

AN ARCHITECTURAL VIEW OF CERAMIC SECTOR TRENDS

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ABSTRACT

Ceramic covering materials have a long tradition of use in architecture, thanks to their excellent proven performance and durability over time. However, because of technological advances and sectorial commercial strategies, it is also a product bound by fashion, and therefore ephemeral.

In view of this fact, manufacturers and other specialist firms have dedicated themselves to monitoring ceramic and habitat trends in order to offer products that fulfil the demands of different markets.

Technological advances in recent years have brought about significant progress in the creation of products that respond to different trends in the realm of design and habitat. Those advances, in conjunction with new vogues, have forged various identity changes in ceramics over the years, with the creation of totally new aesthetics and products that can be considered authentic or unique. Furthermore, they have also aided the creation of increasingly perfect imitations and of new products inspired by other alternative materials.

This paper sets out to examine how trends have evolved over time and the influence that technological progress has had on that evolution. Likewise, it assesses prize-winning projects in the ASCER ceramic and architecture awards to correlate them with the trends that best define their design.

INTRODUCTION

This paper analyses ceramic trends from 2014 to the present day and groups them into different thematic blocks or areas. The sources of information used were publications by the *Habitat Trends Observatory* (OTH) in Castellon from 2014 to today.

The OTH is an initiative undertaken with the support of the Valencian Institute for Business Competitiveness (IVACE), belonging to the Valencian Ministry of Sustainable Economy, the Generalitat Valenciana's Production, Trade and Labour sectors, which amalgamates trend assessment departments from the Technological Institute of Metalworking, Furniture, Wood, Packaging and Related Sectors (AIDIMME), the Textile Technology Institute (AITEEX), and the Institute of Ceramic Technology (ITC).

The observatory's team includes professionals in design, communications and market and economic research pertaining to the textile, furniture and ceramic tile sector. Its multidisciplinary character offers a broad and realistic vision of the situation at any point in time in respect of the availability and evolution of different habitat trends.

Geographically, the initial documents referred to focus on Spain, although, in the case of ceramic tiles and other products, the trends extend to other international export areas.

METHOD

The analysis was performed by collecting and assessing information on trends in ceramics.

The first step was to extract information about trends highlighted in the various OTH publications from 2014 to the present day.

Thanks to the detailed compilation of trends carried out by the OTH, it was possible to assess how they have evolved over time, prior to defining the relationship between them and sorting them into the thematic areas described in the presentation.

For each thematic area, the various associated trends and their evolution over time are included. It also provides references to the most outstanding architectural examples of each.

It is important to note that some of the trends may include features pertaining to various thematic areas and as such, are included under several headings.

Finally, a compilation is made of prize-winning projects at the ASCER (Spanish Ceramic Tile Manufacturers' Association) Ceramics and Architecture awards between 2014 and 2021, comparing them against the ceramic trends defined earlier.

CERAMIC TRENDS

CONNECTION WITH NATURE

This block groups together those trends that seek to connect with Nature and its aesthetics, either with natural and imperfect finishes, or with colours that recall the world of nature.

WORK IN PROGRESS (2014/2015)

Directly inspired by the world of industry and the aesthetics that surround it. Resources such as extolling, or even simulating, unfired or untreated materials are frequently used.

The aesthetics it aims to achieve is of imperfect or apparently uncared for finishes. Unfinished or well-worn is seen as a concept of imperfect beauty, in which failure and defects are highlighted as a stylistic resource.

WILD SPIRIT (2015/2016)

This trend comprises proposals that veer away from elaborate finishes and instead seek 'wilder' aesthetics, in which inspiration from Nature plays an essential role. References to primitive materials and colours found in nature: plants, earth, wood, water, stone and metal. A wild spirit invading domestic homes - nature in the human habitat.

Tones of earthy green predominate, with an inclination towards rust, or reactive dyes and glazes, on metals. A less urban appearance for ceramic materials, with the use of rustic stoneware or fired clay.

DARK & WATERCOLOUR (2018/2019)

A quest for textures and materials with strongly predominant dark tones, the use of black and streaked, even eroded or abraded, surfaces. The top layer is full of imperfections and varieties of hues and tones, and impeccably polished and dazzling metals are replaced by rough or worn materials. Surface texturing is one of the most widely used resources in this trend, and so dotted and blurred designs appear, mottled with sparkles or vibrant colours, all harmonised to give the effect of having deteriorated over time.

As for the range of colours, this trend goes for cold, dark tones, among which the use of black, grey and blue predominates.

SAVAGE SOUL (2019/2020)

The lack of contact with nature leads to a need to incorporate materials and graphics that connect with wild and tropical nature.

Interiors filled with elements that take the beholder directly back to nature with their textures, vegetation-based décors using exotic plants, and shades of intense greens typical of the jungle.

Biophilic designs and references to nature are an inevitable part of this trend and its coverings: ceramics, upholstery, carpets, wallpaper... In this way, textiles are strongly present as wall decorations with an artisan touch, and reproductions of the most natural and exotic surfaces possible: treated and modernised rosewood, bamboo, wenge or eucalyptus woods, or exotic marbles such as Brazilian blue.

