



Ceramic Tiles of Italy

Hawaiian paradise showcases Italian tile

The design of an upscale residence in Kona, HI, combines Italian floor tile and mosaics with reclaimed Teak wood and lava rock for a soothing and chic living space

By Jennifer Adams

A private residence set in the small town of Kona on the leeward side of the big island of Hawaii is an example of modern architecture that reflects its natural habitat. Tucked between volcanic mountain ranges to the east and ocean horizons to the west, the upscale home exudes luxury and takes advantage of its priceless views. Contributing to the overall ambiance of the design is a palette of Italian tile combined with Chinese lava rock and reclaimed Teak timber — making for a unique and stunning aesthetic.

“The program is arranged as a series of pods distributed throughout the property — each having its own unique features and view opportunities,” said Project Architect Barry Gartin of Belzberg Architects in Santa Monica, CA. “The pods are programmatically assigned as two sleeping pods with common areas, a media room, master suite and main living space. An

exterior gallery corridor becomes the organizational and focal feature for the entire house — connecting the two pods along a central axis.”

The residential exterior is comprised of the reclaimed Teak timber — taken from old barns and train tracks — coupled with stacked and cut lava rock. “The two materials form a historically driven medium embedded in Hawaiian tradition,” explained Gartin. “Local basket-weaving culture was the inspiration for the entry pavilion, which reenacts the traditional ‘gift upon arrival’ ceremony. Various digitally sculpted wood ceilings and screens throughout the house continue the abstract approach to traditional Hawaiian wood carving, further infusing traditional elements into the contemporary arrangement.”

To complement the wood and stone, floor tiles

The design of a private residence in Kona, HI, skillfully combines Chinese lava rock, reclaimed Teak timber and Italian-made porcelain floor tile.

Architect/Designer: Belzberg Architects, Santa Monica, CA;

Contractor: DEM Construction;

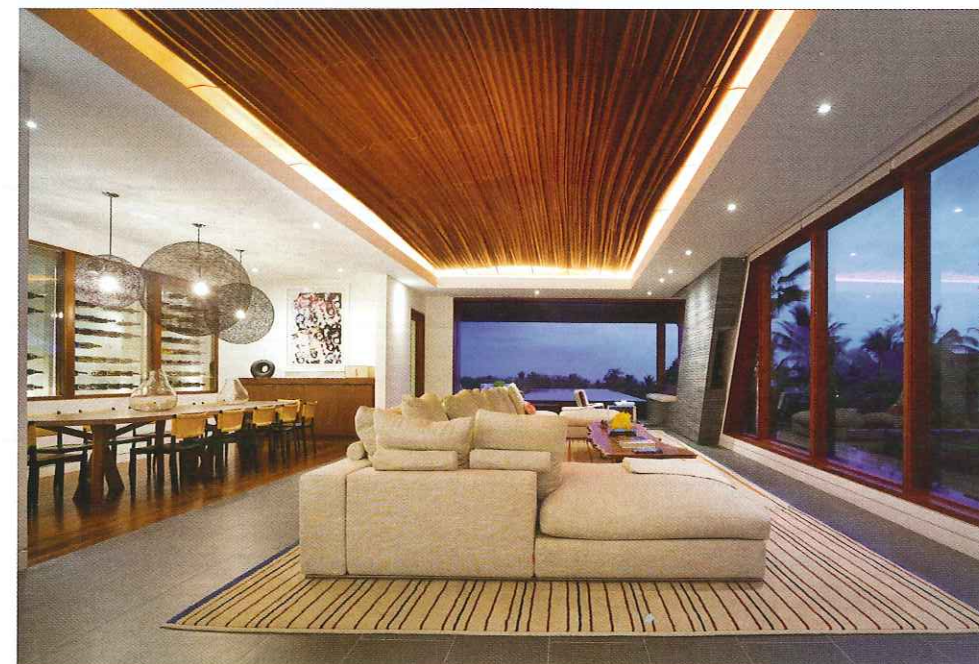
Tile Manufacturer: Floor Gres, Fiorano, Italy (floor tile);

Tile Distributor: Stone Source (Floor Gres floor tile)

from the Architech collection by Italian tile manufacturer Floor Gres were employed. The 16- x 32-inch tiles were in the color “Forest” with a matte finish, and they were used for all exterior hardscape as well as in the kitchen, great room, all bathrooms except the master bath and outdoor showers.

“Similar stones and tiles were considered, but they did not provide a comparable stain resistance to the Floor Gres tiles,” said the architect. “We also chose the tile for its durability, look, traction control and sizing availability.”

Adding a vibrant splash to the otherwise muted color scheme, brightly colored custom mosaics from Italian tile manufacturer Bisazza create an accent wall in



The 16- x 32-inch floor tile, which is showcased throughout the home's interior and exterior design, is the color “Forest” with a matte finish from the Architech collection by Floor Gres.