

# NATURAL LUXURY

## This beauty is set in stone

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Calgary Sun

Beautiful semi-precious stones such as quartz, amethyst and tiger eye are often seen adorning intricate necklaces and earrings made from natural luxury.

Now, homeowners can dress up their home as elaborately as their necks and ears with semi-precious stone surfaces — extraordinary slabs handmade from individually cut and set semi-precious stones.

“Sourced from all corners of the world, semi-precious stones radiate the most vivid colours and breathtaking designs of all natural materials,” says Sophie Belanger, director of marketing at Icon Stone & Tile in Calgary.

“The Concetto collection of semi-precious stone surfaces is a unique blend of art, nature and technology.”

The different types of stones used include grey or brown agate, rose, white, yellow or smoky quartz, hematite, dumortierite, tiger eye and even a petrified wood that is more than three million years old.

They can be used for applications including furniture, vanities, kitchen and bathroom surfaces, work surfaces, countertops, floors, walls and special features.

For a surface as decadent as this, it's best to use restraint, but no matter where you put it, you will have people talking.

“The collection is well-suited for any furniture that is a conversation piece, like coffee tables, confer-

ence room tables and even cabinetry inlays,” Belanger says. “It assuredly will attract attention and reflect upon the owner's excellent taste in décor.

“This is a very exclusive, unique material, not a popular or common choice because not everybody can afford this much luxury.”

Some of the stones, including amethyst, quartz and agate, can be backlit for a gorgeous showcase.

“These are even more stunning when backlit,” she says. “They are catching the attention of designers for spectacularly unique bars.”

And you can take the decadence one step further by encrusting the surface with Swarovski crystals.

“In the Crystallized – Swarovski Elements Collection, stone surfaces made of semi-precious materials and crystals merge natural stone with the mastery of Swarovski crystal processing,” Belanger says. “Our goal was to offer discerning customers a unique expression of elegance and luxury.”

Every piece is different.

The architect or client can decide, for example, if it is going to be a design of a tiger or an elephant, a geometric pattern, or a pattern inspired by nature following the natural veins of the slab, she says.

“As for the applications, you can really do everything — a dinner table, a floor, an entrance to a home.”

When only the sky is the limit, countertops encrusted with crystals and showcase pieces handmade from semi-precious stones become the conversation piece in your home.