The predominant colour tones in this trend are based on dark brown and grey with blue and green hues characteristic of Nature. A palette of mainly cold colours, although a range of earthy tones is also strongly represented.

GREEN CODE (2020/2021)

This trend promotes the concept of sustainability in a more essential manner, one which refers to our relationship with Nature, with our origins, with primitive life, like a journey through time.

The surface becomes the main focus of attention, where earthy textures, blemished materials, and traditional or elementary rough facings bestow on the materials more honest and frank aesthetics and embrace them with loyal devotion to the original source and its natural beauty.

Terracotta is one of the materials that stand out firmly in this trend, thanks to its attractive, unrefined, earthy and tactile nature that allows experiments with firing and hand crafting or using technology but without ever surrendering its terrestrial character.

The palette of colours conveys a return to basics, to sustainable lifestyles. Organic colours are well deployed on surfaces. The quest is for softer and more organic qualities, with tones of sun-baked terracotta and earthen orange, in addition to greens and greys that evoke more plant-like elements, such as soft moss.

ESSENTIAL (2021)

The need to connect with nature has brought about a change in which the attractiveness of renewable, biodegradable materials and products, of rough, natural or wild finishes, is given priority. It explores a new primitivism that revisits local construction methods and materials. It strives for and extols reusing materials that generate elementary and imperfect surfaces, raw, rough, eroded and porous textures. Craftsmanship and the most primitive state of materials are prioritised and held up as natural beauty. Designs carved in stone, rocks, metal, and ceramics left unfired and exposed.

A palette of colours inspired by nature, unsaturated tones where earthy, green, stone grey and neutral tinted colours abound.



Figure 1: "Connection with nature" timeline

SEARCH FOR NEW EXPERIENCES AND TRANQUILLITY

This area or block of trends covers those whose common purpose is to provide the user with a different visual perception and new functions by using reliefs and textures. What is sought with this perception is to create environments that transmit warmth, tranquillity, delicacy, and calmness.

KEEP AN EYE (2014/2015)

This trend groups together proposals that direct their aesthetics towards the user's visual perception. By means of prototyping and 3D printing, they enable the creation of large format pieces that harness three-dimensionality to produce a strong visual impact. It also plays with creativity in the installation and layout of the pieces.

Ceramics can be used as a visual game (using sparkles, colours, textures, volume ...) to force viewers to rethink what they are beholding. It makes one material capable of reproducing the effects produced by others.



Illustration 2: Muca Auditorium and House of Music in Algueña – Cor & Asociados

COMPUTER MADE (2014/2015)

In the ceramic sector, the development of new manufacturing technologies has led to growth in product customisation, in which different pieces can now be created that prior to 3D printing were unthinkable. When used as indoor or outdoor tiling, ceramics are capable of adding novel features to spaces by using new technology.

BEYOND THE WALL (2015/2016)

New design proposals emerge that explore capabilities never previously seen on surfaces, with the resulting appearance of functional tiling that interacts with glossy and matt finishes.

It experiments with surfaces, using *lappato*, polished, glossy, and matt... to create a sense of movement. It draws on a series of resources capable of exploring ceramics' full range of possibilities. Reliefs on the surface are also used to create a visual effect, playing with light and shadow. Dynamic surfaces are born that make an impact on the user.



Illustration 3: Blue Wave cocktail bar in Barcelona – El Equipo Creativo

SOFT EXPRESSION (2016/2017)

This trend is born from the need to create calm, tranquil environments. Ceramics can offer a more neutral, softer appearance, thus becoming an ideal material in domestic interior design to create versatile and timeless spaces.

It aims to evoke a serene and calm ambience, with pastel and neutral colours such as greys and beiges, in which matt white is the most prominent. It may also include watercolour effects and freehand lines to create subtle but delicate details.

TACTILE SURFACE (2017/2018)

Thanks to technological advances in the sector, ceramics can generate both body and volume, three-dimensional effects on its surfaces that afford users a different perception from what they may be used to.

Tactility is present both visually and physically, in a search for coverings with character, with greater decorative significance, but without the decoration necessarily having to be traditional. To achieve such an effect, it combines geometry, micro-reliefs, volumes, and surface textures. Sensitivity is the leading figure in this trend, contrasts are created between polished surfaces and rough finishes, with glossy and matt glazes, even with flat and bulky forms; and as far as colour is concerned, neutrals and matt or semi-sharp finishes are used.

SOFT HERITAGE (2019/2020)

This trend recovers classic ceramics, but from a soft and delicate perspective, with finishes that almost classify as minimalism but with warm touches. Artisan and rustic repertoires return, but with a renewed and contemporary look, with small format tiles and classic design icons, new graphics, and palettes of colour. Hydraulic tiles also make a comeback, but with an updated look that explores the roots of traditional tiles from different countries.

The aesthetics seek to create a space with a relaxing, warm ambience, far removed from technology, as a means of reconnecting with oneself. In this area, ceramics co-exist with materials whose prominent characteristic is their naturalness: untreated woods, natural fibres ... all in warm, light tones.

