



STC

№3

TOWN GUIDE

St PETERSBURG



Stone Town Guide St Petersburg N 3

General composition:

Andrey Bulakh, Professor,
St Petersburg State University

Texts: Andrey Bulakh, Nataly Abakumova

Photos: collections of Andrey Bulakh and Joseph Romanovsky,
Professors,

St Petersburg State University

Layout: Alexander Spiridonov, student,

and Andrey Bulakh, Professor,

St Petersburg State University

Translation: E.I. Kravtsova

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St Petersburg - Excursion 3

From the Palace Square

to the Marble Palace and Field of Mars

Start Point - the Arch of the General Staff

End Point – Field of Mars

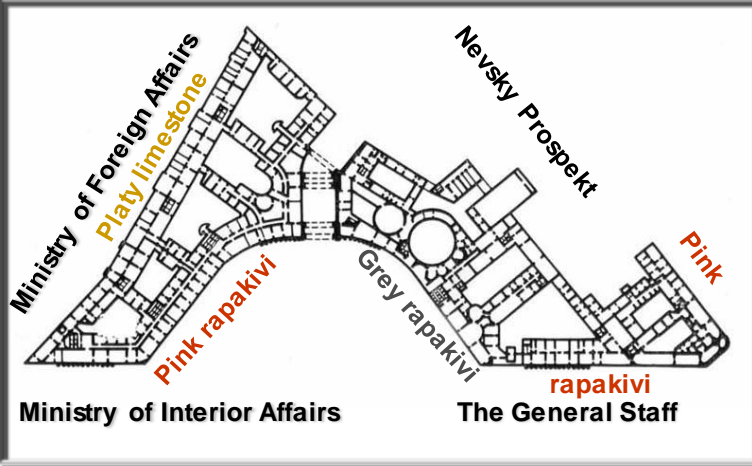
Route length - 1,6 km

The nearest M - Admiraltejskaya

*From the Palace Square to the Marble
Palace and Field of Mars*

See more in
*A. G. Bulakh, N.B. Abakumova,
J. V. Romanovsky*

ST PETRESBURG
A History in Stone
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GENERAL STAFF

