

hot 2010 flooring trends

BY INEZ BRAZ

Flooring trends for the residential market in 2010 will continue to be focused on sustainability and health. Styling will be Art Deco and Mid-Century Modern inspired. Art deco influences will be seen in the use of glossy and opulent materials (a kitchen floor with tiles made to look like huge slabs of iridescent marble). Mid-century modern influences will be seen in the use of strong texture (a living room oak floor in a herringbone pattern, topped with a wirey round shag rug).

Whether your clients are undertaking a new project or simply looking to update their home's design, below are some insights into different flooring material choices and what will be popular in 2010.

bamboo

Strand woven bamboo, such as "Bamboo Fusion" by Dansk, will be a strong trend for 2010. In its natural form, bamboo is harder than oak; but when split, shredded and fused under a cold press, it becomes harder still. Strand woven bamboo will be increasingly popular because of its sustainability, smooth, glossy surface, and durability. Also, it works extremely well in minimalist and Asian-inspired interiors. Colour trends for this flooring will be coffee, tiger and gunstock.

carpet

Triexta is the hottest trend in carpet fibres. It is durable enough for a staircase, yet soft enough for a bedroom. Triexta has engineered-in stain resistance that will never wear off or wash off. Stubborn stains such as wine, coffee and mustard can be easily removed with water and a mild detergent. A portion of triexta's petroleum-based material has been replaced with a more enviro-friendly corn-based polymer. Its production requires 30 per cent less energy than an equal amount of nylon, and greenhouse gas emissions are 63 per cent less with the production of triexta than with nylon. Triexta is marketed under the brand name "SmartStrand with Dupont Sorona", and is made by Mohawk Industries. Styling trends will continue to be in the cut-and-loop patterns and highly textured friezes. Broadloom carpet will remain mostly in the neutral tones, but with a greying of the palette.

ceramic and porcelain

Large format rectified floor tiles, in such sizes as 18" x 36" and 24" x 24" will become increasingly popular, often with small mosaic accents in contrasting textures and colours. Tiles that simulate hardwood, natural stone, textiles, leather and concrete, will continue to be in demand, as will high gloss tiles that resemble polished travertine and marble. Textured tiles with metallic finishes in charcoal and copper will also be strong. The trend will lean more towards urbane, smooth, polished and square-edged styling, rather than old world, rough, tumbled and rustic.

cork

Cork tiles that are glued down and finished on site will gain in popularity. They offer greater water resistance and more creative design possibilities than floating cork planks. Cork tiles come in a wide range of sizes and patterns, which can be intermixed and custom coloured. Eraco's Solida Cork, for example, offers more than 100 custom colours to choose from. Colour trends will be mainly in such neutrals as tobacco, antiquity, nebula and opalescent, or for a metallic punch there's copper, molten bronze and excalibur. Cork will continue to grow in popularity because of its strong environmental story,



and because it is a warm and resilient alternative for kitchens and bathrooms. Cork also provides a cohesive transition when adjoined to hardwood floors.

hardwood

With hardwood, the recent trend toward the very dark 'espresso' and 'ebony' tones will change in 2010. Hardwood stains will be more mid-toned, leaning towards caramels and greys. The red-based exotics will be less popular and yellow based oak and hickory will become more so. Texture will be big, with wire brushed, handscraped and distressed looks continuing to be in demand. Herringbone and parquet patterns will make a come-back, used mainly with heavily grained woods such as oak and ash.

linoleum

Natural linoleum will continue to be popular because of its sustainability, durability and beautiful range of colours. The fact that linoleum now comes with a protective no-wax topcoat, is making it even more appealing to the average homeowner. Aside from sheet goods, Forbo has a line of linoleum tiles available in 30 colours, in 13" x 13" and 20" x 20" sizes. The most sought after colours will be those that simulate buttery leathers and worn concrete, with accents in cerise, aqua, saffron or black.

sheet vinyl

Vinyl sheet flooring will continue to gain in popularity because of technological advancements in imagery and improvements in durability. Vinyl sheet flooring offers warmth and bounce-back. Cushioned vinyls, particularly those which can be loose-laid, such as Armstrong's "Stratamax" and Tarkett's "Fiberfloor" are gaining in popularity, and are extremely gouge and tear resistant. Often, they are strong enough to be used in commercial applications. Digitally enhanced imagery has rendered some of the patterns strikingly similar to those of real stone, ceramic tile, hardwood, concrete and cork. □

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