BALANCE & CARE (2020/2021)

Balance & Care prioritises calmness, wellness, and relaxation, with a more sentimental approach to minimalism. It strives to create authentic spaces using sensory tactics and creating emotional connections with products.

The leading figures are calm, warm and inclusive designs, more honest and thoughtful products, simple in both their aesthetics and construction. Technology and well-being are fused together to achieve a space that transmits comfort and tranquillity, complete personal wellness.

The surfaces are presented with volumes and tactile finishes using padded and rounded shapes that give a feeling of comfort in the ambience. The most prominent colours are soft tones, warm neutrals, white and light fleshy hues - those that convey an air of family cosiness.



Illustration 4: Waiting room at Villanueva de la Serena bus station – José María Sánchez

ROOTS (2020/2021)

Roots recovers local craftsmanship but with a vision of today's society, thus creating a continuation of the *Soft Heritage* trend (2019/2020 ceramic trend). It highlights the use and combination of traditional materials and stresses the importance of different textures and tonalities.

EMOTIONAL CARE (2022)

Emotional Care seeks to turn the home into a centre of well-being, where rounded surfaces offer a feeling of softness for relaxation. It reflects an evolution towards environments focusing more on care, with a sensory approach to comfort, whose concept is more versatile, flexible, reassuring and healing.

Tile coverings are textured and flat surfaces that have ribs and folds to offer a visual and tactile sensation. It continues to enhance surfaces that provide visual and tactile softness, with mild, muted matt finishes and a palette of neutral and soft colours using earthy, pastel tones surrounded by white to forge relaxing, well-defined aesthetics. Off-white tones stand out for their tactile quality that is used to improve texture.

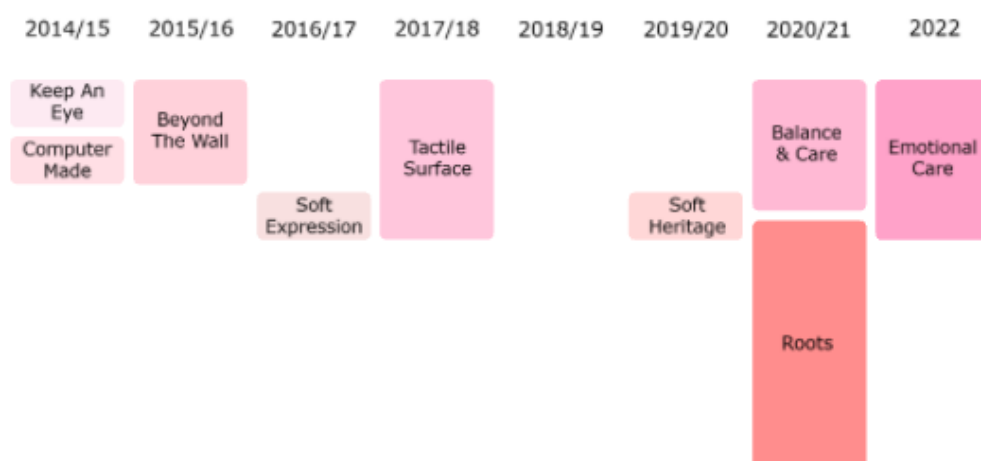


Figure 5: "Search for new experiences and tranquillity" timeline

COLOUR AND FUN

In all the trends that follow hereunder, tiles are used as a type of game, breaking away from a serious appearance. The quest for creativity relies on striking colours and daring designs.

CARTOON GRAPHICS (2015/2016)

In the ceramic sector, inspiration drawn from different materials is always present and this trend reveals a step further in the tendency to decorate wood and marble, aimed at creating an almost cartoonish or pop-art spectacle. It is an ironic and very vivid trend, where colour takes the lead with bold and striking proposals. The use of ceramics in this trend is a contemporary form of re-interpreting the material.

BREAK THE RULES (2016/2017)

This trend is full of life and aims to create fun spaces. With vibrant interiors, visual contrasts, striking colours, overlapping of opposing materials ... and different ways of projecting products with a creative spirit.

Colour blocking is a perfect resource with which to achieve accurate customisation of the ambience. Black and white are complemented with striking, intense colours to create an aesthetic whose main inspiration comes from the 1980s and the round shapes and geometries of the Memphis movement.

STRACCIATELLA PASSION (2017/2018)

Stone-based agglomerates are materials compounded by a binder that serves as the bond between fragments of cement and stones from usable blocks of natural stone.

That type of tile is recovered in this trend, which juggles colour with the size and origin of the fragments used. A myriad of possibilities can be achieved by playing with different combinations.

NEW MEMPHIS (2017/2018)

Directly related to the *Break the Rules* trend (2016/2017), *New Memphis* is also inspired by Memphis Milano.

The graphics and geometries adapt to current tastes, with more sophisticated aesthetics and low-scale colours, while retaining prints and graphic compositions as the leading figures. It follows the current of cheerful and fun design, with great importance given to geometric shapes, glossy finishes, and the use of vibrant colours. Playing with the compositions adapted to each individual space is a characteristic of this trend.

LIGHT MARBLED (2018/2019)

Following on from the *Stracciarella Passion* trend (2017/2018), in *Light Marbled*, the surfaces are mottled with subtle veins to produce a material that appears to be full of life and naturally invaded by the stones.

