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rriving at Michael Jamieson's home and stoneworks in the quaint town of Sloatsburg NY, I noticed a large Buddha bust on the lawn where Michael was just finishing clearing away the spring snow. After introducing myself, he told me that he had just finished carving it for a customer's garden. Like the trained sculptor that he is, he then brushes the snow off his driveway wall to reveal another Buddha, a polished head with a mossy green sheen. He explains that it's made mostly of a local granite-gneiss stone, which is common in Rockland County, but embedded with a colorful twist. "See that pistachio green vein? That's the epidote," Michael says of the green-tinted crystal that mimics jade. He says the epidote is probably the hardest stone he's worked with, and it destroyed many of his diamond-tipped tools.

For architectural projects, Michael uses numerous stones. "Mostly I use local granite stone. After all we do live in *Rock land County!*" he says with a laugh. "Rockland is home to a lot of sandstone, quartzite and basalt. For fireplaces I like to mix all of the above, and also use glacial fieldstone. I just completed an outdoor kitchen with a pizza oven/fireplace. The countertop was local polished granite 2-3 inches thick. This stone was 1.2 billion years old — it rolled into Rockland in one of the glaciers. Knowing the stone's history makes it more exciting to work with."

For a specific stone he'll first go to the local quarries, but he'll continue the search if it's not there. He reminisces about driving all the way to Quebec to grab a few slabs of granite that originated from the Laurentian Mountains.

In some works he incorporates sculptural carvings such as a limestone vine running through a fireplace or a retaining wall with leaves and flower petals cascading throughout. Many jobs involve creating a

Clockwise from top left: Stonework is a blend of local granite in Tuxedo Park. Handcut fieldstone for this gazebo in Ridgewood, NJ. 1860 residence in Piermont with local stone.

