

at home


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Lay it on!

Stunning or discreet, tile is one of the easiest and most versatile design elements in your home.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY NAT REA



Puget Sound sea glass tiles and Labrador Astral granite counters, from Weatherly Tile and Stone, grace the Reverons' kitchen.

From mudroom to bathroom, nothing tops tile.

And talk about a selection. Classic ceramic tiles come in all kinds of guises: beautifully glazed, crackled and imitation stone, to name a few. There are glass tiles, metal tiles, tiles made of pebbles, tiles that wear a titanium dioxide glaze to help reduce air pollution. Some are shaped like animals. Some are skinny, others round. Flowers, umbrellas, boats, bees, dots or dashes; dream up a theme and you'll find a tile that matches it. Their patterns, shapes and colors know no end. Buy tiles made by a Rhode Island artist, a factory or both. Unlike calories or cocktails there's no such thing as too many.

Kirie and Derek Reveron discovered the versatility of tile when they purchased their Jamestown home and set about renovating. They recruited designer Gaye Weatherly of Weatherly Tile and Stone in Portsmouth to help them get the look they wanted. Then Kirie, a jewelry designer, cleverly orchestrated several themes of her own with Home Depot tile. Using custom tiles in some areas and cost-effective finds in others, Kirie made sure her family's house was beautiful and on budget.



Check list

Most tile companies, dealers and designers maintain a list of **installers**. However, it's up to you to check references. Setting tile demands time and attention to details, but it's not *that* difficult if you're handy. Check out Home Depot's tile installation workshops and get some tips from the experts (800-79-DEPOT).

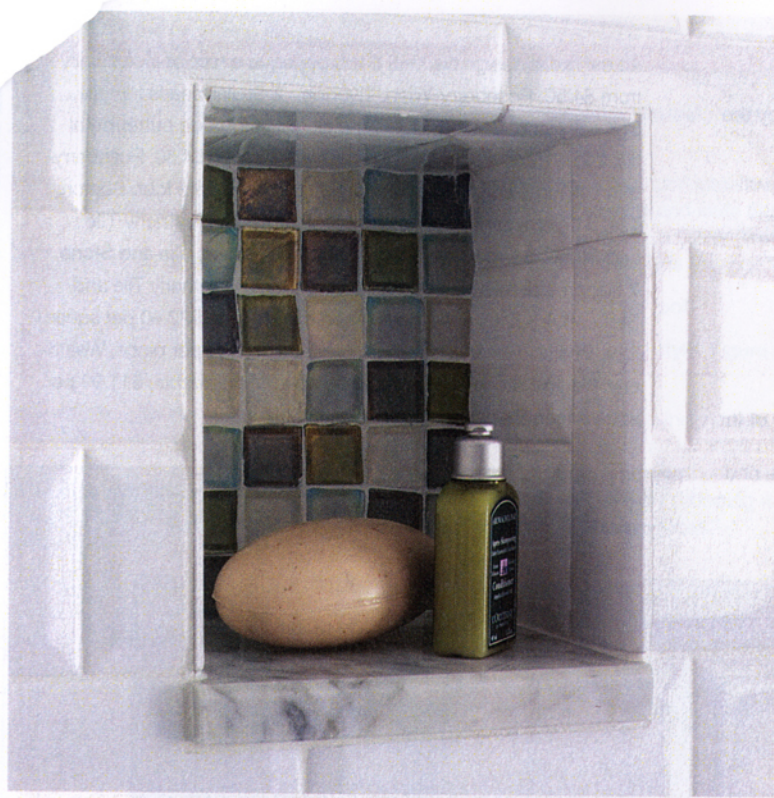
When making choices, keep in mind: Ceramic tiles, made from pressed clay, are stylish in kitchens or baths. Nonporous granite is super for floors and counters. Ditto marble. Marble, however, is more porous, which makes it worrisome on the kitchen counter. Limestone and travertine? Ideal for floors. And the upkeep? No soap on tile; it dulls. No ammonia based cleaners; they affect the grout color. No vinegar, no steel wool (too abrasive). Ask your tile dealer or tile maker to recommend a safe cleaner.

Try it yourself

Consider custom-finishing an already-fired tile at **Earthen Fire** in Providence (421-3473), the **Accidental Artist** in Newport (848-2501) or **Sunfire** at Sun-Up Gallery in Westerly (596-0800). Sizes and prices vary; figure around \$4 to \$5 for a four-by-four-inch tile. Sometimes, the more tiles you make, the lower the cost.