Compared to previous trends, it entails using smaller fragments in the surface to create a marbled and pointillist effect. It draws heavily on the exploration of materials, where their final finish is at the mercy of the process used to extract the material.

A prominent feature are its made-to-measure compositions for architectural projects in the 'Trencadís' or broken mosaic style.

MIDCENTURY COLOURS (2018/2019)

In this trend, flat and lively block colours prevail, although there are also versions that are more sober in the way they apply ceramics. It creates vibrant and harmonious environments, with bolder application and colour combinations, although black is used against pastel tones to give the ambience a more sophisticated touch.

It uses a variety of geometrical forms, from mosaics, linear structures ... thus creating multiple series of colours and effects in the tiles.

Terracotta is one material that has gained ground here thanks to its naturalness and mutability over time.

PLUG & PLAY (2019/2020)

This trend connects with a cheerful view of the adult world, in which graphics and colour acquire great significance when creating the product. The key factors in composing the space are vivid colours, references to the virtual world, and graphic patterns. Ceramics are one of the materials capable of composing such spaces with its formats and colour, creating happy and fresh environments.

It is born from a need to escape from the world and the influence of technology, where visual is of greater importance than texture, so that illustration and graphics become the most significant language.

This trend also relies heavily on reused stocks and products broken during the extraction process. The colouring also tends to drift away from traditional ceramics, thanks to innovations in inks and glazes. Intense and vivid shades in a range of colours relating to a children's world prevail, thus creating a more cheerful appearance.

ROOTS (2020/2021)

One of the characteristics of *Roots* is its eccentric irony. It follows on from the KITSCH movement, with a transgressive perspective, proposing solutions of great personality. Coverings play with colour and texture to create works of art. The decoration embodied in this trend uses the most vivid and cheerful tones which, when intermingled with opposites, create daring and very attractive combinations.

EUPHORIC (2022)

This trend explores the power of design to improve states of mind and share the user's joy and optimism. Priority is given to designs that enhance mood and eclectic and personal styles, resulting in products that convey joy.

Materials, including ceramics, are combined with each other. Colour and shape influence the perception of space, and the idea is to experiment with that. Designers look at art and take references from it with the aim of creating museum-like spaces.

Designers create artistic products by experimenting with an explosion of colour and finishes full of creativity. The colours used range from primary tones to bright pastels, producing co-ordinated sets of colours. Glossy finishes enhance the positive character conveyed by a vibrant palette.

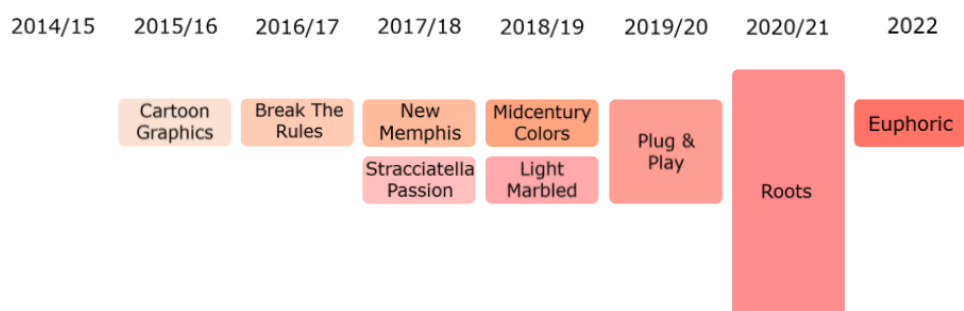


Figure 6: "Colour and Fun" timeline

EVOKING THE PAST AND DARING TO MIX

In this block, the main objective is to evoke the past but with a contemporary touch. To do so, it plays with a mixture of different materials and formats, using various graphic resources depending on the intention of the project.

MIX & MATCH (2014/2015)

The key to this trend is the fusion of different elements to create a new one. In ceramics, this mixture can be achieved through a diversity of materials, colours, formats, textures, graphic motifs ... all of which aims to arrive at unprecedented solutions.

Apart from this mixture of finishes and materials, ceramics also take their inspiration from the rest of materials, thus offering a fusion of varying replicas of all kinds of materials, while still bearing in mind at all times the limitations ceramics face, such as expansion.

PATCHWORK SURFACE (2014/2015)

Patchwork Surface is intended to evoke the past. Using the aesthetics of another era, it strives to create stimuli that bring to light memories and sensations from the past, forging subjective bonds between user and product.

One of the ways to create such a feeling is by using collage, which, in combination with different graphic motifs, generates a mixture of illustrations and colours.

There also exist references to hydraulic tiles and the use of motifs taken from classic textiles. Different styles are blended in a single proposal, generating spaces full of contrasts and differences.

ELECTRIC WAY (2015/2016)

Eclecticism amalgamates different proposals to create unprecedented forms. To break with visual norms, different shapes and resources are mixed in order to bring different styles and eras together, regardless of their origin.

Graphic resources are of great importance: an example is collage, which mixes different references to create new visual landmarks relating to contemporary culture.

