

# Decorator's Notebook

## Stainless Steel: Strong To The Finish

(NAPSA)—A growing number of amateur and professional designers are proving their mettle by coming up with innovative uses for an elegant, durable metal.

Besides its technical and economic advantages, stainless steel allows for innovations. It can be used for facades, roofs, steps, elevators, handrails and other applications. In the home, set against wood, natural stone or textile, stainless steel creates interesting accents.

Today, stainless steel is not just available in gray. The material can be made to order in a variety of colors and finishes. For example:

- Coining creates a light, raised, one-sided pattern and strengthens the material through work hardening. This increases its impact resistance, reduces the depth of scratching and often makes it possible to use a thinner gauge. Coined finishes are used frequently on building exteriors to provide improved visual flatness. They are also popular in high-traffic areas because they minimize scratches.

- Embossing creates a deep, two-sided pattern. Because more metal is displaced than in coining, there is a higher level of work hardening and a greater increase in strength. Both of these finishes can be combined with color.

- Coloring is achieved through a variety of processes, some of which improve corrosion resistance. With electrochemical (pieces are immersed in a hot acid solution) and sputtered (thin ceramic coating is applied to the surface)



**With colorful finishes and patterns, stainless steel can be used in a variety of settings.**

coloring, a full spectrum of colors is available, including gold, purple, blue, red, black and green.

- Graphic and mechanical finishes enable elaborate patterns to be etched into the material.

Because of its versatility, stainless steel is used for everything from kitchen appliances to sports equipment, and in such settings as processing plants, wineries and medical facilities. Most of all, the material is cost-effective—durable, 100 percent recyclable and capable of being readily made from scrap.

To learn more about stainless steel, or to receive a free copy of the Designer Handbook: *Special Finishes for Stainless Steel*, write: Specialty Steel Industry of North America, 3050 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007; call: 800-982-0355; or visit the Web site at [www.ssina.com](http://www.ssina.com).