



## **Rapakivi Granite: An architectural emblem of St Petersburg and its utilisation in other world cities**

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The wide-ranging utilisation of Rapakivi Granite in St Petersburg is typified by the the famous Alexander Column, and 114 stone columns of St Isaac's Cathedral as well as the pedestal of the Nicholas I monument, and portals and basements of buildings of the Admiralty, General Staff, Senate and Synod. The stone is also frequently seen among pavement slabs and in parapets of embankments and bridges around the city. This list of examples where Rapakivi Granite has been used could be expanded further. All Rapakivi Granites used in the buildings of St. Petersburg were quarried from the so-called Vyborg massif. At present it has been found that the massif occupies an area of about 18 000 km<sup>2</sup>. In the past granite of the Vyborg massif was worked from several quarries in the vicinity of Fredrikshamn (Hamina) in Finland for use in St Peterburg. The best known granite quarries are at Piterlaks (Piuterlahti) and Gimmekyul (Hämeenkylä).

Sometimes Rapakivi Granite from Finland differs in appearance from typical varieties. Thus columns of a classical portal in the house at N 7 in Pochtamtskaya Street are hewn from this greyish variety. Other examples are the plinth of the General Staff and Trade Store buildings.

After the 1960s varieties from the Leningrad district, and Korosten (Ukraine) massifs were used in St Petersburg.

Today it is possible to find examples of Rapakivi Granite from Finland in cities in the USA, South Africa, United Kingdom and Germany. It is a long used stone as demonstrated by its cultural heritage. It is also used as an ornamental or decorative stone in modern architecture.

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