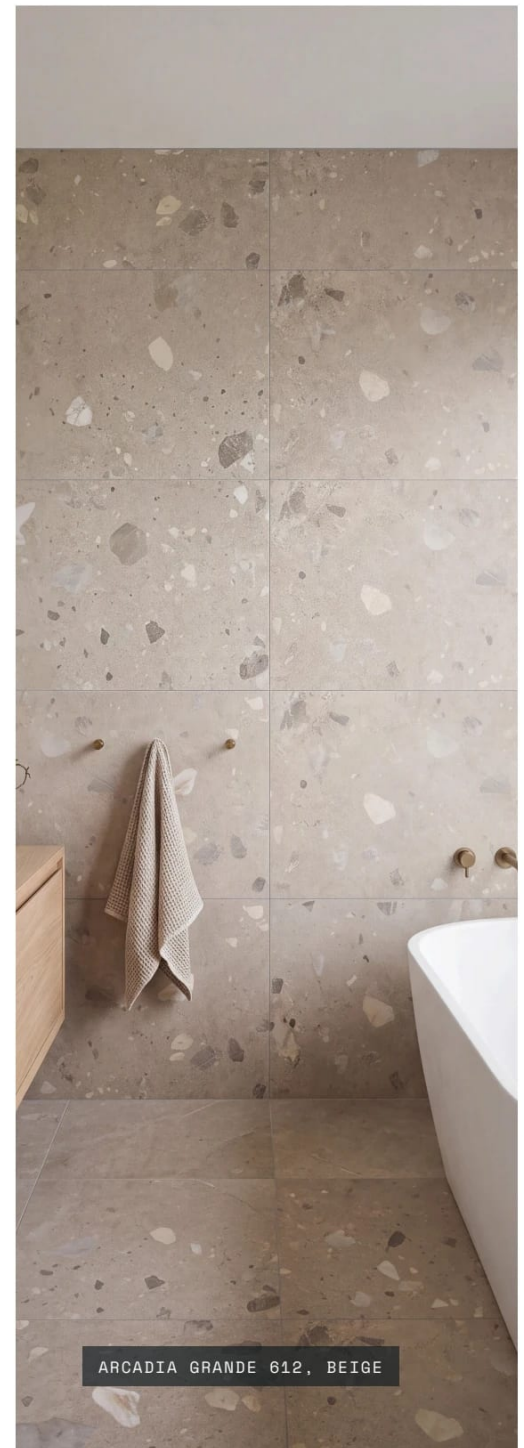
A magazine about inspiration, and a deeper understanding of what goes underfoot.

The white tile that went everywhere, and the myth attached to it
When timber look stopped looking fake
Why you cannot have no grout at all

 **ONWOOD**
TILES

CUADRADO 60 GRIP, BEIGE

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Everything in these pages is on a board at Baringa.



TAKE A SAMPLE HOME

Every tile in this magazine is on display in the showroom. Take samples home for a fortnight, in your own light, before you decide anything.

Why we made a magazine

People ask about the name. It is not about wood. It is about which way we are facing.

Start with the name, because people ask. This is not our first flooring business. Reagan and Carolanne ran Queensland Flooring Centre for four and a half years and sold it in 2024, to take the kids travelling and have a proper stretch of time with them before school swallowed those years. Now we are back, so OnWood is a play on onward.

“But you do not sell wood!” Hold my beer. There are plans to re-enter timber and carpet in the near future. We opened with tiles because tiles are the part we could do properly from the first day.

The old business was run well and we were proud of it. What we did not expect was what a two year break would do to the ideas. The back-end systems, the way we want to look after people, the product access we now have: all of it was a long time in the making, and none of it would exist if we had never stopped.

Which brings us to a magazine. Most of what is interesting about this material never fits into a conversation at a sample rack. We wanted to give you inspiration you can actually use, and something worth keeping. Thank you for reading it.

Reagan and Carolanne

ONWOOD TILES • BARINGA, SUNSHINE COAST

“But you do not sell wood!” Watch this space.



REAGAN, BACK ON THE FLOOR

KILN • BATCH ONE

OnWood Tiles
Baringa, Sunshine Coast

Room images are
visualisations of real
products from our range



LUSTRE 60 POLISHED, PEARL

The white tile that went *everywhere*

In 1904, two architects had to convince New Yorkers that walking into a hole in the ground was not a death sentence. Most of what you have been told about their solution is wrong.

IMPRESSION OF A NEW YORK SUBWAY STATION, 1904

By 1904 the tunnels under New York were dug and the trains ran. The remaining problem wasn't engineering. It was persuading ordinary people to walk down a staircase into a hole in the ground, something almost none of them had ever done and which sounded, on the face of it, like a very poor idea.

So the architects Heins and La Farge didn't design a tunnel. They designed a room, vaulted, ornamented, and lined at eye level in small white glazed tiles, three inches by six. The reasons had nothing to do with fashion, and every one of them still holds.

LIGHT

A glossy white glaze is close to the most reflective interior surface money can buy. In a station with no windows and dismal early electric lighting, tile did the work of lamps nobody could afford to install.

