



## **INFORMATION & GUIDELINES FOR THE INSTALLATION OF KUKUI PORCELAIN TILES**

### **RECOMMENDED INSTALLATION**

SOLI Kukui mosaic tiles are not recommended for areas that may be subject to heavy impact, heavy abrasion, and areas where temperatures can exceed 130 degrees Fahrenheit.

We always recommend dry-fitting your pattern first to think about your cuts in advance and to make sure you like the pattern. This will also help you choose which pieces go where, which is especially helpful with tiles that have a lot of variation.

**NOTE:** this document contains only guidelines for the installation process. A professional installer should always be consulted to discuss the specific parameters surrounding your project.

### **SUBSTRATES**

All substrates should be firmly fixed, flat, clean, dry and free of contaminants such as dust, oil, paint, sealers etc. to ensure proper adhesion. Painted surfaces must be scuffed or sanded for the product and adhesive to bond correctly. Wet areas need special attention and require appropriate substrates, e.g. concrete, cement boards (compressed sheet), and/or treated plywood. The use of reinforced waterproof membranes is suggested, and in the case of floors, a fall to the drainage point of no less than two inches.

### **WATERPROOF MEMBRANES**

Waterproof membranes prevent leakage of water through to the sub-floor framing and/or habitable spaces below. Particular attention must be paid to: carrying the membrane up the wall, outside shower boxes, installation of bond breakers, and sealing around penetrations. It is strongly recommended that membrane systems be used in all wet areas. Some systems may involve the use of a primer.

### **CUTTING**

Cuts can be done with either a wet saw or the tiles can be scored and snapped. To cut with a wet saw, tape the area around the desired cut with masking or painter's tape and run the saw through the tape. Remove tape after cut is made. This will create a clean, straight edge and avoid chipping the glaze.

The mesh back can easily be cut with a utility knife. To create a flush edge or corner, pull excess pieces from the mesh and cut to straight edge. Then, replace in thinset and continue the grouting process.



## **ADHESIVE**

Follow the adhesive manufacturer's instructions carefully. We do not recommend one brand of adhesive over another. Please check with your local tile supply store for alternative and comparable products.

The manufacturer's literature will explain if the adhesive product is suitable for interiors and/or exteriors, as well as walls and floors. Most thinset mortars with a latex additive (multi purpose and polymer modified thinsets) are adequate for installing porcelain. A cement-based adhesive is generally suitable on masonry substrates where no movement is anticipated. Where slight movement could occur through thermal or pedestrian loads, a modified cement adhesive should be used as a minimum. A 1/4" – 1/8" notch trowel is recommended for most applications. Set the tile in place gently tapping it in with a grout float to ensure 100% adhesive coverage.

## **GROUTING**

Select the type of grout you use based on the width of the desired joint. Sanded grout is generally recommended for any grout joint larger than 1/8". Grouts are ordinarily a water mix but where some flexibility may be needed, a latex additive or similar product should be used.

## **SPACERS**

Spacers aren't strictly necessary between individual mosaic tiles due to the mesh backing, but they're often recommended to maintain consistent gaps and achieve a uniform look.

## **SEALANTS**

The porcelain tiles do not have to be sealed but we strongly recommend sealing the grout after installation to help prevent it from absorbing stains.

## **CARE & CLEANING**

SOLI Kukei mosaic tiles must be regularly cleaned and maintained to extend the life and beauty of the installation. The tiles can be cleaned with a neutral mild detergent or glass cleaner but you should be careful about the type of cleaner you use. Any spills should be cleaned quickly to lessen the degree of the stain to the grout. Do not use abrasive cleaners, powders, scouring pads, steel wool or sandpaper.