



# ROCCALIA

## NATURAL STONE EXHIBITION

PRESS RELEASE  
JUNE 2021

## NATURAL STONE TRADES. JOBS WITH PROSPECTS

**Perpetuating ancestral traditions, natural stone is also a sector which is modernizing and is now in tune with current trends like sustainable development and the circular economy.**

**A long-lasting material, natural stone offers jobs with prospects. The sector is recruiting and needs young people trained not only in heritage restoration but also in more industrial and technical trades.**



### THREE QUESTIONS TO JEAN-LOUIS VAXELAIRE

President of SNROC

What challenges face the Natural stone sector in 2021 as regards recruitment and the years to come?

The first challenge we have to meet concerns the attractiveness of our trades. We have to get the message over that our trades are not just about "hammers and chisels", that they are really about thought, imagination and digital technologies.

We have to clean up their image and show young people and their parents that working with your hands is something to be proud of.

We need to promote public esteem for our trades with diplomas that are more likely to enhance the image their parents have of our sector and show them that we are a sector with a future.

The second paramount challenge is the development of apprenticeships as a way of attracting young people and passing on the natural stone "virus". We have to show them what our companies do through apprenticeships designed to pass on our own passion.

Are youngsters attracted by the natural stone sector today?

I believe that the existing diplomas in our sector are not attractive in the long term.

In the stone transformation trades, young people too often stop studying when they leave high school. They go to trade schools and take additional "capability" diplomas but these specializations are limited in their scope and do not qualify them to progress in their careers.

To make our sector attractive, recognition of these courses is essential.

We need to recruit young people with higher levels of education to meet the challenges of passing on our trade skills. This requires additional skills in data processing, digital technologies and management... We have to train students to pass on our knowledge – and our companies!



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## Do the existing training possibilities meet the needs of natural stone professionals?

They are moving in the right direction. French State education has introduced an additional course in digital technologies – on the right track to attract young people. We must focus on 4.0 model companies. Tomorrow's

world will be digital. Training must direct young people towards these trades and we need to move even more quickly in this direction.

All the machines sold in the next few years will be computer controlled. We have to convince youngsters that learning programming is quite within their abilities.



## A GREAT DIVERSITY OF TRADES ALL CHANGING FAST

There are over 2,500 companies working with natural stone in France, in sectors ranging from quarrying to machining in workshops.

Stonecutters, masons and "wallers", specialists in heritage restoration, engravers, sculptors... Ancestral know-how now modernized and which today is mainly digital (BIM, 3D).



### INDUSTRIAL TRADES

Working with natural stone starts with quarrying from natural stone quarries and many businesses working together (quarriers, heavy plant drivers, mechanics, automated installation operators, maintenance or laboratory technicians, logistics specialists or bosses of quarries specialized in decorative rocks) create a thoroughly modernized industrial universe using impressive machines and automated control systems designed to be environmentally-friendly.

There are a host of opportunities with specific training courses for every trade...

### ARTISTIC TRADES

The natural stone sector perpetuates ancient know-how and applies it to the restoration of our heritage and beautifying public spaces. The trades are as varied as the practices. A partial list includes:



STONECUTTING

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SCULPTING

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### STONECUTTING

The job involves cutting and shaping blocks of stone for construction works, decorations, the restoration of monuments, staircases, chimneys and tombs. It can also involve building in stone (walls, vaults...).

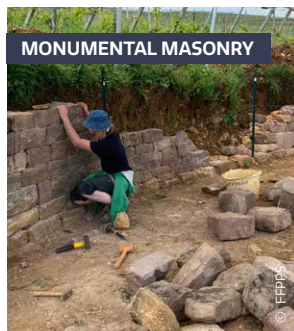
### SCULPTING

This job brings stone to life by concentrating on decoration and embellishment. It uses both ancestral tools and digital machines. Sculptors make sketches and models either to design new sculptures or copy or restore old ornamental works.



ENGRAVING

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MONUMENTAL MASONRY

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### ENGRAVING

This job involves creating and executing decorative designs or inscriptions. Engravers draw and read plans, choose and select their tools (chisels, round gravers, etc), as well as the materials. Engravers carry out every phase of the work through to finishing.

### MONUMENTAL MASONRY

This job involves sawing, shaping and polishing blocks or sheets of stone. Following a plan, monumental masons use set squares, rulers and compasses to trace the shape required on the stone. They cut, assemble and polish the stone using machines or hand tools in workshops. Then they go to the works site to install their creations.



**WALLING**



**WALLING**

This job uses the traditional dry stone technique, i.e. the assembly of usually uncut, unshaped rough stone without the use of binder or mortar (cement, soil, lime). Wallers build walls, terraces, paths and small constructions.

**TRADES USING DIGITAL TOOLS**

The introduction of digital technologies (CAD) from the outset of project design makes it possible to execute complex forms in stone today, even in long series, enhancing productivity and improving working conditions. Their introduction allows the manufacturing of stone elements from digital programs.

Skills in 3D and BIM (Building Information Modeling) are also increasingly required to enable sophisticated project designs and improve communications between designers and customers.

**YOU CAN FIND TRAINING COURSES IN EACH TRADE AT ROCALIA**

CFA at Unicem, the Compagnons du Devoir institute of advanced studies, research and training in the stone trades, vocational training programs in French State schools, Greta, AFPA... France proposes a wide range of training courses in working with natural stone, from the CAP (Professional Aptitude Certificate) to the BTS (Technical Certificate) and the DUT (Technical University Diploma). 81 training programs in stone trades and restoration were available at the end of 2019.

Either introductory or sandwich courses, they cover every aspect of every stone trade and in particular stone cutting, essential for the restoration and maintenance of our national heritage. From training in manual techniques to the use of digital machines, courses meet present and future corporate needs and the sector is recruiting!



■ From November 30th to December 2nd, **Trades and skills space** with the double objective of making young people aware of career possibilities in these trades and highlighting the attractiveness of this sector.

■ **The guide to vocational training opportunities in stone trades** (only available in French) published by Rocalia's main partners will be updated for the 2021 Show.

You can consult the 2019 edition on [www.salon-rocalia.com / News](http://www.salon-rocalia.com / News)

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