




GENTLEMAN'S QUARTERS

By MARGO LOCUST

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If a man's home is his castle, shouldn't his bedroom be his private retreat? Fortunately for men of taste, rich, natural colors and textures are one of the hottest decorating trends for 2007, and that means the bedroom can be both stylish for HER and appealing to HIM.

The flooring industry has picked up on this theme with an emphasis on natural materials and colors. For the bedroom, this means exciting new flooring options with substance, style and features that everyone can agree on.

For men who want *rugged* style and the decorator who wants *colorful* style, and for both who want something new and different, acid-stained concrete fits the criteria. It's durable, available in a palette of rich, beautiful colors, creates a natural, textural look and has the added bonus of easy maintenance.

FABULOUS FLOORS, which has introduced consumers to the fashion of concrete in previous issues, knows that an acid-stained concrete floor sets the stage for the aged, rough-hewn look — another popular trend in home décor for 2007 that men will relate to.

Color is created by a chemical reaction between the acid in the stain and the calcium in the concrete. Color variations that enhance the floor's beauty develop randomly, depending on the degree of reaction that occurs.

Because the stain penetrates the concrete surface, it brings out the beauty and interesting elements of the concrete's texture often lost or overlooked in its original gray state. Depending on how deeply color penetrates concrete and how concrete reacts with the acid, the final result will have interesting and unexpected color variations, natural irregularities and a patina for that popular aged look. Every floor turns out to be unique!

For added effect, an expert installer can layer different colors of acid stains to achieve special effects. Usually the entire floor is covered first with a light base color in a diluted strength, and then specific areas or sections are spot-stained with another color or the undiluted color. For more drama, these areas can be brushed, rag-rolled or sponged.

A professional installer can apply acid stain to a new or existing concrete floor or a polymeric overlay installed over a subfloor, making it an artistic option for virtually any room in the house.

The process begins by thoroughly cleaning the floor to remove any surface contaminants that might prevent stain penetration. The stain is applied with a sprayer and then brushed into the surface to create a random texturized effect. After the first coat is dry, a second coat usually is applied.

For added interest and visual appeal, the floor surface can be saw-cut to score lines, allowing separation of different colors and creation of a multicolor design. Custom designs also can be created by incorporating some artistic stenciling techniques.

Stone to Foam®, a company specializing in high-end decorative concrete coatings and finishes, has introduced a new color palette in its Accent™ acid stain, available through authorized dealers nationwide.

"Acid-stained concrete has been a popular choice for commercial flooring for years, found in high-end restaurants, grocery stores and building lobbies," says Steve Grimm, a Stone to Foam dealer in Grand Rapids, Mich., specializing in decorative concrete coatings and finishes. "Now, with the latest generation of stains and sealers, acid staining is making an impact on the residential scene as well, bringing a welcome combination of aesthetics and performance to the floor."

The richness of acid-stained concrete complements dark woods, patterned accessories and metal accents such as drawer pulls and lamps that are at home in a more masculine environment. For intriguing visual interest right down to the floor, acid-stained concrete fits the bill. Strong, substantial and stylish, it banishes boring bedroom floors forever. 🏠