CLEANLINESS

A vitrified glaze absorbs nothing. In a space handling thousands of strangers a day, in a city that had recently worked out what caused cholera, tile wasn't a finish. It was public health equipment.

ENDURANCE

A fired glaze is a thin layer of glass. It doesn't fade, chalk or need repainting. Some of the original 1904 tile is still in service, having outlasted the company that laid it.

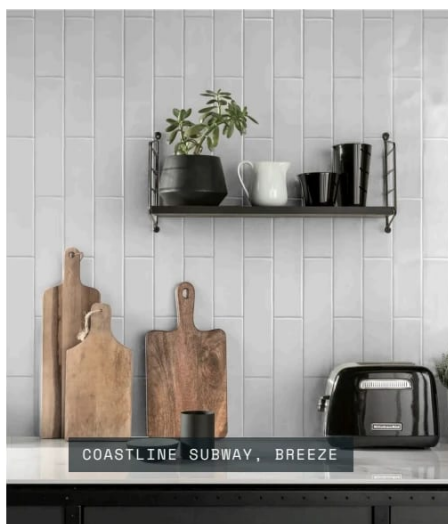
And then it never left. Every few years someone announces subway tile is finished, and it never is, because it is one of very few design objects that is genuinely neutral. It isn't modern and it isn't traditional. You can't date a room from it. Put it in a Federation cottage and it reads as heritage; put it in a rendered box and it reads as contemporary. It doesn't argue with anything.

Which means that in a subway-tiled room, the decisions carrying the design are the ones nobody photographs: the grout colour, the layout, the edge detail. The tile is the canvas. It has been the canvas for 120 years.

THE BEVEL THAT NEVER WAS

You will read that subway tile was bevelled to bounce light onto the platform. The originals were flat, and no reliable source supports the story. The bevel is a later revival flourish.

*Tile was not a finish. It was **public health equipment**.*

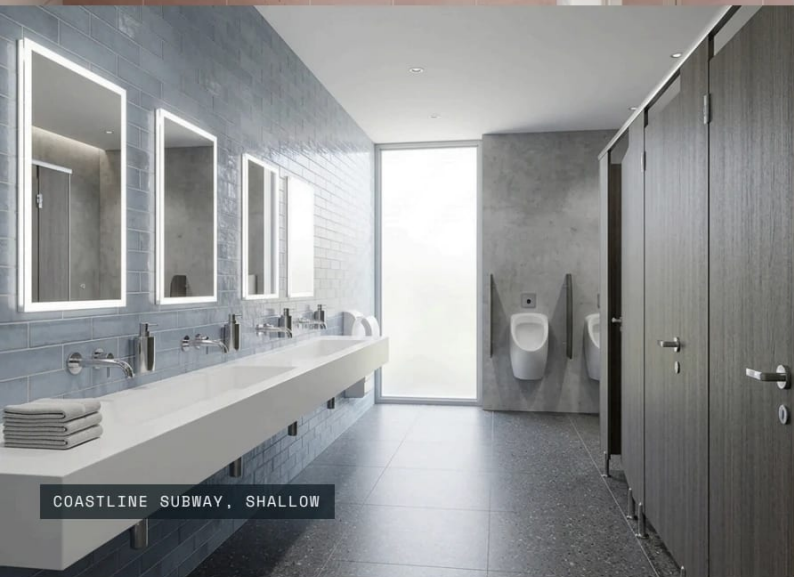




COASTLINE SUBWAY, SUNBURN



COASTLINE SUBWAY, SHADE



COASTLINE SUBWAY, SHALLOW



COASTLINE SUBWAY, SHADOW



GELATO 75X300, PANNA



GELATO 75X300, LIQUORICE



GELATO 75X300, FRAGOLA

ONE SHAPE, NINE GLAZES

A hundred and twenty years on, the rectangle has not changed. Only the colour has.



03 / MATERIALS • 3 MIN READ

The scraps of *Venice*

Terrazzo was not invented. It was salvaged, by workers not allowed to waste marble who had no floor of their own worth the name.

In sixteenth-century Venice the marble mosaic trade was run by migrant workers from Friuli. Mosaic is brutally wasteful, and in a guild trade the offcuts were nobody's to bin, so they went home with the workers, who had bare earth underfoot in their own quarters. They pressed the fragments into a bed of clay on their terraces and beat them flat.

That floor is now specified for airports, museums and expensive kitchens. Nothing about the material changed. What changed was who was looking at it.

And it endures because of how it was improvised. Chips suspended in a binder give a floor with no directional grain to fail along and no joints to open up. It moves as one plane. It can be ground back and repolished, which means terrazzo doesn't wear out so much as get thinner, slowly, over a century.

Porcelain terrazzo-look gives you the same visual language for a fraction of the cost, with porcelain's indifference to water. Just know which one you're buying. The difference shows at the edges, at a step, a skirting, a shower hob, where real terrazzo turns the corner as one continuous mass, and porcelain has to be cut, mitred and joined.

*Nothing about the material changed. What changed was **who was looking at it.***

TERRAZZO

From terrazzo, Italian for terrace. Venetian mosaic workers set marble offcuts from bigger jobs into the terraces outside their own homes. The older name for it was seminato, sown.