1819-1929

C.I. Rossi

No 29





Grey rapakivi

A new pavement

The General Staff

ENSEMBLE OF GENERAL STAFF

1819-1929

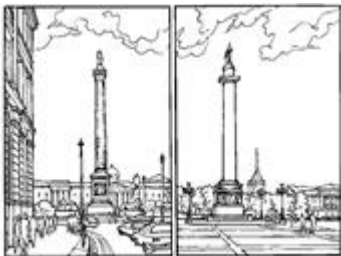
C.I. Rossi



Pink Rapakivi

Ministry of Interior Affairs

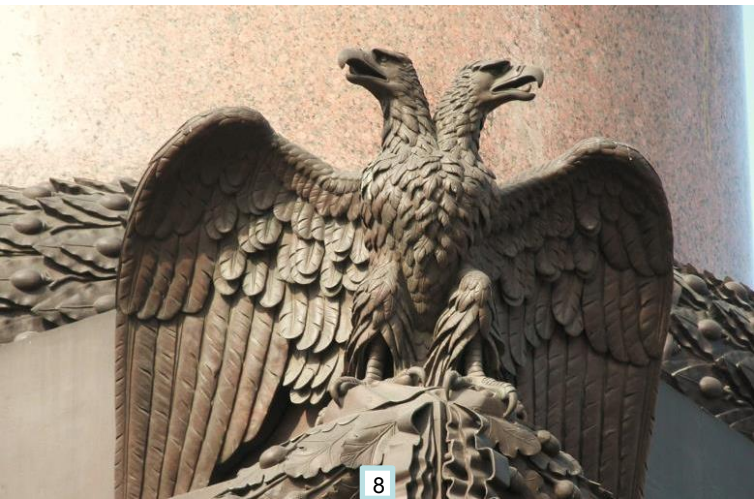
No 30



1829-1834
Au. Montferandt

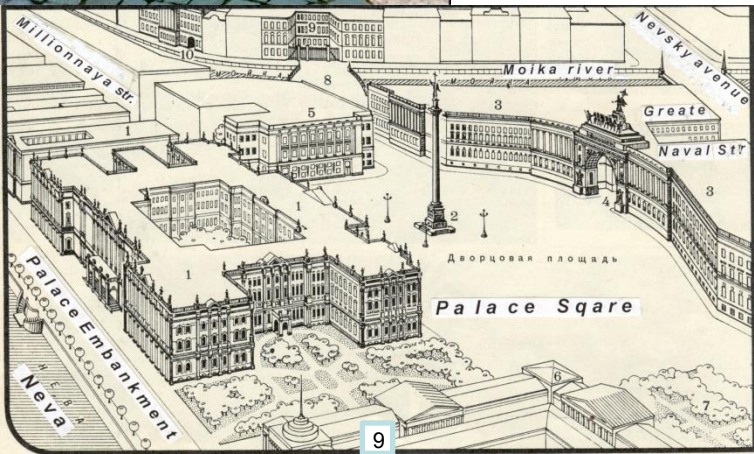


ALEXANDER COLUMN



PALACE SQUARE

1976-1977
G.N. Buldakov
et al





WINTER PALACE

1754-1762

B. Rastrelli





WINTER PALACE *INTERIORS*

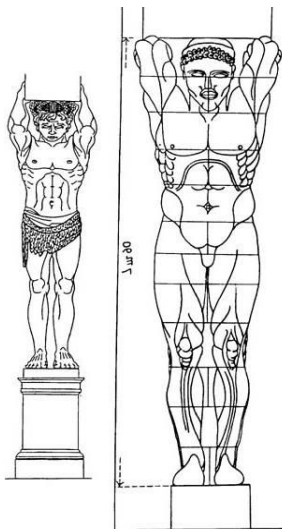
№ 32





THE NEW HERMITAGE

1839-1852 L. Klenze



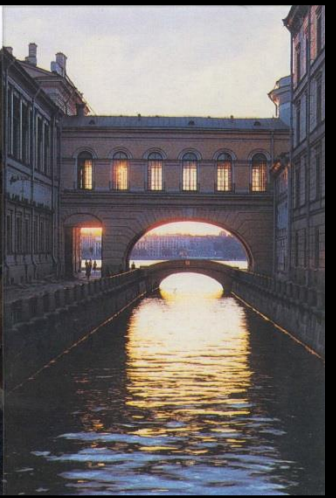


№ 34

Drawn by J.A. Ivanov, 1810s



Venice

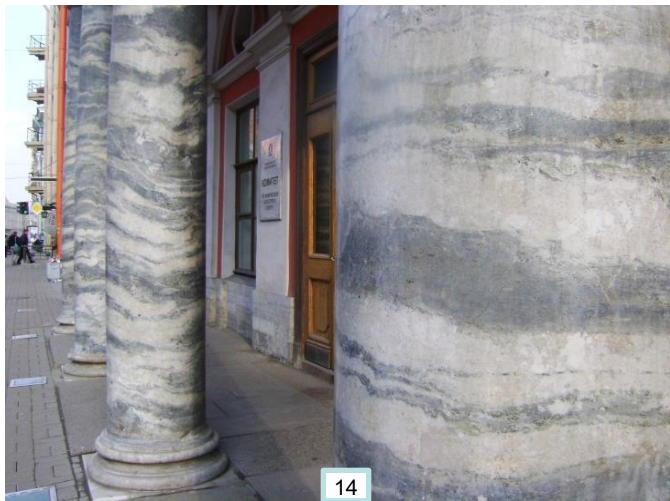


St Petersburg

№ 35

HOUSE OF APRAK SIN

1770s





MARBLE PALACE

1768-1785
A. Rinaldi





MARBLE PALACE

№ 36





№ 37

1799-1801
M.I. Kozlovsky



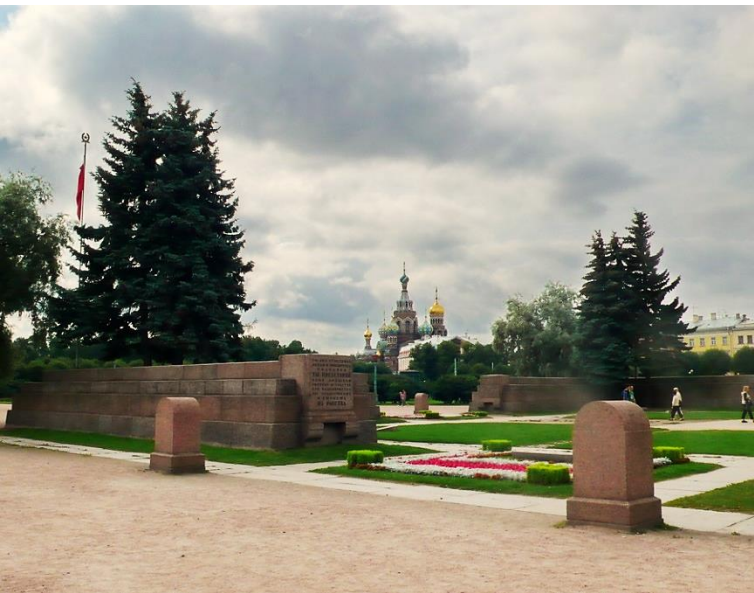
MONUMENT TO SUVOROV





1917
L.V. Rudnev

MONUMENT TO REVOLUTIONARY FIGHTERS



N 29. GENERAL STAFF ENSEMBLE **(Headquarters)**

The edifice of the former General Headquarters consists of buildings united by the common façade and the Triumphal Arch. The scale of the edifice as a whole, its monumental, grandiose character are emphasized by the massive socle, 2.5 m high, faced along all the perimeter with three rows of rapakivi-granite slabs. A slab length approximates 2.2 m, its width may be as much as 15—17 cm. The granite ranges in colour from pink to rather rare for such a rock light-grey and whitish-grey. The pink stone was applied in the facing of the left part of the main semi-circular edifice, the grey granite can be seen to the right of the Archway.

Bases of columns decorating the semi-circular part of the facade are made of pink rapakivi-granite, four balconies of the first floor are constructed of thick slabs of the same type, and of granitic consoles and balusters for lattices. Curiously, an opening for runoff of rain-water from every balcony slab had been drilled.

GENERAL STAFF

(continuation)

A pavement along by the buildings is constructed in 2003. Two granites are used. They are Baltic Brown and from the Vozrozhdeniye quarries. At last, building for departments of Ministries for Foreign Affairs and of Finances looks onto the Moyka River. Its low socle is covered with plates of Putilovo Ordovician limestone.

