ARTESANO

Installation Instructions

Handcrafted Clay wall tile

IMPORTANT PRODUCT INFORMATION: READ BEFORE USING THE PRODUCT. All materials are artisan, handmade, salvaged and reclaimed, therefore present different characteristics than industrially produced products. All sizes and shapes are approximate and nominal. No two pieces are alike in measure or equal in size, color range, or appearance. Blending from different boxes is recommended.

1. Receipt, Inspection and Claims

- **Inspection:** Inspect all material immediately after receipt.
- **Claims:** Any claim must be reported before the product is used. Use of the product constitutes acceptance, and no further claims will be accepted.
- **Returns:** The manufacturer will not accept claims or returns for products that have been used, or that are outside their original, well-protected box.

2. Application Limits

Requirement	Detail
Orientation	**Vertical wall application only. Not suitable for flooring.**
Immersion	Do not install where the tile will be fully immersed in water.
Exposure	Not for wet outdoor use or for water-exposed areas subject to freezing temperatures.

3. Installation Steps

Step 1 — Substrate Preparation

- **Surface:** Install only over clean, flat and structurally sound walls (for example, cement backer board, or greenboard in dry areas).
- **Waterproofing:** For wet walls — backsplashes and accent walls near water — apply a high-quality liquid waterproofing membrane before setting the tile.

Step 2 — Dry Laying & Blending (Critical Step)

- **Mix boxes:** Open multiple boxes of tile at the same time.
- **Layout:** Arrange the tiles on the floor to inspect the distribution of glaze shades and distressed elements.
- **Balance:** Blend high-imperfection tiles evenly across the layout rather than grouping them in one spot.

Step 3 — Mortar Selection & Setting

- **Mortar type:** Use a premium, polymer-modified Large and Heavy Tile (LHT) mortar. White mortar is recommended to avoid shadow bleed-through.
- **Application:** Apply mortar to the wall with a trowel size appropriate to the tile dimensions.
- **Back-buttering:** Fully back-butter each tile with a thin layer of mortar to fill the natural cavities of the hand-cast terra-cotta biscuit. This ensures 100% coverage and structural adhesion.
- **Beating-in:** Gently press the tiles into the mortar bed to achieve a flat exterior plane, adjusting for minor variations in tile thickness.

Step 4 — Grout Space & Grouting

- **Joint width:** Use a minimum grout joint of 1/8" to 1/4" to accommodate the natural size variations (warpage and wedging) of handcrafted terra-cotta. Do not butt-joint.
- **Grout type:** Use a high-performance polymer-modified unsanded grout to protect delicate glazes from scratching, or a fine-aggregate sanded grout where joints exceed 1/8".
- **Installation:** The tile is factory pre-sealed, so grout release is generally unnecessary. Test a sample piece first if using a dark contrast grout. Clean grout residue promptly with a damp, clean sponge.

Step 5 — Post-Grout Sealing (critical step for wet areas)

- **Cure:** Allow the grout to cure completely, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- **Sealing:** Apply a high-quality, water based, breathable penetrating sealer over the entire wall. This seals the new grout lines and protects any exposed raw clay (biscuit) inherent to the distressed finish.

4. Re-Sealing and Maintenance

Re-sealing is required over the life of the installation. Always follow the sealer manufacturer's own recommendations for timing and product.

5. Cleaning

Use	Avoid
pH-neutral cleaners and a soft cloth.	Harsh acids, bleach, and abrasive scrubbing pads — these can scratch the glaze or strip the factory pre-seal.