GRANIGLIA 60 LAPPATO, CREAM



GRANIGLIA 60 LAPPATO, CHARCOAL



GRANIGLIA 60 MATT, SAND



GRANIGLIA 60 LAPPATO, SAND

MATT

Reads as texture rather than pattern. The safe choice through a whole floor.

LAPPATO

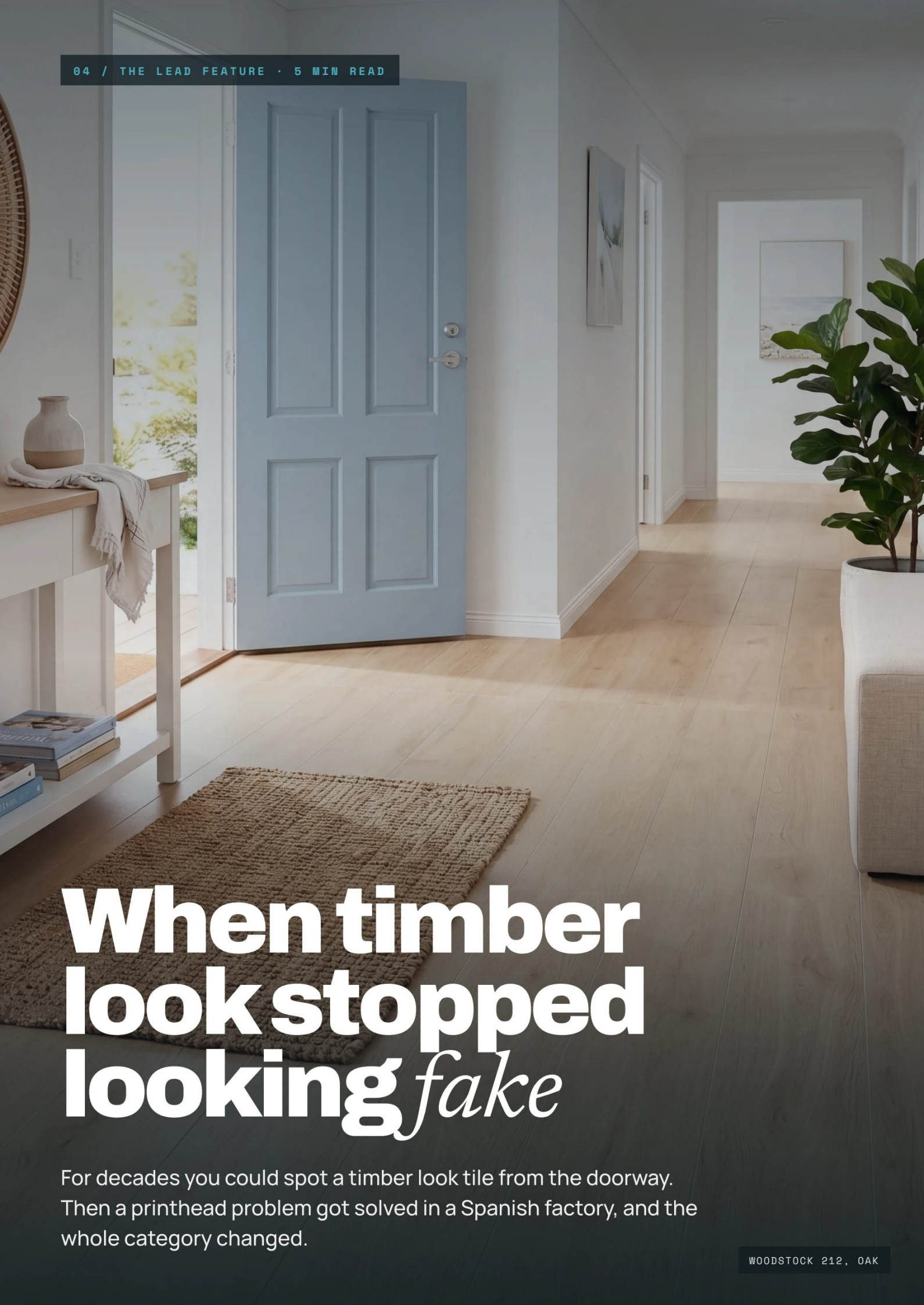
A half polish. Catches light without the glare, and without the risk of a full gloss underfoot.

GRIP

The same aggregate with a wet area rating. Ask us which of these carries it.





A bright, modern interior hallway with light wood plank flooring. On the left, a white console table holds a stack of books and a small vase. A blue door is slightly ajar, revealing a glimpse of the outdoors. A large potted plant is on the right. The hallway leads to a bright doorway at the end.

When timber look stopped looking *fake*

For decades you could spot a timber look tile from the doorway. Then a printhead problem got solved in a Spanish factory, and the whole category changed.

If you looked at timber look tile in 2004 and have not since, your opinion is correct and out of date. Back then you could stand at the door and see the repeat: the same knot, the same grain, recurring in a rhythm your eye caught whether you wanted it to or not.

The reason was the printing. Screens press one image onto the tile, and each extra image is another screen to change on the line, so a typical run had just four faces. Four faces across forty square metres is a repeat every few tiles.