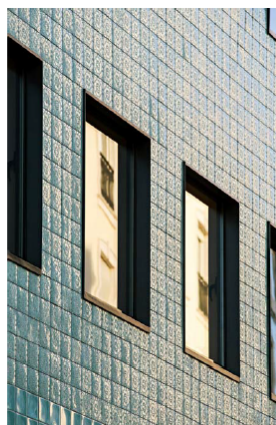


Illustration 7: House in Príncipe Real in Lisbon – Camarim Arquitectos

NORDIC HEART (2016/2017)

In this trend that stems from Scandinavian design, value is attached to small formats, where the joints become relevant and are used as a decorative resource. It searches for products that connect directly with functionality and local beauty.

Apart from employing natural materials, it also places great value on their authenticity. Traditional decorative elements are shown in their most classic version but with a contemporary look.

BACK TO THE ORIGIN (2017/2018)

The opportunities offered by artisan and small format ceramics are explored to give spaces a new personality. Ceramics acquire a more decorative character and artisan models are recovered.

The folkloric dimension of ceramics is also revisited by searching for references in other cultures and countries.

As in earlier trends, it aims to create series of pieces that allow different combinations to be created, collections designed for creative juggling. In regard to colour, the most prominent colours are neutral.



Illustration 8: TABA Cafeteria in San Sebastian – Ibon Salaberria

LITTLE, BIG (2017/2018)

This trend returns to small formats, which co-exist with larger formats. Although the large format has more advantages in terms of manufacturing, the small format serves to create different designs and plays a different role than we were used to.

RESTORE MATERIALS (2018/2019)

This seeks to exalt tradition by making use and combination of traditional materials and highlighting the importance of textures, both in new building and rehabilitation.

It also varies combinations of different traditional elements to achieve dynamic, highly ornate spaces.

Fired clay, majolica of different colours and artisan stoneware, Catalan tiles, Mediterranean roof tiles, or hydraulic tiles are highly visible references in this trend.



Illustration 9: Winery in Mont-Ras – Jorge Vidal and Víctor Rahola

ROOTS (2020/2021)

Roots is a review of heritage from a contemporary perspective, recovering local craftsmanship and adapting its traditional techniques in both materials and uses to take the needs of today's society into account.



Illustration 10 "Evoking the past and daring to mix" timeline

THE DEFINITION OF ELEGANCE

Over the years, the concept of elegance and luxury has varied, and as can be seen in the following trends, this idea ranges from the simplest to the most complex, from fine to extravagant finishes. All aspects have a place in this block.

TRUE TILE (2014/2015)

It seeks to appreciate ceramics' potential and opportunities as a natural material. It exploits its intrinsic characteristics, but at the same time, it renews the material by exploring fresh possibilities.

Ceramics are seen as a material capable of building on another material to give it a new, unique value, where the joint becomes a decorative element in itself, one that is free to express its presence instead of trying to hide.

Small, square and rectangular formats with a classic glaze and hand-crafted appearance prevail, while, on the other hand, classic pieces of glazed terracotta are revisited. Another traditional element adopted here is latticework, which allows for a myriad of visual possibilities to imprint its personality.

In interior design, old decorative tools such as ceramic carpets or hydraulic flooring return.



Illustration 11: Multi-purpose Hall at Gavina School in Valencia - Carmen Martínez Gregori, Carmel Gradolo Martínez and Arturo Sanz Martínez

NEUTRAL LUXURY (15/16)

Interest in products of more classic, sophisticated and simple aesthetics, where the versatility of colours provides a wide variety of combinations in interior spaces. This trend searches for luxury in noble, refined materials with balanced chromatics, where the naturalness of veins and joints in materials poorly treated with soft polishes or natural varnishes are respected and highlighted.

Quality pieces that are characterised by being timeless, simple and authentic. They are presented as sober and simple proposals, with a simplicity of lines, refined textures of earthy and light tones, imperfections in wood and stone, and, despite all that, as highly ornate décors.

GEOMETRICAL DREAMS (2015/2016)

This trend seeks to extol traditional formats, such as the hexagonal or subway-type tile, and update them. A new, fresh and youthful approach, where the role played by the joint is used to renew classic pieces.

New palettes of colours strongly influenced by Scandinavian design.

The ceramic tiling becomes the decorative resource, with no need for any other element.

DECADENT LUXURY (2016/2017)

Defined by a strong, renewed Baroque style with a slightly decadent nuance, where gilding and noble materials are primordial.

Pieces of furniture in noble materials, with sumptuous details that revere the presence of elegance and luxury as a general criterion. Surfaces that look worn or in poor condition, a strong presence of aged gilt and matt gold combined with cement-based textures, ornate and highly sophisticated granites.

Expanding not only in the Western market, with maximised resources such as decomposed and shiny reproduction stones and onyx.

RECTILINEAR MOTION (2016/2017)

Based on elegant, sober and masculine aesthetics, with a strong presence of dark and saturated colours. Straight lines and deconstructed geometries as its predominant visual elements.

Geometry is the essence of this trend, upholding the pure line, understood from a synthesised point of view, where the convergence of lines is used as a visual game of movement and decomposition.

