

Rustic Charm

BY CHRISTINE HANLON

Contoured scalloped edges lend a handcrafted charm to this Sculptique laminate flooring by Quick-step. "The subtle texture creates the look of soft-scraped hardwood," notes Tim Pariseau, Sales Manager for Curtis Carpets. The use of individual planks further enhances the authentic appearance.

With a width of 6 1/8 inches, the planks replicate the contemporary charm of rustic hardwood while delivering the performance of a laminate floor. Pariseau points out that many of today's families – particularly those with pets – want the look of hardwood but need something that resists scratches, dents and chips. For them, a higher-grade laminate is the perfect solution.

Furthermore, Sculptique floors are easy to install and repair if necessary. Thanks to a specially made tool, even a plank in the middle of the floor can be replaced effortlessly, without having to dismantle the entire floor and remove baseboards or furniture. And the click-together planks of the floating floor can be easily adjusted if the house shifts.

As beautiful as it is versatile, the Sculptique line comes in five colours that mimic different species and stains. The black cherry in this living room is only one example of the flooring's rich appeal.

"The detailing on it is simply unbelievable," says Pariseau.



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Clean, Crisp & Contemporary

A white Italian leather sofa and motion club chairs set the tone for the clean, crisp design of this great room. "They wanted a contemporary and comfortable setting with enough seating for entertaining," says Ella Platschick of Interior Illusions. She explains that because the clients were downsizing, they did not bring any existing dining room or living room furnishings into their new home except for a grand piano and some marble coffee tables.

Interior Illusions worked closely with the clients to select and source the furniture and accessories, as well as the platinum white shag carpet, which adds texture to the sleekness of the leather. On the wall, an edgy flowing wall sculpture creates motion and interest, drawing the eye to the simple clean light fixture, also in brushed steel.

"We kept the colour scheme clean and neutral but not boring," notes Platschick. Art glass vases in plums and amber add a hint of translucent colour.

The same plum accent was selected for the window valance, custom designed and created by Interior Illusions from a Kravet couture custom weave. Silhouette blinds complete the window treatment.

For more than 26 years, Interior Illusions has combined the advantages of custom design services and an on-site workroom to provide

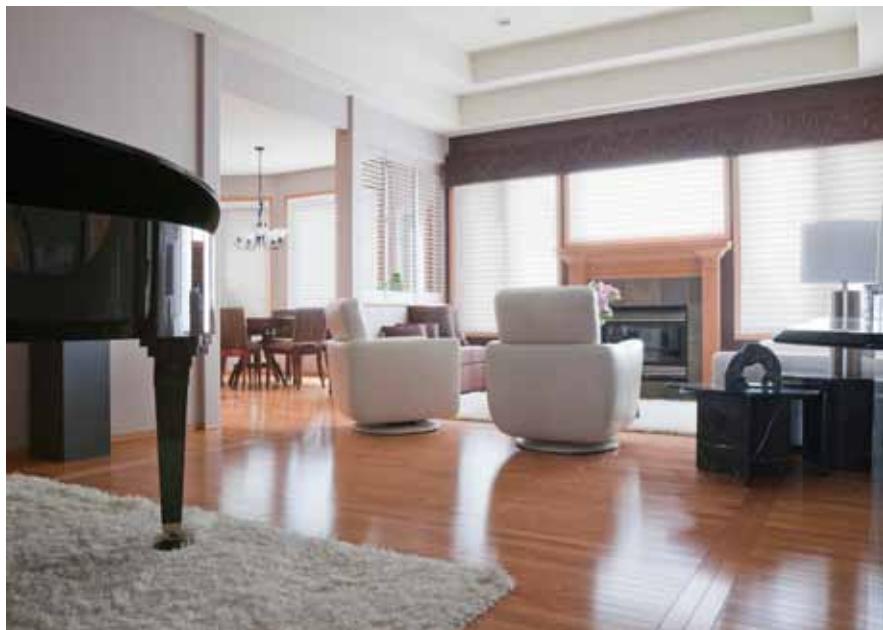
Manitobans with superior window treatments and upholstery.

"Now completing your spaces is even easier thanks to our extensive lines of furnishings," says Platschick.

Interior Illusions had the wood dining room furnishings custom stained in a deep merlot. Upholstering the dining chairs with custom

fabrics in shades of greens, ambers and plums brings together the accents that unite the various spaces. The result is a whole home design that coordinates perfectly.

Interior Illusions' wide range of products and services allows clients to customize everything from window treatments to furniture and accessories for a personalized décor that is just right.



Setting the Stage

Staging is an effective tool for anyone wanting to sell a property quickly at the best possible price. "The whole point of staging a property is to attract as many potential buyers as possible and have them feel comfortable enough to be able to live in that space," notes Jennifer Donovan-Faubert, Founder of RSDR – Real Estate Staging & Decor Re-Design. RSDR looks at what can be done with the interior to achieve this goal, but also makes recommendations about the exterior and surrounding yard so potential buyers' first impressions are positive.