Then, around 2007, printheads arrived that continuously recirculate the ink. Ceramic ink is ground mineral pigment rather than dye, because it has to survive the kiln, so it settles and dries in the nozzle like sand in still water. Keep it moving and it cannot. Printing went digital, and faces were free. A maker could print forty different planks, or scan a real board and print every one.

That is the whole story, and it is why the category is worth a second look from anyone who wrote it off. The tile did not get more expensive. It got more honest.

WHY IT CLOGGED

You are firing finely ground stone through a nozzle a fraction of the width of a hair.



The ten second *test*

01

Count the planks

Pull ten off the display and lay them side by side. Two or three the same means a four to six face product that will repeat in any real room. All ten different means a proper digital face count.

02

Feel the grain

Run your fingers across it with your eyes shut. On good product you press a knot and feel a knot. On lesser product the texture is a generic emboss with no relationship to the image on top.

FACE COUNT

The number of different printed images in a range. Four faces repeat visibly. Forty makes the repeat invisible at room scale. It is almost never on the box, always known to the supplier, and the single most useful question to ask about a timber look flooring products.





WOODSTOCK 212, DRIFTWOOD



WOODSTOCK 212, TEAK



WOODSTOCK 212, WALNUT

ONE RANGE, TEN ROOMS

Look for the repeat. In a properly printed range, you will struggle to find one.

Porcelain or ceramic, in *one number*

Two words used as if they mean the same thing, describing two genuinely different materials. The distinction is not marketing. It is a number you can measure.

The definition is water absorption. Weigh a dry tile, soak it, weigh it again. Porcelain absorbs half a percent of its weight or less. Fire a fine clay hot enough and the mineral fuses into glass that closes the pores, so a vitrified body does not drink. Everything above that line is ceramic.

WHERE IT EARNS ITS MONEY

INTERIOR WALLS

Whatever you love. The membrane behind the tile does the waterproofing. Ceramic is lighter, easier to cut around tapware, and gives the adhesive something to grip.

INTERIOR FLOORS

Either. Normal domestic traffic does not care, provided the tile is actually rated for floors.

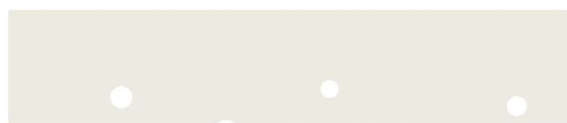
OUTSIDE AND WET AREAS

Porcelain. Not for the frost argument imported from the northern hemisphere, which means nothing here. A poolside in February hits sixty degrees and then takes a storm across it, and that crazes a glaze. A porous body also swells until a floor with no movement joints lifts.

KITCHENS AND ENTRIES

Porcelain. Same answer, different reason: abrasion and staining rather than water.

CERAMIC BODY



3 to 12%

Open pores. It drinks. Walls and dry interiors.

VITRIFIED PORCELAIN BODY



Under 0.5%

Fused solid. Floors, wet areas, outside, salt air.





Why can't I just have *no grout at all*?

The most common request in any showroom, and the answer explains almost everything about how tiles are made.

Everyone asks it eventually. You have found a tile you love, you can picture it as one unbroken surface, and the grout lines look like the only thing standing in the way. So why not push them together and be done with it?

Three reasons, and each one tells you something worth knowing.

Because no two tiles are the same size. Firing shrinks a tile, and not by an identical amount every time. A pressed tile leaves the kiln at approximately its nominal size, which is why boxes carry calibre numbers grouping tiles that came out close enough to lay together, and why mixing calibres causes grief. Push those hard against each other and the variation has nowhere to go: your joints wander visibly across the floor.

This is where rectification comes in. A rectified tile gets one extra step after firing: the edges are mechanically ground square and true to an exact dimension, so every tile in the box genuinely matches. That precision is what buys the narrow joint. As a working guide, rectified porcelain wants 2 to 3mm; pressed, unrectified tile wants 3 to 5mm.

It is a bigger decision than it sounds, because the joint is most of what you are looking at. Walk past two displays here: one reads as a continuous surface, one reads as a grid. Often it is the same colour. The difference is the joint, and the joint was decided by whether someone ground the edges.

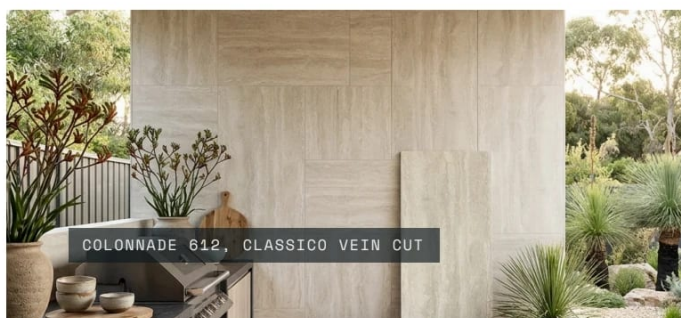
Because the floor has to move. Tile and substrate expand and contract with heat and moisture, at different rates. The grout joint is the only thing absorbing that across the field of a floor. Remove it and the floor has exactly two remaining options: lift, or crack a tile. This is not a slow, cosmetic problem. It is the one that goes bang.

