

## MANUFACTURING FROM A TO Z

Numerous auxiliary services and workshops ensure the smooth running

### Preparation of raw materials

The clay soils are brought from the banks of the Rhine in wet clods which are placed in the courtyards in a sort of rack with louvers where air currents pass through to promote drying. The dry lumps are transported to the first workshop where the preparation work begins: a crusher breaks up the lumps and sends the fragments upstairs, which then fall into a crushing machine where they meet sea pebbles. The whole thing is ground with a certain amount of water, transformed into a slurry, and passed through a mixer. The slurry is forced through a sort of cloth filter, from which it emerges as a dry paste in the form of a cake.

These cakes are sent to the grinder, where the crumbles are reduced and the coloring is done.

The colored earth comes out as a paste.

These go through a crusher and then the grinding wheel, which reduces the chips to a very fine powder. The work of preparing the raw material is completed. The powders are sent to the pressure rooms.

Soil is extracted from open pits and transported back to the preparation.

The preparation . It is crushed, cleaned, mixed, dried and delivered in powder from the press room.

### The manufacture of tiles

It's in the press room that the ceramic tile with its multicolored design is made. In a steel form a grid is placed as the main design. On top of this , another grid is placed , the openings of which correspond to the openings of the first grid, which must receive a certain color.

Colored clay powder is sifted over the grid , then the second grid is changed and so on for each color. Once the design has been made and the grids removed, the mould which has been filled with natural clay , is sent to the hydraulic press, where the tile is first subjected to low pressure to expel the air, then to high pressure to ensure its final homogeneity.

## FIRING THE TILES

After checking, the tiles are placed with sand in refractory tubs made in the factory and sent the kiln where they are fired for about eight days. The 7th day, the temperature reaches the desired level of 1290 to 1310 , what in technical terms is called the Seger n°9 fugible watch. There are five kilns that can hold 50.000 standard size tiles and a sixth that can hold twice as many. The manufacturing process is complete. All that remains are the preliminary operations for shipping.

The tiles which are very fragile in their raw state, are transported and stacked with great care in the kilns.

The ovens: 1350°! The delicate operation of cooking requires the sustained attention, hard work of the drivers and the watchful eye of the supervisor.

At the sorting stage , a specialized workforce classifies the tiles by choice and color.

A final check is carried out before the tiles are put into storage.

Shipment by rail or road.