

Walking the Plank

Terrazzo plank tile made of 100% recycled glass adds sparkle at NikeWomen

By Marianne Wilson

Thinking “green” is standard practice at Nike. The athletic footwear and apparel giant is committed to protecting the environment throughout its operations, from the acquisition of raw materials to the recycling of old shoes to the use of sustainable building products.

In addition to being environmentally aware, Nike is well-aware of the importance of first impressions. The company remains dedicated to a high degree of aesthetics in its products and store environments. Both priorities are well-served in one of the featured flooring materials in Nike’s newest retail format: NikeWomen. The product is composed of 100% re-cycled glass and color-pigmented epoxy.

“The flooring is a large part of any retail experience,” said Lois McKenzie, senior designer, NikeWomen, which has 12 locations, including seven in California. “We were looking for an eye-catching entry that would entice customers all the way into the store. And with so many great products available, we felt that this was an excellent place to use a recycled and sustainable material.”

After reviewing available materials, Nike selected a 6-in.-by-36-in. terrazzo plank tile, EnviroPLANK, from EnviroGLAS Products, Plano, Texas, which manufactures terrazzo plank tiles, countertops and poured-on-site terrazzo made from 100% post-use crushed recycled glass and non-emitting, color-pigmented epoxy resin (sources of recycled glass range from discarded bottles and mirrored glass to traffic lights and stained glass.) The terrazzo tile can contribute to seven of more of the 69 total U.S. Green Building Council LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) points available.



Bits of colored glass and mirror chips give the flooring a mosaic effect.

Runway: NikeWomen utilizes the planked terrazzo floor at the entrance and down the center aisle (Nike refers to the area as the “runway.”) The placement is important in that the areas contribute significantly to the customer’s first impression of the retail space.

“We wanted it to have a premium finish with a high level of contrast to the adjacent walnut-stained wood flooring,” McKenzie said. (The wood floor is also environmentally friendly and from a company that makes ecologically sound wood surfaces from certified well-managed forests and reclaimed flooring.)

EnviroGLAS collaborated with Nike to develop a custom look for the plank

tile that would convey the store’s design aesthetic which, while understated, is fast, sleek and focused. A bold blue stripe that runs around the perimeter of the highly polished white walls makes a very strong statement.

The planked terrazzo floor is composed of tinted epoxy with tiny pieces of 100% recycled colored glass mixed in for a mosaic effect. EnviroGLAS worked closely with Nike to achieve a mix of glass and mirror chips and a pigment for the epoxy that, together, delivered the precise overall color the retailer wanted and enabled it to match the finished floor to the palette of other finish materials in the space.

The fact that only recycled glass products are used in the manufacture of EnviroPLANK weighed heavily with Nike. Another important product attribute was the tiles’ rectangular shape, which allowed the installation to capture the essence of a planked wood floor. Nike also like the sparkle in the flooring (credited to the addition of recycled mirror chips to the mix).

“The planked floor is a great way to show our best and brightest,” said Edward Cardimona, director, visual presentation, NikeWomen. “The runway draws the customer in and shows her how to get to the center of the world of NikeWomen.”

Nike’s commitment to using eco-friendly materials extends beyond the flooring. Many of the fixtures feature wood veneers and laminates as opposed to solid-wood construction, which helps save on trees, McKenzie added. Also, the upholstery for the seating is comprised of 100% wood fibers, which are a renewable resource. ■

--mwilson@chainstoreage.com