

FLOORS WITH A FLAIR

Tips From America's Foremost Flooring Experts

Putting Your Foot Down On Flooring Costs

(NAPSA)—If you're like many homeowners, you keep a close watch on household costs, especially if you're renovating. However, the number on the price tag may not be the last word. Many home improvements need to be not only installed, but maintained—adding hidden costs that can reach thousands of dollars. In addition, the life span of an improvement is another factor that must be considered when calculating true cost.

A recent study compared various floor-coverage options and ranked them on not just installation costs, but also on the costs of upkeep and durability. The report compares materials including:

- Quarry Tile
- Glazed Ceramic Floor Tile
- Glazed Porcelain
- Mosaic Tile
- Unglazed Porcelain
- Natural Hardwood
- Marble
- Laminate
- Terrazzo
- Concrete
- Carpet
- Vinyl Composition Tile.

All the types of ceramic tile, including quarry, mosaic and porcelain, were found to be the most durable and the least expensive in the long run. The expected life span of ceramic tile is 50 years. That means the ceramic tile floor you install today could still be going strong when you're ready to move out.

Ceramic tile in particular has aesthetic benefits as well. You can use it to create a look for your



Durable and easy to clean, ceramic tile offers an array of design options for a fireplace. Using a monochromatic palette, the ceramic tile floor and the tile around the fireplace (Dakota in Prairie Beige from Daltile) offer a clean and crisp transition for this family room.

home or yard, with the color and textures you choose. Ceramic tile is not just for bathrooms, kitchens or other wet areas—it gives you the freedom to create a beautiful living or work environment anywhere in your home.

In addition, if there are kids or toddlers around, ceramic tile is convenient. Not only is it easy to clean—you can wash it thoroughly with just soap and water; no complicated and bulky steamers required—it resists dust mites and bacteria, so you can be confident they'll be safe. It even resists the abuses kids tend to put floors through, scuff marks, spills and all.

It's also a safe material. In the event of a fire, ceramic tile won't burn and give off toxic fumes.

To learn about the Floor Covering Cost Comparison, go to www.tileusa.com.