Because buildings are not square. Every wall is slightly out. A tiler resolves those small accumulated errors a fraction of a millimetre at a time, in the joints. A floor with no joints has no tolerance in it anywhere, so the error has to surface somewhere visible, usually as a wedge-shaped cut at the wall you look at most.

What this means for you. Rectification is not simply better. A ground edge chips more easily in handling, and it demands a flatter substrate, because a tight joint has nowhere to hide a bump. It asks more of the tiler and more of the floor underneath, and it should be priced accordingly.

But it is the answer to the seamless look, and the question to ask is simply: is this tile rectified? It sets your joint width, your substrate preparation, and how the floor reads from the doorway.

The honest version of what you actually want is not no grout. It is a 2mm joint in a grout colour matched to the tile, which from standing height is indistinguishable from seamless, and which will still be flat in twenty years.



The grout *decision*

The cheapest thing in the room, chosen last, in a hurry, and the single biggest influence on what the floor actually looks like.

Here is the arithmetic nobody does. A 1200 by 200 plank with a 3 millimetre joint puts roughly two and a half percent of the floor's surface area into grout. That sounds like nothing. But grout does not read as area, it reads as line, and line is what your eye follows. Two and a half percent of the floor is drawing all of the pattern.

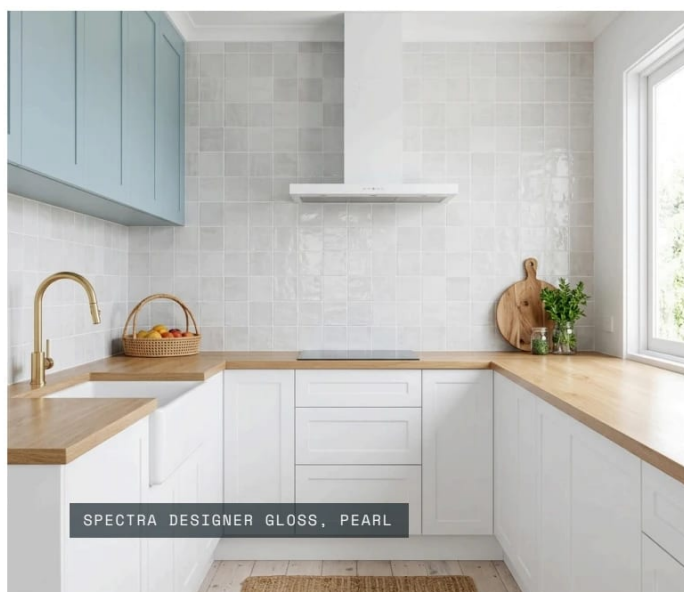
Which gives you a real choice. Match the grout closely to the tile and the joints disappear, so the floor becomes one continuous surface. Contrast it and every tile is outlined, and the floor becomes graphic and much busier.

Neither is wrong. What is almost always wrong is the accidental middle: a cool grey grout with a warm tile, chosen because grey seemed safe. It reads as neither, it makes the tile look colder than it is, and it is the regret we hear about most.



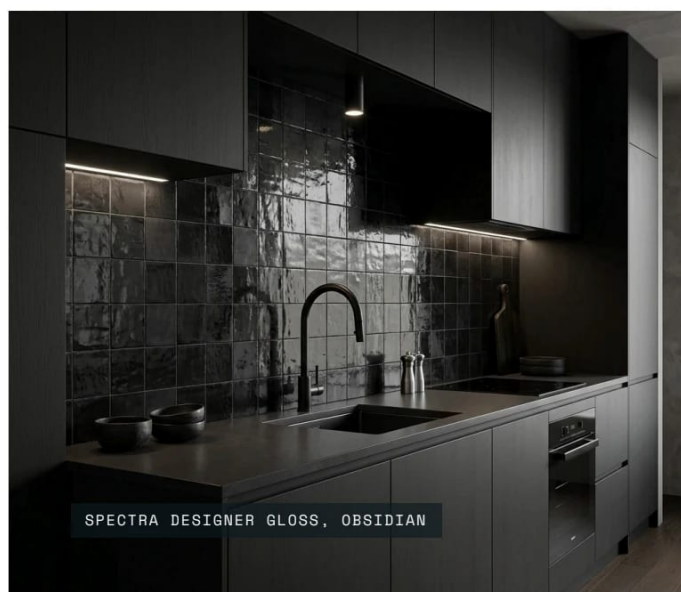
TWO RULES

Go one shade darker than the tile rather than one lighter, because grout paler than the tile shows every mark and traffic lanes appear within months. And in wet areas and kitchens, seal the grout with a grout sealant once it has cured, then keep an eye on it.



SPECTRA DESIGNER GLOSS, PEARL

MATCHED • ONE SURFACE



SPECTRA DESIGNER GLOSS, OBSIDIAN

CONTRASTED • EVERY TILE OUTLINED

Where the floor *stops*

Four junctions that decide whether a floor looks designed or merely finished. None of them cost much, and all of them get settled in a hurry on site.

1 The front door threshold

Set the grid out from here, not from the longest wall. A sliver of cut tile at the entry is the first thing every visitor sees for the next thirty years.