A corner-house stands both at the very beginning of the Nevsky Avenue (odd side) and at the Palace Square. It flanks the main building of the former General Headquarters at the Palace Square. The house was added to the latter at the expense of reconstruction of a three-storey house of the Russian Free Economic Society. The added house is almost indistinguishable in the facade decoration from the General Headquarters. However the socle of this part of the common facade is faced with slabs of pink rapakivi-granite while grey rapakivi granite covers the basement of the General Headquarters.

Door-cases are embellished with red, glassy polished rapakivi-granite. Facing of entrances comes to the meander frieze and looks very festive at a distance, the appearance of the doors with their hard folds decorated with reliefs is enhanced by it. The height of the doors comes to 7 m.

N 30. ALEXANDER COLUMN

The 704-ton monolith of the Alexander monument is 84 (83.85) feet high. It is cut out of pink rapakivi-granite at Piterlaks quarries. Au. Montferrand tried to use proportions of the Trojan's column in Roma to give forms that Peterlaks monolith. They are 8:1 (height : bottom diameter) and 8:9 (top diameter : bottom diameter), so sizes of the Alexander column are like following: 84 feet : 10 feet 4 inch : 12 feet, or the same 25.58 : 3.19 : 3.66 meters. The column is not attached to the pedestal, only the force of gravity keeps it in the place. The pedestal is made of granitic blocks and rests on a thick fundament constructed of stone and lying, in its turn, on a pile basement. The fund amentand pile basement lie down the level of the square and hide under huge, massive granitic slabs.

The stone pedestal of the column is covered with bronze at the top and decorated with four bas-reliefs. From the bottom it is faced with smoothly polished slabs of granite and has a rectangular low stylobate with three stone steps and kerbstones on the corners.

The column is crowned with the square bronze capital that is combined with the cylinder and semi-sphere on which the angel with the cross is standing.

ALEXANDER COLUMN (continuation)

A foundation pit 5.1 m deep (5.25 m on other evidence) had been dug out for the column. 1250 wooden piles 26 cm in diameter and 6.4 m in length had been driven into the bottom of the pit. A wooden tower with a monkey that weighed 830 kg (1200 kg — on other evidence) had been built for it.