Different geometric figures are born of varying combinations of regular parallelograms, sizes, materials, and neutral colours.

A new market opens, where ceramics is able to reinterpret technical textiles and vinyl floors.

METALLIC LOOK (2017/2018)

Despite having more in common within the furniture sector, this trend recovers metals and metallic finishes, such as aged rose gold, brass and copper.

More classic uses of metallic finishes are resumed, with decorations in which combinations of textures, mixtures of gloss and matt, and subtle playing with volumes are the main attributes of these tiles.

Also common are mirror effects, inlays of sparkles and glittering, metallic tones.

TILE DECO (2018/2019)

Pieces in intently decorated habitats that bring renewed aesthetics to the classics of previous decades.

It recovers the ornamental component of past trends, such as the Art Nouveau and Art-Deco of the 1920s and 1930s, or the English Arts & Crafts movement.

It presents sophisticated and elegant proposals with a Baroque touch, in which metallic, gold, filigree, marquetry inspirations, velvet, dark and elegant colours, aerodynamic lines and the geometric influence of Cubism predominate.

It plays with colour and lighting, as well as introducing elements from different cultures. Surfaces are filled with detail and ornamental art for both their organic and geometric inspiration - wallpaper, ceramics and wood are introduced.

BRUTALIST STYLE (2018/2019)

Large pieces abound, made of natural stone with aesthetics both inherited and at the same time removed from cement-based brutalism, where luxury is introduced as a determining element. Consequently, large formats of marbles, granites, cements or igneous rocks are imposed. Ceramics reproduce these stony materials in a somewhat risky manner.

Raw material is sought as a tool to be exalted and magnified, in an abundance of overburdened, 'horror vacui' interiors.

DRAMATIC INTERIOR (2019/2020)

Here, theatricality and drama prevail, reflected in elegant and synthesised designs.

It redefines the meaning of luxury on the basis of authenticity and quality, by connecting to other values, such as solidarity or sustainability. That is why it aspires to coverings capable of reproducing natural materials, their dark colours, marble and sandstone textures, veins ... This enables the fusion of different materials on a single surface to generate something that is irreproducible in nature.

As far as its use of metallic materials goes, they have a strong industrial essence but are redefined within luxury to evoke sophistication.

Ceramics are presented in combination with other materials, but in an innovative way. Tonality is also presented in a different way, using low scales with a strong presence of black, in which navy blue stands out.

ETHICAL LUXURY (2020/2021)

Sustainability and well-being are once again the key, and the frivolity of aesthetics gives way to the criterion of 'beautiful' and to the importance of the impact of materials' service life.

Luxury is forced to be reconsidered from the new approach to environmental sustainability, but without losing refined looks and moderate glamour.

Reused materials such as glass acquire a new sophisticated presence as high-tech, authentic, and pre-futuristic. Structures and materials create plays with lighting, distortions, reflections, and refractions.

It entails a fascination for the disturbing and mysterious, inherited from the Dramatic Interior, linked to fear, all of which leads to visceral-looking surfaces.

The metallic elements and surfaces generate textures and patterns of ethereal fluidity, playing with natural graphic scales and generating incredible effects. Precious and industrial metals are found with a modern finish, using shiny or brushed, galvanised and matt gloss effects.

Monumental black is used to highlight the textures thus generated. Dark blue continues to instil an effect of sophistication in products thanks to its deep intensity and versatility, but matt black combined with lustre is the key tool to creating deep and dark environments.

ELEGANT & REFINED (2022)

Profound search for durable, natural materials, but without neglecting sophistication and luxury during their service life. Evolution from sensible luxury to a more refined elegance of textures, thanks to its naturalness and craftsmanship. Materials are presented as harmonious and textured. They are also present in a more innovative way, adding colour to the natural patterns of the material.

Metallic elements are key to adding drama and glamour to finishes. Straight line geometrics return, strongly inspired by Art Deco, with large arches, diagonal lines and designs, reminiscent of metal latticework. Gold is treated with extreme elegance. Large formats are again present in marble, with great importance attached to its graphics and colour.

Dark tones build reassuring spaces through warm shades of bluish-green and deep blue; opulent finishes are essential to produce an up-market feel. As for textiles, velvet and satin are prominent, while playing with geometries and colour. Soft shades of silver or copper, combinations of black and white, and the use of digital colours, redefine trends in the luxury sector.

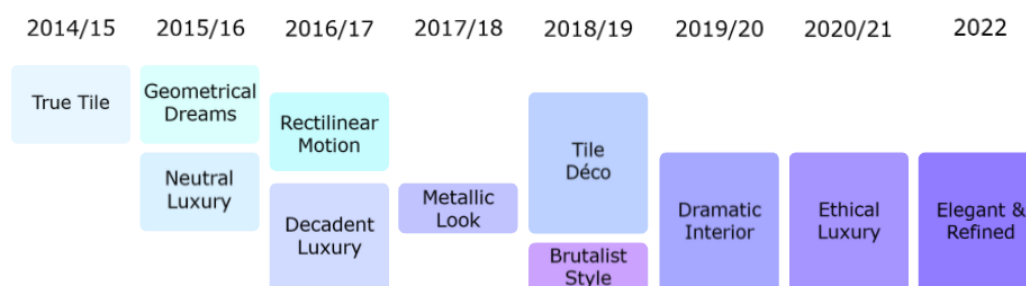


Figure 12: "Definition of Elegance" timeline

CERAMIC AWARDS FOR ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN

To verify the relationship of these trends with the most noteworthy works of architecture, the latest jury decisions of the ASCER Ceramic Awards for architecture and interior design were taken as a reference.