3 Skirting, or no skirting

Painted timber over the tile is the forgiving answer. A shadow line reveal is sharper and asks a lot of the plasterer. Skirting cut from the tile itself suits wet areas.

2 Inside to outside

Run the same tile through the sliding door in its grip finish, joints aligned across the track. The room grows by the width of the patio. This needs deciding early.

4 Meeting the carpet

Land the change under the closed bedroom door, never in the opening, and pick a trim that matches the tile rather than the carpet. Most bad transitions are a bright strip in the wrong place.





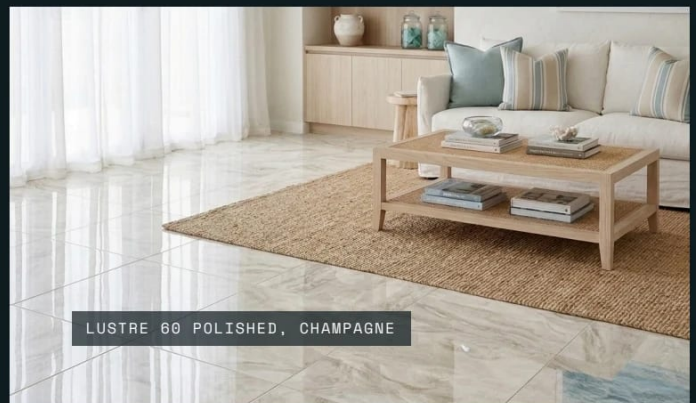
The coolest thing in the *house*

Tile floors have been standard in hot climates for thousands of years. That is not tradition, it is thermodynamics.

Step barefoot onto tile in February and it feels cold. It is not. It simply pulls heat from your foot faster than a rug can. A concrete slab under tile is a thermal battery: when the air is hotter than the slab it soaks up heat, so the room's peak flattens and lags by hours.

The honest part is that mass only pays off if it can discharge overnight. On the Sunshine Coast in February the overnight low is twenty two degrees, the swing is narrow, and a slab that cannot cool becomes a liability. Mass works here only when it is shaded and night air can move across it.

Good if it is shaded and can breathe at night. A liability if it cannot.







10 / SHOWCASE

One tile, *every room*

The hardest thing to do in a showroom is imagine. So we took one tile, Strata 612 Matt in Earth, and followed it through five rooms of the same house.

Not a range, not a family of colourways. The same tile in every photograph.



ALFRESCO · SAME TILE



KITCHEN · SAME TILE



BEDROOM · SAME TILE

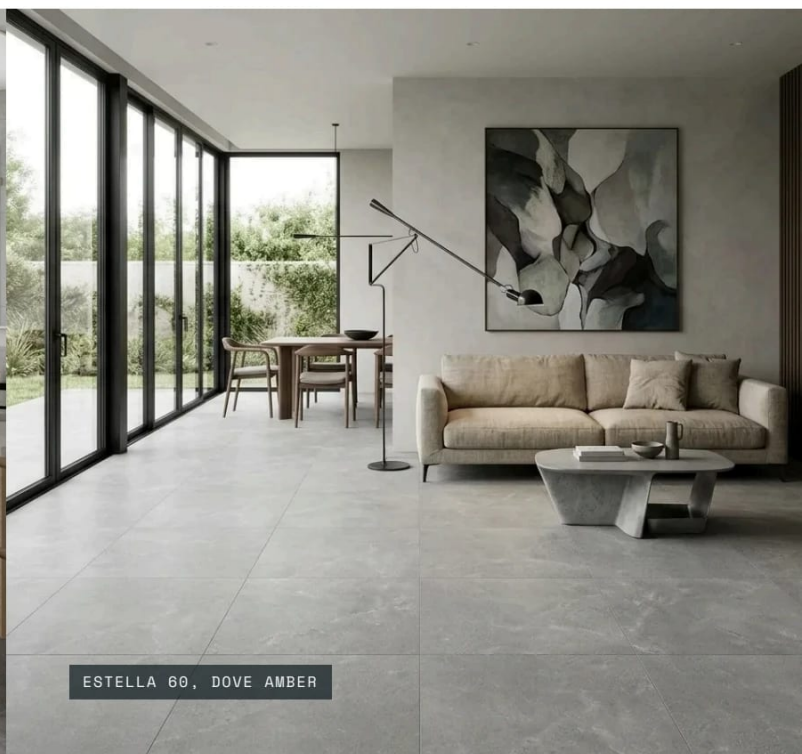
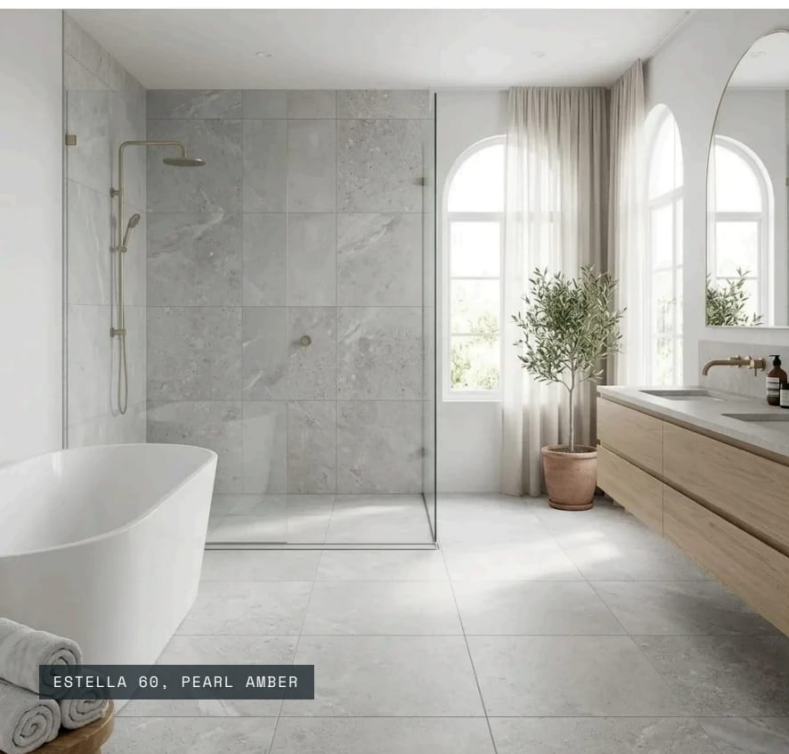


