

Granite

Magmatic rock

Granite is a rock created when **magma** cools at a certain depth inside the Earth's crust.

Within Aosta Valley, this type of rock is mainly found in the **Mont Blanc massif**. Its appearance is different to most of the rocks found in the region. In fact, these normally show so-called foliations, thin parallel "stratifications" caused by the rock's metamorphic origin.

Granite, on the other hand, has a **compact and solid surface** and doesn't break along preferential layers. Its hardness is due to its composition, made up of particularly hard minerals such as quartz and feldspar. Its **excellent mechanical properties** make it widely used as an ornamental stone, after cutting and polishing (not the case for Aosta Valley Granite), and is excellent for climbing, offering solid foot and handholds and providing an excellent base for fixing spits and other safety systems for climbers.

Lastly, Mont Blanc granite **contains small quantities of radioactive minerals**, in concentrations that are not harmful to man, but which have caused changes on an atomic level in the crystalline forms of the quartz found in the massif, causing a brown colouring known as Smoky or Fumé.



(Photo MRSN)