Neutralizing, or de-personalizing the decor for staging can involve anything from changing paint colours and de-cluttering a space to rearranging, removing and adding furniture and/or artwork to create a more cohesive design. A former realtor, Donovan-Faubert knows it is essential that nothing detract from the home's potential.



Updating the decor is also important – and not only to those selling a home. RSDR's decor and renovation re-design services focus on personalizing the property for the owners by offering more functionality to a space or freshening up the look and feel to reflect the client's current lifestyle.

The design specialist works closely with clients to offer solutions within their budget. A customized DIY option for both re-design and staging provides a "design blueprint" for homeowners to implement themselves. Or RSDR can manage the entire project for them. Says Donovan-Faubert: "We're very flexible in the services we provide."



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Personalizing a Space

At the end of a major renovation, the owner of this condominium felt that something was still missing—something that would personalize her new décor. She turned to Mandy van Leeuwen for that intangible final touch.

The two met at the condominium to discuss the location and size of the artwork. "She didn't know what she wanted the content to be," recalls the muralist. "We spent time talking about what ideas she might have."

Van Leeuwen notes that creating a mural is a collaborative creation process often involving in-depth conversations about what the content will mean to the space and the people living in it. Based on these discussions, the artist creates a small sketch for further fine-tuning.

In this case, the composition evolved from a colourful moth to the addition of white roses that flow from great room to dining room. Covering only a portion of the wall, the motif exemplifies the versatility of the mural art form.

Van Leeuwen has worked on numerous unique interior and exterior projects. Her outdoor large scale murals can be seen all over the city, including Corydon Avenue, where she is currently at work on the corner of Arbuthnot Street with fellow artist Michel St. Hilaire.



Engineered Excellence

This Dansk hardwood floor is only one of many product lines at The Floor Show to offer solid and engineered options. "Engineered floors are becoming increasing popular with homeowners thanks to their versatility and dimensional stability," says Heidi Streu at The Floor Show.

Unlike solids, engineered floors are constructed with a 1/16 to 1/8 inch layer of finish wood on top of several layers of plywood. Laying the middle layer of plywood crossways to the finish layer provides additional strength and stability.

"And engineered floors use up to eight times less lumber than traditional floors," notes Streu, adding that consumers are increasingly looking at greener products for their homes. At the same time, the specialized construction means engineered floors can be installed above or below grade, making them suitable for basements and condominiums. Engineered products can be nailed, glued or installed as a floating floor.

Furthermore, the latest generations of engineered products offer the same aesthetic features as solids. The planks now come in various widths and feature micro-bevelled edges. Surface options include not only smooth, but also popular hand-scraped and wire-brushed looks, while finishes include low gloss, low sheen and matt.

Says Streu: "Engineered floors are truly the way of the future."





Glass & Steel

Replacing the staircase with a stunning combination of glass and steel both opened and modernized the central space in this home.

"It makes the interior much more transparent," says Phil Gussakovskiy, owner of SSG Notion (AluMen Group). The former staircase, with its wooden railings and risers, closed the space by obstructing both the view and flow of light.

To minimize the presence of the staircase, SSG Notion combined open risers and sleek stainless steel posts/handrails with specialty tempered glass panels. Even the supporting central post was replaced. Beautiful and elegant, the glass and steel materials are strong and resistant, with a lifetime of maintenance-free durability.

SSG Notion works closely with homeowners to design each unique staircase, starting with a three-dimensional computer model and then making changes accordingly.

"People know exactly what they are going to get before construction begins," notes Gussakovskiy. Components are then laser-cut from sheets of stainless steel and glass. Using European expertise and engineering, SSG Notion builds each staircase to precise specifications.

"There is nothing standard about our staircases," says Gussakovskiy, adding that the company is presently working on a project using glass steps made from three or four 10mm laminated layers. "No two houses are alike."



Storage & Style

Marrying style with abundant storage, this well-crafted cabinet includes glass doors, three fixed wood shelves and plate grooves. Besides the antique black finish shown here, the unit is also available in rustic oak, natural oak, stone grey and barn red.

Along with this Attic Heirlooms library cabinet, Pineridge Hollow offers a full range of products from Broyhill's extensive line of furniture for the bedroom, dining room, living room and home office. With occasional tables, wall systems, home entertainment units and numerous categories of upholstered furniture, it is easy to coordinate a room—or even an entire home. There are hundreds of fabric options available for Broyhill's wide selection of chairs, sectionals and sofas.

For more than a century, the company has been recognized for its commitment to quality and value. As versatile as they are beautiful, pieces from the collection are easy to integrate with existing furniture and floor coverings.

In fact, Pineridge Hollow shows Broyhill alongside its other furniture lines – LEE, Dash & Albert, Homespice, Canadel and Riverside – to create unique and inspirational vignettes. With its unique lines of quality furniture and accessories, Pineridge Hollow is quickly becoming a popular destination for those Manitobans seeking to create distinctive home and cottage décor.