BATHROOM · SAME TILE

Estella, *pearl* *to obsidian*

Six colourways in two formats, running the full length of the tonal range. The same face and the same veining, from the palest floor in the house to the darkest.

This is the range to look at when the room is already decided and the tile has to fit it, rather than the other way around. Pearl and Dove sit back and let the joinery talk. Almond and Chestnut warm a room that faces south.





ESTELLA 60, CHESTNUT AMBER



ESTELLA 60, MIDNIGHT AMBER



ESTELLA 60, OBSIDIAN AMBER



ESTELLA 36, PEARL AMBER

Midnight and Obsidian are for the room you want people to notice. A dark floor reads as deliberate, or as dirty, and the difference is the grout.

HONESTY NOTE

These room images are visualisations of real products from our range. We would rather tell you that than pretend a new shop has photographed forty finished homes. The tile is real, the room is interpretation.



HARPER SQUARE · BRUSHED BRASS



HARPER CHANNEL · STAINLESS



PIXI INSERT · BRUSHED COPPER



SINK BASKET · ANTIQUE AURUM



SINK BASKET · ANTIQUE BRONZE

WASTES AND GRATES

Where the water *goes*

The last thing anyone specifies, and the first thing you look at when you look down.

Harper channels and square wastes, Pixi tile inserts, antique sink baskets. Brushed brass, copper, gunmetal and stainless, and Antique Bronze and Aurum for a room that wants age rather than shine.



Harper Square
BRUSHED BRASS



Harper Channel
BRUSHED GUNMETAL



Harper Square
BRUSHED COPPER



Harper Square
STAINLESS STEEL



SPLASHBACK IN SPECTRA DESIGNER GLOSS, JADE · FLOOR IN MARCHESE 60 LAPPATO, DEMIN

12 / COLOUR

Nobody regrets the *green kitchen*

The case for putting one brave surface in your house, and keeping everything around it quiet.



HALL IN MARCHESE 60 LAPPATO, DEMIN • PORCH IN HAKKARI, ICE GREY • WALL IN RIDGELINE, TRAVERTINE

Almost everyone who comes in says they want to do something a bit different, and almost everyone leaves with grey. Not because they changed their mind. Because grey is the choice you can defend to your mother, your builder, and a buyer you have not met yet.

The fear is always resale, so it is worth saying plainly: tile is rarely what dates a room. Tapware dates a room. Handles, light fittings and one particular shade of white date a room. The splashback on the previous page will still look considered long after the rangehood beside it looks like 2026.