The monkey was being risen with a help of a capstan and horse attractive force. It took three months to drive all piles in the ground over the area that occupied 23x23m. On that pile basement the foundation constructed of 12 rows of granite blocks, every 40—60 cm thick, was laid. The foundation was encircled with a stonework consisting of waste of granite, marble, rubble slab packed up with addition of mortar.

A granite monolith 6 x 6 m² in size, weighting as much as 410 tons was put on the foundation. The monolith represented the pedestal of the column. It was pulled to the edge of the platform and carefully thrown down on the sand. Then it was taken 90 cm up in order to put the mortar between the monolith and foundation.

ALEXANDER COLUMN (continuation)

The stone lay down inexactly and had to be shifted with two capstans. Still two more monoliths: 203 and 215 kg in weight, together with smaller blocks had been set on the base stone later. Today they are covered with bronze and concealed behind the bas-reliefs. Just on that pedestal the column was installed with the help of the portal crane.

The model of the acting crane during the process of the column rising is exposed at one of the departments of the Museum of the History of St Petersburg in the Peter and Paul Fortress. After the installment the prominences of the column were hewn off and two hundred men were polishing the monolith daily for five months.

N 31. PAVEMENT OF THE PALACE SQUARE

In 1976—1977, pavements of the Palace Square were designed by architects G.N. Buldakov, G.A. Baykov, F. Romanovsky and the artist V.A. Petrov. Quadrangles lined with pink granite from the quarry Vozrozhdeniye and with grey granite from Kamennogorsk quarry are artistically paved with grey-black dyabase stones. Later, before 300 anniversary of St Petersburg pavements were renovated.

N 32. THE WINTER PALACE

Stone decoration of the Winter Palace is very modest and unpretentious, as well as of all edifices built in Baroque style. At the foundation of the palace facades simple, dull slabs of Putilovo Limestone are seen, and the same material was used for pedestals of the columns and for their cubical parapets (in 2000s they were unsuccessfully restored and replaced with new slabs, they were destroyed again soon). Earlier, 128 statues hewn out of limestone were standing on the roof of the building along all the perimeter of it, but they were quickly broken up and in 1892 were replaced by bronze replicas. Besides the Putilovo Limestone, pink rapakivi-granite had been used for the Winter Palace decoration. In the 1880-s *pentre douces* of the main entrances from the Palace square were clad with granitic slabs. Massive rectangular small posts of the cast iron railing of the *pentre douces* were also cut from the same stone.

N 33. THE NEW HERMITAGE

The building erected in the very beginning of the Millionnaya (Million) Street to the design of the architect L. Klenze. It is decorated on the ground floor with stone door-cases and outside window frames made of slabs of yellow fine-grained, dense Kirna Limestone and with metallic figures of great masters of the past mounted in niches of the plastered walls and on the consoles. The portico of the New Hermitage with wonderful sculptures of atlases is particular beautiful and triumphal. The atlases are carved from grey Serdobol Granite by the sculptor A.I. Terebenev.

The pedestals of the atlases, parapets of the *pente douces*, steps, facing slabs of the building socle were made of pink rapakivi-granite, the driveways of the *pente douces* being paved with stone too.

The columns and architrave of the portico, small columns of the balcony are constructed of blocks of dense yellow limestone. Slabs of the same rock are lying on the socle of the edifice drawing a line round the walls base.

N 34. THE HERMITAGE BRIDGE

The Hermitage Bridge was the first one in St Petersburg which was made of bricks and faced with granite rapakivi in 1763-1768.

Only some earlier, the Palace Embankment and wall of Winter Canal (Zimniaya Kanavka) were clad with rapakivi.

In 1783, arch. J. Felten constructed an arch and gallery to join the Hermitage buildings. It replies the Bridge of Sighs in Venice.

N 35. 22-24, MILLIONNAYA STREET

HOUSE OF THE COUNT F.A. APRAKSIN

It has come down to us with considerable changes. In the 1770-s added to he mansion was a portico with four columns of Ionic order. They were cut from Joensuu Marble that shows distinct pattern of contrasting white and black bands.

N 36. THE MARBLE PALACE

It was presented Count G. Orlov by Catherine II. He died and Catherine bought the Palace for Romanov's family.