Table 1 lists the prize-winning works and identifies the ceramic trends in each of these.

Year	Award	Prize-winning work	Trend
2020	Architecture Prize	"Casa Ter" by studio Mesura	Soft Heritage Essential
	Mention	"Runnymede College Campus", by Rojo/Fernández-Shaw	Balance & Care
	Mention	"The Young Old House", by Enrique Espinosa & Lys Villalba.	Balance & Care Plug & Play
	Interior Design Prize	"Atlantis Gastrobar", by Arantxa Manrique Arquitectes.	Plug & Play
	Mention	"Tienda Camper La Roca", by Tomás Alonso.	Plug & Play
	Mention	"6 viviendas en Cabrera de Mar", by TWOBO Arquitectura.	Soft Heritage
2019	Architecture Prize	"Centro de investigación del Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, Barcelona" by PICHarchitects_Pich-Aguilera and 2BMFG Arquitectes	Green code
	Mention	"Patio de los valientes y nueva sala de padres" by Elisa Valero	Soft Heritage
	Mention	"Edificio Tívoli. Rehabilitación de edificio para 22 viviendas, local y aparcamientos" by Martin Lejárraga Architecture Office.	Soft Heritage
	Interior Design Prize	"Sala de espera en las dársenas de una estación de autobuses" by José María Sánchez García.	Balance & Care
	Mention	"Vallirana 47" by Vora Arquitectura.	Soft Heritage
	Mention	"Camper Paseo de Gràcia" by KKAA (Kengo Kuma / Javier Villar Ruiz).	Soft Heritage
2018	Architecture Prize	"Estación intermodal de Palma de Mallorca", by Joan Miquel Seguí Colomar.	Soft Heritage
	Mention	"Laan Van Spartaan Amsterdam Student Housing" by Studioninedots Amsterdam".	Restore Materials
	Mention	"Pabellón polideportivo y aulario. Universidad Francisco de Vitoria" by Alberto Campo Baeza.	Soft Expression
	Interior Design Prize	"Casa frente al mar" by Xavier Martí and Lucía Ferrater.	Restore Materials
	Mention	"Reforma Integral Casa Artium" by María Fernández Torrado – Torrado Arquitectura.	Little, Big
2017	Architecture Prize	"Bodegas Mont-Ras" by Jorge Vidal and Víctor Rahola.	Restore Materials
	Mention	"Ampliación y rehabilitación de los talleres Gon-Gar" by NUA Arquitectures.	Restore Materials
	Mention	"Hotel Santacreu en la isla de Tabarca" by Diego López Fuster + SUBARQUITECTURA.	Restore Materials
	Interior Design Prize	"Tres estaciones de metro de la L9 de Barcelona" by Garcés - de Seta - Bonet Arquitectes.	Restore Materials
	Mention	"Can Picafort" by Ted'A arquitectes	Back to the Origin
	Mention	"Rehabilitación de vivienda entre medianeras" by ARQUITECTURA-G.	Back to the Origin
2016	Architecture Prize	"Dos Viviendas en Oropesa" by Paredes Pedrosa Arquitectos.	Back to the Origin
	Mention	"Casa MM" by OhLab.	Little, Big
	Interior Design Prize	"TABA espazioa" by Ibon Salaberria.	Back to the Origin
	Mention	"Casa#77" by Rue Arquitectos (Raúl Montero Martínez and Emilio Pardo Rivacoba).	Little, Big
2015	Architecture Prize	"Pabellón Docente Polivalente Escola Gavina en Valencia" by Carmen Martínez Gregori, Carmel Gradolí Martínez and Arturo Sanz Martínez	True Tile
	Mention	"Parking Saint Roch" by Archikubik (Miquel Lacasta, Marc Chalamanch, Carmen Santana).	Keep an Eye
	Interior Design Prize	"Coctelería Blue Wave" by El Equipo Creativo.	Keep an Eye
	Mention	"Restaurante Disfrutar", by El Equipo Creativo,	Keep an Eye
	Mention	"L'Àtic Vernacle" by El Fabricante de Esferas	True Tile
2014	Architecture Prize	"Casa en Príncipe Real" (Lisbon) by studio CAMARIM Arquitectos (Vasco Correia and Patricia Sousa)	Keep an Eye
	Mention	"Casa El Enroque", by Ángel Luis Rocamora	Patchwork Surface
	Mention	"Casa Andamio", by bosch.capdeferro architectures.	True Tile
	Interior Design Prize	"Recuperación del claustro del Palau-Castell de Betxí" by studio El Fabricante de Esferas.	True Tile
	Mention	"Tienda Bodebó" by CAVAA (Jordi Calbetó i Oriol Vañó)	True Tile
	Mention	"Restauración del Pabellón de la Administración del recinto modernista de Sant Pau", by Joan Nogué Arbussa.	Keep an Eye, Decadent Luxury

Table 1: Compilation of ASCER awards and mentions and identified trends.