*The room people photograph is **never the beige one.***

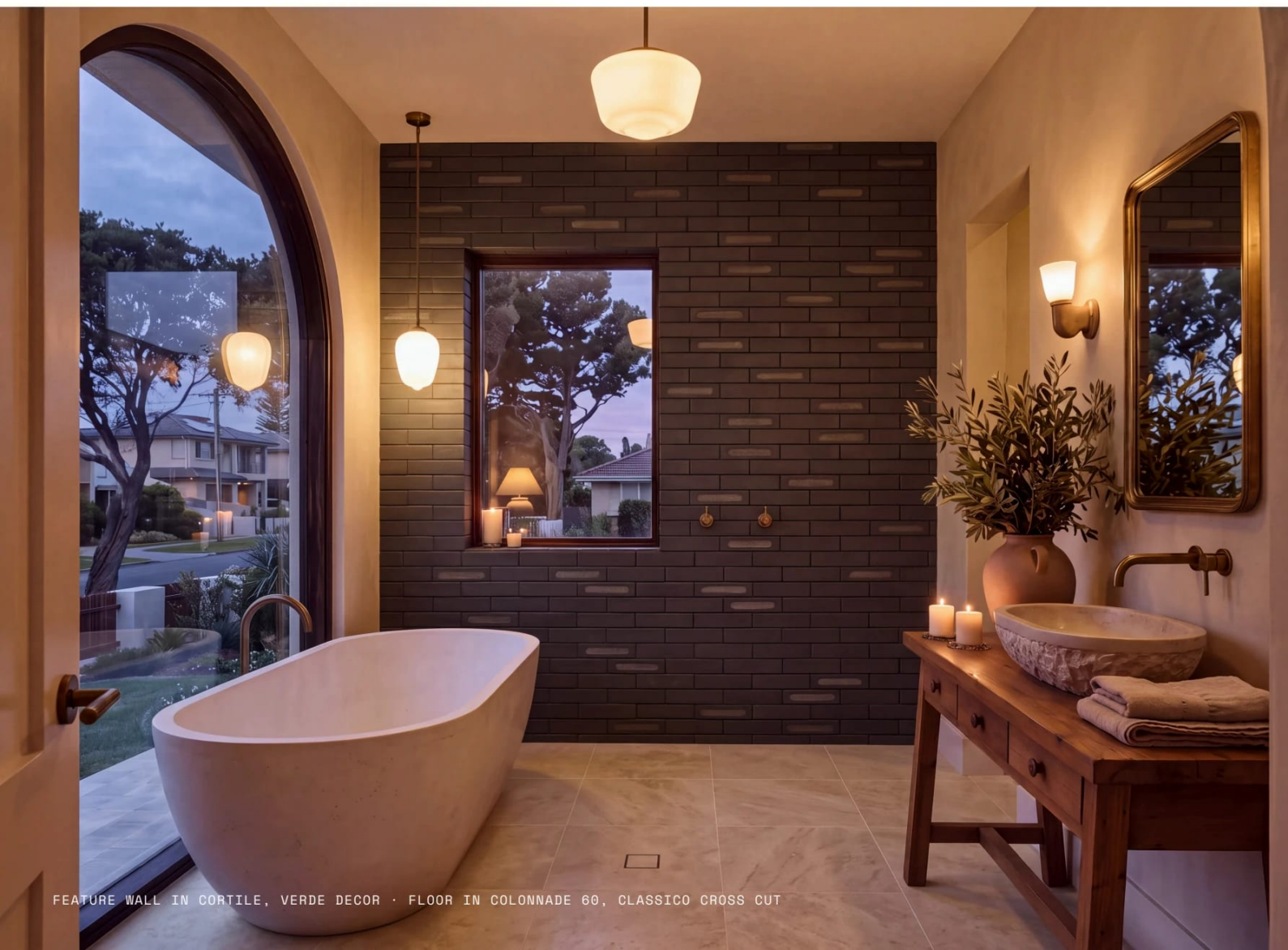
THREE THINGS WORTH KNOWING

Bold does not mean loud. In each of these rooms the brave decision is held to a single surface, and everything around it is deliberately calm: travertine underfoot, timber, brass, plaster. The colour is given somewhere to sit, and that is the whole trick.

If you are nervous, start on a wall. A wall takes less material, costs less to lay, and is far easier to change your mind about in eight years than a floor running through the house. Put the risk where it is cheap and the calm where it is expensive.

FINISH MOVES A COLOUR FURTHER THAN SHADE DOES

The same jade in gloss and in matt are not the same tile. Gloss throws light around and makes a small room feel larger and wetter. Matt absorbs it and makes the colour read like plaster or clay. If a colour feels too strong, the honest fix is usually the matt version rather than a paler shade.





FEATURE WALL IN IRONCLAD 612, VERDIGRIS • FLOOR IN TERROIR 60, CALCE

Queensland light is harder and brighter than the light in the magazines most of these ideas come from. A green that reads deep and calm on a European moodboard can go acid in a north-facing kitchen at two in the afternoon. That is not a reason to avoid colour. It is a reason to borrow the sample and look at it in the actual room at seven in the morning, and again at five.

None of this is an argument for doing something strange. It is an argument for doing one thing properly. Pick the surface you look at most, give it a colour you actually love, and let the rest of the room be quiet and hard-wearing behind it. That house reads as considered. The all-grey one reads as undecided.

THE FOUR SURFACES IN THIS FEATURE

Spectra Designer Gloss, Jade
Marchese 60 Lappato, Demin
Cortile, Verde Decor
Ironclad 612, Verdigris

AND THE QUIET ONES AROUND THEM

Hakkari Natural Stone, Ice Grey
Ridgeline, Travertine
Colonnade 60, Classico Cross Cut
Terroir 60, Calce





Come and see it *full size*

Everything in these pages is on a board in the showroom, in real light, waiting for you to take a corner of it home.

Our showroom is at Baringa, an easy run from Caloundra, Pelican Waters, Kawana and the hinterland. Bring your plans, a photo, or nothing at all.

We will help you work out your quantities, and we will tell you honestly when the tile you love is wrong for the room. We will see you in the next batch.



CORTILE, DESERT DECOR



ANTICO DESIGNER, VENETIAN



IRONCLAD 612, CORTEN

BRING WITH YOU

Your floor plan, even a rough one
A benchtop offcut or a cabinet door
Paint chips, if the walls are decided
The photo saved on your phone

WHERE WE ARE

OnWood Tiles
Baringa, Sunshine Coast
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See you in the next batch



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