For the construction of the Marble Palace special search for marbles and "agates" were undertaken over the Urals and other regions of Russia. Marble was brought to the building site from stone quarries discovered on Ladoga Lake shores, in Karelia and Eastland just at that time. "Wild stone", as granite was then called, arrived from Finland. White and coloured marble was carried from Italy and Greece. Some part of the marble was conveyed from the Office of Isaac's Cathedral buildings.

The monumental ground lower floor of the Marble Palace is faced with pink rapakivi-granite. It serves as a basement for the more light-coloured upper part of the palace, two floors of which are united by pilasters and columns of Corinthian order.

Walls of the first and second storeys are faced with grey Serdobol Granite. The architrave, upper cornice and outside window-frames of the ground floor are made of the same rock. Outside window-frames of the first and second storeys are cut out of light-grey Ruskeala Marble.

THE MARBLE PALACE (continuation)

The pilasters and columns are hewn of rosy Tivdiya Marble and their capitals and bases are carved of a white Uralian one.

Garlands placed above the windows of the first floor are carved of the same marble. Slab-panels, on which the garlands are fixed are made of Juven Marble brought from the island Joensuu situated near Serdopol. The frieze and high attic of the edifice are faced with rosy Tivdiya Marble.

Set up on the roof of the Marble Palace were vases of light-grey Revelsky dolomitic Marble (some of them had been replaced by rude concrete mouldings in 2000s).

Carved of white Italian Marble from Serravezza were cartouches on the northern and southern facades, a vase on the clock-tower, and two figures standing on each side of the tower. The same rock was used for vases and compositions of armour installed on pillars of the garden railing.

The inner decoration of the palace was carried out in stone as well. Steps of the Grand Staircase are made of dark-green, almost black, Brusna Sandstone. The banisters and balustrade, pilasters and columns of the Staircase, as well as niches for sculptures are made of grey, patterned marble from the Urals. Marble statues are standing in niches.

THE MARBLE PALACE (continuation)

Made of the yellowish-grey marble are massive outside window-frames in window niches on staircase landings.

The grandeur of the staircase is accentuated by rich fretted cases of doors leading to the private apartments of the palace. As the material for them served the same banded black-white Juven Marble that was used for the panels established on the facades of the building. Rather thick zigzag black and greyish-white layers in this marble have sharp contacts and are clearly defined. Stone-cutters hewed out the door-cases intricate in their design and profile. It was done in such a way that bands have generally vertical orientation, therefore the stone decoration produces the impression of the aspiration upward.

The effect of the just proportion, harmony and elegance in the refinement of the Grand Staircase had been accomplished by those means. Garlands above the doors, rosettes of the capitals and bases of the columns are cut out of white marble. Most likely it is the same rock that was used for the analogous garlands fixed on the facades of the palace.

THE MARBLE PALACE (continuation)

Among other apartments of the Marble Palace the Marble Hall produces much more impression.

Walls of the hall through the height of the lower storey are lined with natural stone of different colours, adorned with gilded bronze and embellished with bas-relief panels performed of white marble.

Grey and yellowish-grey coarse-grained Uralian Marble identical with that used for the Grand Staircase decoration is of minor importance in the Marble Hall. The rock serves as the background for other marbles and is used rather miserably: in the piers between pilasters, near the doors, as frames of panels made of brightly coloured marbles.

In some places in the grey and yellowish-grey marble fine concentric banding of grey and brown-yellow colours is observed. Its pattern resembles a cut of a tree's trunk. The marble of such a type was quarried at the Fominsk deposit and sometimes it is used for decoration of modern buildings.

THE MARBLE PALACE (continuation)

Pale-rosey, of very delicate shade, in places with dark-red veinlets Tivdiya Marble is applied for pair-pilasters covered with cannelures and standing along all the walls, for frames of panels cut of white marble and fixed above the doors, and for lining of the window niches.

Cherry with white and rosy veinlets Tivdiya Marble, often very dark, was used for decoration of the lower part of the walls. The wide plinth along the perimeter of the floor under the pilasters are performed of the same rock.

Green serpentine Italian Marble with white calcite veinlets represents almost a breccia. Such a marble was called *Verde Antico* (Green Antique) and most likely was brought from stone quarries existing in the proximity of the Italian town Levanto, hence is its second name — *Verde di Levanto* (Green Levantian). Cut out of this rock are slab-panels under the pilasters.

Golden-yellow Italian Siena Marble is used in combination with blue lazurite from the Slyudyanka river in the South-Baikal area. Lapis-lazuli is the worthy background for the valuable marble bas-reliefs while the panels of lazurite is framed by golden-yellow Italian Marble.

