



DECADES OF COLOR
Merlex Stucco
KEEPING IT PREMIUM SINCE 1963



The Latest Stucco Trends: Cool, Smooth, Acrylic

Merlex has proven to be at the forefront of stucco trends, but how do they do it? They look at which of their products are flying off the shelves, and consult with independent color designers and professionals in the field.

What's Trending In 2015?

Designers are choosing cool colors, especially contemporary shades of browns and grays (see [color chart](#) and LRV's). While peach and coral hues were the 'hot' color of years passed, Thunder Sky is the top-selling color of 2015.



[P-2090](#)
[Thunder Sky \(B Base\)](#)



[P-192](#)
[Caramelo \(B Base\)](#)

"Color trends typically go hand-in-hand between the building and fashion industry," said Melissa Higgins, Director of Marketing at Merlex. "In the fall, we analyze upcoming spring fashion, which is how we figured Thunder Sky and Caramelo stucco colors would be a hit."

Smoothing Things Over

Merlex also observes texture trends, giving their customers the option to go with the coolest new look, or to stick with the classics.



*The Tides in Crystal Cove
Santa Barbara smooth finish*



*S. Region Elementary School
Super Fine acrylic texture*

People used to prefer rough finishes, perhaps because that was the popular building aesthetic, in addition to thinking smoother finishes were more susceptible to cracking. Now Merlex is seeing a surge of projects where the smoother and flatter the surface, the happier the customers. This new-found love for smooth stucco is partly due to products like [BASEX](#), which reduces the risk of cracking by 90%.

'Going smooth' coincides with the growing demand for [acrylic finishes](#), a naturally crack-resistant, water-shedding material. Acrylic is the perfect choice for customers that want darker, more uniform colors than traditional cement stucco.

Who's doing what?

Upscale residential customers are trending toward smooth finishes in contemporary grays and whites. Tract housing developers are sticking with neutral colors and sand finishes. Acrylic is gaining popularity among all building types, but commercial buildings are turning out to be the biggest market.

Whichever type of project you are working on, [specify Merlex](#) to make an impression that lasts.



*Andalusia Coral Mountain
in La Quinta - 20/30 Finish*

Merlex Stucco Selected for Massive San Clemente Project

Hopes of building something grand along the Marblehead Coastal plateau date back to the 1970s. Craig Realty Group is finally making it happen with Outlets at San Clemente, and they're using Merlex materials to do it.

The shopping plaza will be 580,000 square-feet with an early-California style stucco exterior and oceanfront shops and restaurants. The owner has made clear that the view *of* the building is as important as the view *from* the building. He's decided on a California 'hump & bump' finish that is as crack-resistant as possible.



Under construction - 580,000 sq. ft. Outlets at San Clemente

Inside The Merlex Base and Mesh System

The plaza's owner is described as "a man who knows plaster." He knows that crack-resistance requires all layers of the plaster assembly to be high quality and executed to perfection.

For the shopping plaza, they're using a four-coat process that begins with Sanded [Insulex](#) for the scratch coat and brown coat. Insulex is durable and substantially cuts curing time without violating California's code, which is important for retail projects because the goal is getting businesses open and generating revenue as soon as possible. By ordering the Insulex preblended with sand in the Merlex factory, the San Clemente Outlets will get the strongest, most uniform base coat possible, without big sand piles on the job.

The third coat consists of [BASEX](#) with embedded mesh, which is specially designed to reduce cracking. That is then topped with Santa Barbara smooth finish modified with [Acrylex](#) to ensure proper bonding. And voila, you have the system that's producing the exterior of Plaza San Clemente, with architecture expecting to rival retail spaces in Beverly Hills and Santa Barbara.

Supply, Demand, and Customer Service

Brady SoCal, the project's sub-contractor, has been thrilled with the product and service provided by Merlex.

"What separates Merlex from other manufacturers isn't just the quality and workability of their products, it's their dedication to the project. Vince from Merlex is at our job site every week answering questions and ensuring materials are mixed and applied perfectly. It's refreshing to work with people that care so much."

Chuck Cannon
Lath & Plaster Superintendent
Brady SoCal.



Visit Merlex at PCBC Booth #130

PCBC is a gathering of residential builders, developers, architects, and manufacturers in San Diego on June 24 & 25.

Come stop by the Merlex booth to see new products and large samples that showcase just how good stucco can look and perform.



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