

Remodeling Boom Throws Spotlight on Realistic Laminates

(NAPSA)—According to the National Association of Home Builders, a record \$238 billion will be spent on home remodeling in the U.S. this year—and more than \$8 billion on new flooring alone. “Money well spent,” say experts.

“Installing new floors is one of the best investments people can make to their homes,” says Fred Miller, managing director of the Home Improvement Research Institute, which recently conducted a study that revealed 25 percent of homeowners plan to replace floors as a way of increasing their home’s value. To maximize the return on their investments, more consumers look to laminates.

Laminate flooring is the fastest-growing segment of the flooring market. No surprise, considering its appealing combination of cost, performance and maintenance benefits.

Minimum Investment, Maximum Return

“Laminate flooring is a quick, easy and relatively inexpensive way to dramatically transform the look of a home—thereby increasing its perceived value,” explains Don Cybalski, design director for Pergo, the inventor and leading manufacturer of laminate flooring.

Compared with spending \$4 to \$6 and up for a square foot of solid wood, top-grade laminates typically run between \$2 and \$4 per square foot.

Faux or No?

Today’s laminates look—and feel—more like the real thing. Consumers routinely mistake laminates for higher-priced wood, ceramic or stone alternatives. Beyond the popular oak and maple varieties, laminates are available in rich wood looks like mahogany, walnut and cherry, as well as in classic tile designs including granite, marble and ivory that could fool even the most discerning eye.

“Among the hottest looks right



Today’s laminates are routinely mistaken for real wood and yet cost less per square foot.

now are exotic woods that draw their influences from Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands,” says Cybalski. “Laminates make it possible to enjoy the beauty of these rare and even endangered woods—such as jatoba, merbau and teak—without actually removing them from their natural environments, something that has become increasingly important to today’s environmentally-conscious consumers.”

For a truly traditional wood look, laminate flooring is now available in narrow widths with varying lengths that create a sense of realistic randomness. Offerings like Pergo’s Vintage Home Traditional Strip or Select Traditional Strip collections feature special texturing technology that replicates the feel of hardwood and simulates natural wood grains.

Peak Performance

Laminates offer durability and ease of maintenance far superior

to any other flooring option. They won’t wear through, stain or fade over time and never need waxing, polishing or refinishing.

“Solid wood can fade, dent and show scratches. It also requires sanding and refinishing to retain its appearance,” explains Cybalski. “Vinyl tends to yellow and tear and comes apart at the seams. Ceramic is hard on back and ankles, difficult to clean and is prone to cracks and chips.”

Quick and Easy Installation

Unlike many home renovations, installing laminate flooring is a relatively quick and painless process. Most floors can be installed over a weekend and put directly on top of existing flooring (except carpet), eliminating the need for lengthy surface preparation. Add it all up and laminate flooring is a smart investment that returns a lifetime of value, both monetary and aesthetic. For additional information, visit www.pergo.com.