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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL HOTEL MANAGEMENT

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SPECIAL FEATURE

MAKING SPACE WORK FOR YOU

DESIGN

MORPHOGENESIS: BLENDING
TECHNOLOGY AND HERITAGE

ENTRE-DISRUPTOR

HOW KAPIL CHOPRA HAS CREATED A COMPANY THAT IS PROFITABLE AT THE ORIGIN,
WITH A VISION TO MAKE POSTCARD EMPLOYEES STAKEHOLDERS AND LAUNCH AN IPO



A top-down photograph of three small, round, light-colored concrete pots arranged in a triangle on a light-colored wood floor. Each pot contains a different variety of succulent. The top-left pot has a bright green succulent, the top-right has a blue-green succulent, and the bottom-center has a purple succulent. The wood floor has a geometric pattern of large, light-colored planks.

FLOORED BY CHOICES

Even as tiles, marbles and wood continue to be the classic materials used by architects for hotel flooring, there is lot of work being done behind the scenes, to evolve new designs, materials and innovations with a potential of revolutionising the segment. Bamboo flooring could be the next big trend.

BY NISHA SHUKLA

Décor plays an important role in creating a unique ambience and guest experiences, while being crucial in defining a hotel's success. One of the most fundamental aspects that contribute to the process of enhancing hospitality design is the flooring. One of our favourite international hotels in terms of design is the Artist Residency in London, a hotel that has paid special attention to its flooring. The designers have used varied and interesting sources such as reclaimed floorboards, encaustic tiles and herringbone parquet to create a varied flooring palette that delights.

Obviously, in the hospitality segment, design is increasingly focusing on flooring design as a way to enhance guest experience. While the industry of surfaces is inundated with numerous options such as tiles, ceramics and marbles, a decade ago they were favourite choices just for interior spaces. But they have now evolved as top contenders for exterior spaces too, thanks to various innovations in terms of design, material, texture, size, finishes and colours that have kept the segment interesting. Materials such as tiles, marble, ceramic and stone are no longer only decorative coverings; they also define the vividness and subtleness of a space with their design, colour and finish. Market leaders and design professionals share their view about various aspects of the industry.

The materials that are on-trend

Keeping up with market trends, the tiles, ceramics and marbles industry has come up with several latest products, which are not only technologically more advanced but also have an art element infused in them. There is a heightened demand for new-age floors, aesthetically appealing surfaces, natural stone tiles and engineered wood. Ponni Concessao, principal archi-



➔ Marble flooring adds a level of elegance to a space.

➔ Bamboo flooring is set to be the next big trend.

tect, Oscar & Ponni Architects says, “In India, wooden flooring, both engineered and laminated is the norm. High quality matte ceramic tiles have found significance in five star hotel projects. Italian marble is the norm for public spaces. A 3mm tiles also finds place in areas of private spaces and outdoor elevation areas.”

Commenting about the factors influencing selection of flooring, Reza Kabul of ARK Reza Kabul Architects states, “Today’s popular choices for hotel flooring depend upon factors such as budgets, maintenance, durability, etc. Vitrified flooring tiles, because of their large size and flexible bodies, are practical, aesthetically pleasing and stain resistant. They are very durable and often inexpensive ways to stimulate the appearance of more expensive marble floorings. In addition to the vast variety of colours, vitrified tiles often have different grades of polishes, different finishes which include matt, polishes, sugar-honed etc, which provide good aesthetics and help in safety too.”



➡ Patterned cement tiles such as Heritage™ tiles as well as micro cements have come into vogue.



➡ Ponni Concessao, principal architect, Oscar & Ponni Architects



➡ Reza Kabul of ARK Reza Kabul Architects

The other option adding a new dimension are natural stones such as Kotah and Cuduppah. “Also gaining popularity are hard-wood floorings and premium wood floorings. Patterned cement tiles such as Heritage™ tiles as well as micro cements have come into vogue. Besides, there is a trend of adding some special design element to each project with a strong emphasis on creating wall and floor art. However, this has been accomplished through innovative ways, including waterjet cut patterns, custom-made terrazzo with metal inserts, patterned tiles in cement as well as in ceramics and also natural stones cut in different shapes and joined together to form patterns,” states Firdaus Variava, vice-chairman, Bharat Floorings.

In order to cater to the growing demand for terrazzo flooring, recently Classic Marble Company introduced three new products—the Forum, Elba and Trevi in their KalingaStone Terrazzo collection. “These products bring back the retro look and are very high in demand. Several hotels are installing the terrazzo range in flooring, stairs and pillars. As a complementing edition to the terrazzo, we have also introduced the stone and luce collection which shares designs with terrazzo, but is a translucent marble. It allows light to pass through the marble and when installed in backlit applications, brings out the beauty of the embedded chips. The product is a popular counter top application such as bar counters in restaurants,” says Amit Shah, managing director, Classic Marble Company.



