

Take the floor

STEP UP TO THE LATEST HANDCRAFTED TILES, SUBTLE TIMBER FINISHES AND LUXURIOUS CARPETS.

WORDS CATHERINE McCORMACK
PHOTOGRAPHY CRAIG WALL
STYLING GERALDINE MUÑOZ

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT 1 'MOD 602' hexagonal encaustic cement tile, \$220 a square metre, from Di Lorenzo Tiles. 2 Timber & Deck Stain in Swan River Jarrah, \$66.23 a litre, from Dulux. 3 'Reflect' oak floorboards, POA, from Woodstock Resources. 4 'Galet' wool carpet in Pumice and 5 in Cinder, \$120 a square metre, both from Cavalier Bremworth. 6 'Livyn' vinyl tile, \$27 a square metre, from Quick-Step. 7 The Society Inc. 'Tales of a Sea Gypsy' paint colours from Murobond. 8 'Dash Dot', 'Dots' and 'Loco Spot' cotton canvas fabrics in Indigo, POA, all from Walter-G. 9 Clip, \$15, from The Society Inc. 10 Genero 'Looselay' vinyl in Burnt Ash Oak, \$65 a square metre, and 11 GNS Ceramics hexagonal mosaic porcelain tiles, \$400 a square metre, both from Choices Flooring. 12 Perfect Floor Paint in Chintz Grey, \$44.90 a litre, from Porter's Paints. 13 Encaustic cement tile in Teal, \$93 a square metre, and 14 Spanish handmade tile in Sage, \$250 a square metre, both from Aeria Country Floors. 15 'Platinum Lattice' wool and sisal carpet, \$175 a square metre, from The Natural Floor Covering Centres. 16 'Merchant' nails, \$30 a pack of six, from The Society Inc. Background, Private 0204 hand-dyed hemp rug, \$2100, from Ondene. All other props, stylist's own. For stockist details, see page 141.



Good design starts from the ground up and never is this more true than in our choice of home flooring. A key decorating decision, flooring sets the mood in a space and helps determine the sense of flow from room to room. Flooring also has the ability to “connect and expand spaces, not just between rooms but from the inside to the outside,” says Matt Rawlins of Figureground Architecture in Melbourne. “It’s one of the most important layers to an interior design, particularly as it gives you the opportunity to introduce a natural material, such as timber or stone.”

In a nod to modern Scandinavian style, whitewashed and white-painted timber is currently making an impact, as are wide, reclaimed or rustic-look boards in shades of silver and grey. And if you still love the look of dark-stained timber floors, try oak. “It takes a stain beautifully, and it’s durable, cost-effective and reliable,” says Kendall Waller from Quick-Step’s Premium Floors.

If your budget doesn’t extend to natural timber, consider engineered boards, which can be installed in one day (and walked on the next). Vinyl and cork are other good lower-cost options, with the latest products boasting a realistic timber look. ReadyCork ‘Vita’ (see 12) “is a long cork board with a high-definition digital print of stained oak,” Kendall says.

In line with our love for open-plan living, concrete and large-format floor tiles are growing in popularity. “Polished concrete lends itself to a more modern, contemporary feel,” says Sydney-based interior stylist Carmen Parker. “It also looks fantastic, it’s warmer than people think and you can soften the look with rugs.”

In smaller utility rooms, such as bathrooms and laundries, the trend is for colour and pattern. “We’re seeing feature tiles with pops of colour, such as tangerine, lime, lemon and watery blues,” says Carmen, who

suggests running floor tiles up the walls to create a feature. To prevent the look from dating, choose encaustic cement tiles in traditional Spanish and Moroccan patterns, and stick to one feature colour — or consider marble, stone or terracotta products, such as Terre Ossidate from Di Lorenzo tiles, which uses natural oxides to produce subtle, ocean-inspired tones.

Natural products also offer the benefit of working inside and out. “We love stone because it can flow from an internal living space into a courtyard and really draw the landscape into the house,” Matt says.

Colour shy? “Patterned timber or tiled flooring is an interesting way to add texture and connect spaces,” suggests Matt. Larger-scale mosaics in hexagonal, lantern and scale patterns are popular, as are smaller tiles that create geometric or three-dimensional shapes.

“Geometric patterned floors are another growing trend,” Carmen says. “And we’re seeing them come out of the bathroom and into spaces, such as kitchens, open-plan living areas, outdoor entertaining areas and hallways.”

In bedrooms, it’s hard to go past a beautifully textured, wool-rich carpet. Fabulous underfoot, wool also “acts as a natural humidity regulator, keeping your home warmer and drier in winter and much cooler in summer,” says Desiree Keown of Cavalier Bremworth.

For an on-trend finish, look to wool, synthetic or sisal weaves with chunky texture, stippled or two-toned effects, or random striations, all of which make the floor “much more visually interesting, and are also more forgiving in the event of spills and stains,” says Desiree. Darker shades of grey have a contemporary feel but, “just be aware that a darker carpet will make a room feel smaller and more cosy,” Desiree warns. “Always take a sample home and check it in various lights before making your selection.” *

For stockist information, see page 141.

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT 1 Gypsy peg, \$8, from The Society Inc. 2 Spanish handmade tile in Bush Basil, \$250 a square metre, from Aeria Country Floors. 3 ‘MOD 133’ encaustic cement tile, \$220 a square metre, from Di Lorenzo Tiles. 4 ‘Spanish Reclaimed Terracotta’ tile, \$275 a square metre, and 5 encaustic cement tile in Rock Red, \$93 a square metre, both from Aeria Country Floors. 6 Sierra handcrafted wool blend rug in Pumice, \$1410, from Armadillo & Co. 7 Wood Wash in Conifer, \$28.30 a litre, from Porter’s Paints. 8 ‘Quartz Lattice’ wool and sisal carpet, \$175 a square metre, and 9 ‘Glacier Grey’ sisal carpet, \$150 a square metre, both from The Natural Floor Covering Centres. 10 ‘Woodgrain’ nylon carpet in Ghost Gum, \$61 a square metre, from Cavalier Bremworth. 11 Recycled French oak parquet flooring, POA, from Woodstock Resources. 12 ReadyCork ‘Vita’ cork flooring in Oak Blanc, \$77 a square metre, from Premium Floors. 13 Cotto Etrusco ‘Terre Ossidate’ tile in Ottanio, \$455 a square metre, 14 ‘C-Acquamarina’ tile in Madre Perla, \$679 a square metre, 15 ‘Terre Ossidate’ tile in Ossido di Calcio, \$455 a square metre, and 16 plain enamel tile in Ossido Rame, \$430 a square metre, all from Di Lorenzo Tiles. Background, ‘Re-use’ concrete tile in Fango Sand, \$110 a square metre, from Di Lorenzo Tiles. All other props, stylist’s own. For stockist details, see page 141.