THE MARBLE PALACE (continuation)

White statue marble imported from Greece was used for sculpture. Russian sculptors M.I. Kozlovsky, F.I. Shubin and Italian statuary A. Valli had carved both bas-relieues arranged on the walls of the Marble Hall and sculptural ornaments: branches with leaves and flowers, eagles keeping garlands and vases in their claws.

The upper tier of the hall that appeared at the reconstruction of the Marble Palace in the middle of XIX century was made of artificial marble.

Among stone decorations of other premises of the Marble Palace eight perfectly polished columns of grey Serdobol Granite standing in the oval passage room survived until the present time.

In 1996 the equestrian statue of Alexander III was put in the *cour d'honneur* of the palace. Until 1937 it was standing on the huge granitic base in front of the Moscow Railway Station. Granitic monolith was quarried at Syyskuunsari in Finland by Valamo monks.

N 37. MONUMENT TO SUVOROV

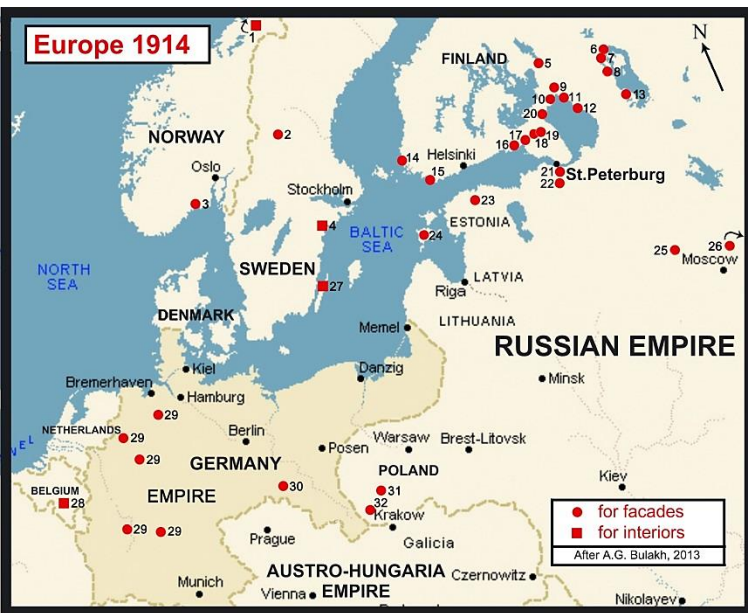
Bronze sculpture stands on monolithic pedestal of Granite Rapakivi.

N 38 The Field of Mars

N 39 MONUMENT TO REVOLUTIONARY FIGHTERS

In the middle of the Field of Mars a monument to revolution fighters is located. It is one of the first memorial constructions that appeared after October 1917. The memorial was built to the design of the architect L.V. Rudnev. It is composed of large blocks of dark-pink rapakivi-granite laid in such a way that they form shelves around graves of heroes of February and October revolutionary events, 1918, and Civil War in Russia. Blocks are from a destroyed old store. Butt-ends of the monument bear lofty epitaphs composed by A.V. Lunacharsky.

Deposits of St Petersburg ornamental stone



See more in:

A. G. Bulakh. ORNAMENTAL STONE IN THE HISTORY OF ST PETERSBURG ARCHITECTURE / Towards International Recognition of Building and Ornamental Stones. Geological Society Spec. Publ. London. 2014.

1	Marble pink*, €-S
2	Blyberg porphyry, PR
2	Garberg granite, PR
2	Åsby diabas (dolerite), PR
3	Larvikite, P
4	Marbles green and other*, PR
5	Soap stone, PR
6, 7, 9, 11	Marble, PR
8	Black schist, PR
10, 19	Granite grey, PR
13	Quartzite, PR
14	Granite grey, PR
12, 15-18, 19	Granite pink, AR-PR
20	Almandine gneiss, PR
21	Platy limestone, O
22	Tufa, Q
23, 27	Limestone, Marbled limestone*, O
25	Limestone, C
26, 28	Marble, Marble black*, C, and others
29-31	Colored sandstones, T - K
32	Marble, J
-	Marbles from France, Italy, Norway, Poland, Spain, Germany*

* Only in interiors

No3

This project is co-funded by the European Union, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Finland

