Rancho Mirage
Turns to Natina for Re-Re-Beautification Project

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Owner/Client:
City of Rancho Mirage

Simulated desert varnish manufacturer & applicator:
Natina Products, LLC

Desert Varnish Blends Cut Hillside Seamlessly into Natural Surroundings

Rancho Mirage has been a desert Mecca for decades. This scenic oasis sits at the heart of the Palm Springs Valley where residents and visitors alike admire the city’s breathtaking natural beauty. Taking the lead from the desert’s rugged terrain and sun-baked hillsides, Rancho Mirage prides itself in blending construction with Mother Nature’s own inherent qualities. With roots as a residential community, Rancho Mirage’s land development has grown tremendously over recent decades, including commercial business, residential construction, renowned country clubs and world-class destination resorts. City planners however, have remained committed to controlled growth without losing the environmental beauty and quality of life that originally attracted residents to the area even in its earliest days.

Back in 1997 sections of Hwy 111 were widened to accommodate the city’s population growth and expansion. In the process, an existing hillside at the intersection of Frank Sinatra and Hwy 111 was cut back approximately 17 feet exposing the interior of the slope which looked like gray granite. In a town like Rancho Mirage this simply was not acceptable. Knowing something had to be done to “re-naturalize” the surface, Bruce B. Harry, Jr., Rancho Mirage’s Director of Public Works, took the issue to task searching for a solution that would blend the cut surface with its surroundings.

At the time, Harry investigated the only two products available that were designed to provide the desert varnish look needed to tone down the glare and reduce the unnatural contrast created by the hillside excavation. Seeing both product applications in action and viewing the results, Harry enlisted Permeon and its process to blend the newly exposed surface with the surrounding environment. After selecting the
appropriate color concentration, the procedure went off without a hitch and within a couple of weeks the stripped slope closely resembled the desert varnish of the undisturbed areas around it. Harry was pleased with the results.

However, over the years the surface lightened up to the point of revealing much of the stark gray color from the original excavation. With re-naturalization projects becoming more common and in demand within desert communities, Ryan Morey of Natina Products met with Harry to demonstrate his relatively new desert varnish solution, offering it up for use to the City of Rancho Mirage. Already serving a growing list of municipal, landscape and architectural clients covering the Coachella Valley and into Nevada, Arizona and beyond, Morey knew that Harry – well-versed in desert varnish solutions, the application process and the ensuing results – could benefit from Natina’s newer technology and durable formula. Typically less expensive and more environmentally-friendly than competitive products, Natina’s results are expected to last decades due to the physical makeup of the formula and the way it reacts with the mineral composition of target surfaces.

“When I learned that the hillside was originally treated with Permeon, I wasn’t surprised that it was already showing signs of wear.”

It was clear to Morey that Natina was the perfect solution to provide Rancho Mirage what was needed to blend this hillside with its natural surroundings for years to come.

“Ryan showed us treated samples and photos of projects they’d done. He was knowledgeable, had an impressive product and gave us a good price so we decided to give Natina a shot,” stated Harry. “It was a very pleasant experience – they were able to show us exactly what we were going get and the surface turned out just as we’d anticipated.”

Once the hillside was treated with Natina, it took about two weeks to reach the desired color intensity. Harry was pleased with the process, results and follow-up he’s received from the company. “We have another hillside treated about eight to 10 years ago; it’s still holding up pretty well,” he added. “When it starts to fade we’ll certainly give the folks at Natina a call.”

Upscale desert communities like Rancho Mirage have an image to maintain, and preserving the natural beauty of the surrounding landscape is definitely a priority for local businesses and residents. Advanced desert varnish solutions such as Natina – that offer next-generation technology, better blending capabilities, and longer lasting results – are poised to help these efforts considerably.