➡ Vitrified flooring tiles because of their large size and flexible bodies are practical, aesthetically pleasing and stain resistant.

Tech Talk

While tiles and marbles have evolved into art pieces with newer prints, finish and designs, technological innovations is also adding to their uniqueness. Launched as a revolution in flooring, CMC’s Process 360 is an innovative technology that puts every marble slab through rigorous treatment for achieving unmatched strength

and durability. "The technology is a nine-step process that not only imparts strength and durability to the marble, but also beautifies its appearance. By applying this process, we have ensured that the quality and life of the product increases thereby reducing the cost in post installation service and care, explains Amit Shah, managing director, Classic Marble Company.

To deal with issues of joints and installation in wood flooring, Square Foot has come up with an innovative technique called the Click Lock System. According to Abhishek Saraf, joint MD, Square Foot, "The system instantly allows two planks to be joined without any nailing on top, which makes the process very hassle free. It has reduced the labour cost and the time spent in installation. We have also introduced an aluminum oxide top finish that offers additional protection to the lacquer and provides strong barrier against heavy traffic in hotels. This finish has helped in making the maintenance and replacement period come down, thereby reducing the cost involved in same."

TEXTURE AND FINISHES

There are several options of textures and finishes available to go with various décor patterns and design. While the basic elements of flooring remain the same, a variety of finishes, thickness, durability, colours, textures and sizes have been trending. We possess the ability to customise designs, sizes and colours. It is a great pleasure to see materials like terrazzo, poured concrete, metal inserts and even resin that can be fashioned into flooring materials increase the scope for exploring these new age materials.

Sumesh Menon, principal architect, Sumesh Menon Associates.

Simple patterns have gained prominence, with people's focus shifting towards minimalism rather than grandeur. An emerging trend in flooring design is the use of seamless joints between flooring options, using innovative fillers or eliminating the use of one altogether.

Malcolm Daruwala, principal architect, Seedle by DC Group.

Wood floorings from Italy, chevron, herringbone, Quadro collection are trending because of variations in colours, textures and patterns they offer. In terms of finishes, hand-scraped for more natural lived-in kind of feel, mild brushed, medium brushed, smooth and glossy finishes are in vogue.

Abhishek Saraf, joint managing director, Square Foot.

On the marble front, polished, textured, leather finish, rough finish, honed finish marbles are a successful trend. Colours such as whites, classics and exotic hues of beige and off-white are trending. Porcelain tiles are popular for their artistic look and affordability. Polished and honed finished tiles are also in vogue. Nature-inspired and geometric patterns, earth-colour and textures, or marble tiles with a thickness matching international standards are also making their appearance in the commercial flooring industry.

Ramesh Bhandari, director, A-Class Marble India Pvt. Ltd.

Wood finishes range from satin, matt and super matt to rustic and distressed. Depending on the aesthetics, one can also choose from stained, non-stained or smoked options in flooring colours. While brushed surface textures offer an intense and visible textured finish, non-brushed textures have lighter grain pattern. The non-brushed texture and satin lacquer finish works best in heavy traffic areas as they are easy to clean and maintain.

Parul Mittal, director, Greenlam Industries.



➔ CMC's Stone and Luce on the wall creates an aesthetically appealing bathroom.



➔ Sumesh Menon, principal architect, Sumesh Menon Associates



➔ Malcolm Daruwala, principal architect, Seedle by DC Group

Taking the flooring solution to another level is Stone Reinforcement System (SRS) introduced by Stonex India. SRS technology brings in the highest international quality standard in marble processing and polishing, says Saurav Agrawal, MD, Stonex India.

"This technology is meant to retain the sheen and life of our products for a longer period of time."

Orient Bell Limited has experimented with cool tiles which reflect the sun's heat instead of absorbing it. "This helps keep the inside of the building cool. The tiles show best results when applied to building terraces, exterior walls exposed to sunlight, pavements and balconies as it has been designed to reflect more sunlight and absorb less heat than a normal surface," says Alok Agarwal, its chief marketing officer.

While technological advancement in flooring is not just making a difference to how much effort has to be put into maintenance and installation of tiles, marbles and wood, it is also significantly reducing the cost. While wood floors are quite in-trend, the more sustainable bamboo floors are gaining prominence. Being eco-friendly, durable and water-resistant, bamboo floors can be a viable flooring option for hotels to create a far more sustainable design. **IN**