Learn how to **make tile**. Sign up for a course at the Newport Art Museum Art School (848-8200). A variety of classes are offered for all levels of students. If you have a specific project in mind, creating tile for your powder room for example, they can guide you along. Classes are held at the museum's Coleman Center, last about ten weeks and cost anywhere from \$75 to \$190.

Mosaics more your thing? The Learning Connection (800-432-5520; www.learnconnect.com) offers classes on how to make mosaics using tile and glass. "We make items from tabletops to bowls," explains instructor Laura Berry. Check with dealers (Bannon Tile in East Greenwich is a good bet) to see if they have any discontinued types to give away.



Handy men

Nationally recognized in museums, magazines and television, Rhode Island artisans Michael Roseberry and Bruce Winn are hard at work in their Fall River studio, cranking out a new handmade tile line in some eleven low-relief



patterns and fourteen luscious glazes. Given the slew of admirers already on board for their stunning pottery, which includes some very handsome dinnerware, we're guessing Roseberry-Winn tile will be a sell out. With complementary field, accent, edge, trim and cap molding pieces available, the installation possibilities are endless. This talented team accepts commissions. Visit them at their Tiverton shop (3842 Main Rd., Tiverton Four Corners; 816-0010) or at www.roseberrywinn.com.



FACING PAGE: Kirie created a custom look for a guest bath with tumbled marble for the backsplash and ceramic floor tile, both from Home Depot. THIS PAGE: Puget Sound sea glass tile teams with beveled-edged subway tile in a shower, while Rainforest marble showcases a hearth, all from Weatherly Tile and Stone. Tile installations by Tile Tech, North Kingstown.

Price points

Field tiles (plain, ceramic, solid-colored tiles) are generally sold by the square foot.

Decorative tiles are priced individually. A midrange porcelain tile will sell for about \$5 per square foot. Twelve-inch marble and slate tiles start at around \$6 per square foot. "From there," says Linda Siravo, design consultant at Boston Tile in Warwick, "the sky is the limit."

Glass tiles climb from about \$28 to \$60 per square foot.

Metal tiles vary widely according to size, finish and style. Figure around \$20 per tile.

Handmade tiles are infinitely varied and can be sold individually or in increments. "I have custom handmade tiles that retail for \$300 a square foot," says tile designer Gaye Weatherly at Weatherly Tile and Stone. "But it's easy to make the ordinary sublime by dropping a handful of handmade tiles in a sea of mass-produced tiles."

1 Leaf radial design tile, \$65-\$165 per square foot or individually from \$4.50, Roseberry-Winn, Tiverton. **2** Stellar pearls trim tile, \$18 per piece, Boston Tile, Warwick. **3** Handmade butter petal tile, \$65-\$165 per square foot or individually from \$4.50, Roseberry-Winn. **4** Tumbled yellow travertine, \$9.89 per square foot, Boston Tile. **5** Opalescent glass bull's-eye, \$12 each, Weatherly Tile and Stone. **6** Dragonfly, \$12 per piece, Weatherly Tile and Stone. **7** Handmade milk-glass bee, \$12 per piece, Weatherly Tile and Stone. **8** A.K.D.O. small mint-green marble tiles, \$22.40 per square foot, Boston Tile. **9** Lime crackle fleur-de-lis, \$38 per piece, Weatherly Tile and Stone. **10** Tumbled Verde Laguna marble, \$11.99 per square foot, Boston Tile.





- 1** Green deco-liner, \$25 and up per piece, Weatherly Tile and Stone. **2** Milk glass blue deco-liner, \$25 and up per piece, Weatherly Tile and Stone. **3** Seafoam field tile, about \$38 per square foot, Weatherly Tile and Stone. **4** Handmade flower tile, in assorted colors, \$50, Lark Pottery, Portsmouth and Weatherly Tile and Stone. **5** Glass deco-liner, \$29 and up per piece, Weatherly Tile and Stone. **6** Handmade cork-backed fish trivet, \$72, Pat Warwick Ceramics, Warren. **7** Souza field tile, \$29.52 per square foot, with Deco Granada, \$8.33 per piece, Boston Tile. **8** Glass bull's-eye, \$12 per piece, Weatherly Tile and Stone.

Mini-tile jobs

Many showrooms will allow you to take home tile samples, just like wallpaper, and try them out. No charge involved. Use tiles you make or ones you purchase to pull off some of these ideas:

- Cover a wood valance with tiles (tiny ones look best).
- Update a boring coffee table with a tile top.
- Affix hangers to the back of tiles and mount them on the wall.
- Create a centerpiece: a group of votives upon a stunning tile.
- Use a large tile as a cheese tray. Pile on cheese, crackers, grapes and apples.