By way of summary, Table 2 groups the trends identified in the prize-winning works or works awarded a mention in the ASCER ceramic awards for architecture and interior design between 2014 and 2020:

Group of trends	Trend	Repetitions	
Connection with nature	Green code	1	2
	Essential	1	
Search for new experiences and tranquillity	Keep An Eye	5	15
	Soft Expression	1	
	Soft Heritage	6	
	Balance & Care	3	
Colour and fun	Plug & Play	3	3
Evoking the past and daring to mix	Patchwork Surface	1	14
	Back to the Origin	4	
	Little, Big	3	
	Restore Materials	6	
The definition of elegance	True Tile	5	6
	Decadent Luxury	1	

Table 2: Groups of trends identified in the works of the ASCER Awards.

CONCLUSIONS

As seen in this study, it is possible to identify different themes that evolve over the years. Likewise, there are many similarities between the different trends, which enable us to analyse how they evolve. Although this paper specifies five thematic areas or blocks, many of the trends have similarities, but those characteristics that best define their essence were taken as references.

On the other hand, trends from the same year are likely to have certain similarities, since they emerged within the same social, cultural and economic environment, factors that directly influence all trend characteristics. Therefore, although each of the blocks is based on a different philosophy, there will always be similarities between blocks from the same year, as Illustration no. 13 shows.

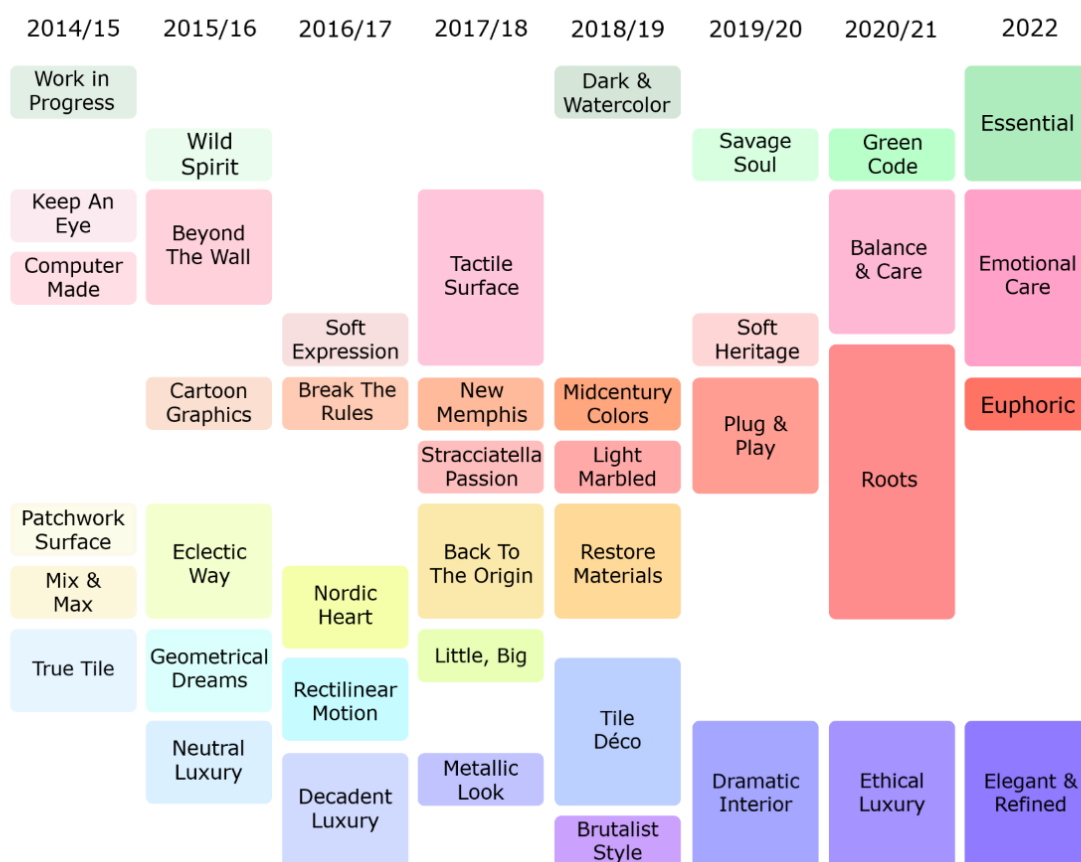


Figure 13: Timeline of ceramic trends

The intention of this paper was to extract the main values behind each trend and to visualise similarities between the past and the present, thus reflecting broadly and loosely those aspects that will define future trends.

Our search for architectural examples of each of the trends above, together with the list of the most recent ASCER prize-winners, reveals that the most commonly sought-after characteristics are new experiences generally based on peace and calm, an evocation of the past that is allowed to mix with new aesthetics, and the definition of elegance, generally using neutral colours or exalting the actual material, without looking for similarities or references with other materials that are not typical of the essence of ceramics.

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