

DECORATION

the ultimate in luxurious living ideas

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Maison Baccarat
The Russian addition
Mediterranean chic
An apartment at Le Reve

Carpe
diem
Penthouse Perfection

UAE - Dhs 15



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technical tips

Get floored

Blanchard hints behind flooring



Marie-Noëlle Swiderski, a design professional since 1993, set up the Blanchard Design House in Dubai in September 2006. Her aim "to comfort her soul with beauty".



The hard finishes in a space define that space's language. When it comes to flooring, there are almost as many options it seems as there are types of spaces available. But what are the main considerations we bear in mind at Blanchard when deciding on a type of flooring?

This month, I will concern myself with the function of the room, its dimensions and proportions as well as its

opening onto other spaces. This would entail the meeting of two materials and the ensuing necessity that these two materials be sympathetic. Should the room in question be more formal, or only occasionally used, it makes sense to treat its flooring with a befitting level of detail and refinement, with a certain level of polish, reflection, and the corresponding maintenance. If, on the other hand, the room focused on is more of a casual space, very much in

use by the household on a daily basis, with the wear and tear and versatility attached to the whole household calling on it for their respective purposes, the flooring will call for much easier maintenance, much more solidity and discretion at showing use, stains and even damage. In terms of colour palette, considering the hard finishes of a room are the most difficult to change, a predilection for neutrals, from the lightest through to the warmest, leaves

room for everything else in the space to make, or add to, the statement.

Wherever possible, we use natural materials from sustainable sources, in the projects we develop at Blanchard. As much for the beauty and character of the materials as for their intrinsic functional qualities. Stone will offer the variation of veins, fossils, layers. It will allow the flexibility of a polished, honed, tumbled finish, to name but a few options. This lends character to any room, formal or casual, large or small, bright or dark. It also has specific thermal properties, allowing the area it covers to retain its cool or store its heat. Gorgeous honed limestone, rough slate, will introduce a quiet statement of elegance, fitting for a slightly more contemporary space, or a more grounded, natural take on a classic interior. Beautiful polished marble, rich tumbled travertine will offset a sophisticated décor, lift it and lend it a glow, ushering it into glamour.

This is not to say that we refuse to use man-made materials. So many are not only suitable, but indeed very beautiful, functional and cost effective. As age-old techniques are refined and further developed, tiles are becoming incredibly versatile, offering a wide array of finishes, faux effects and amazing textures. There are 'wood', embossed animal skin, metallic, perforated, possibilities in porcelain tiles! And for those who have been privileging man-made tiles for lack of access to the previously exorbitant glass mosaic tiles, these now exist in sky-is-the-limit myriads of colours, shapes, finishes, sizes and at a rather acceptable cost. Residents of this region are discovering the beauty of a natural wood floor, again for its aesthetics, but also for its longevity and practicality.

Whatever the space it finishes may be, a flooring needs to feel right, to the eye of course but most of all to the feet, day in, day out. As with many things in design, there is no sense cutting corners in the choice of a floor finish, its supplier nor its installer. By definition, floors are set to last, live along their user and that should be the main consideration when choosing what covers them.

