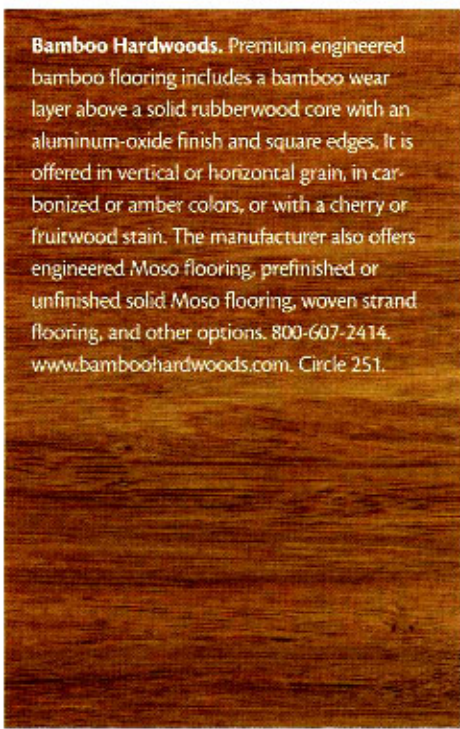




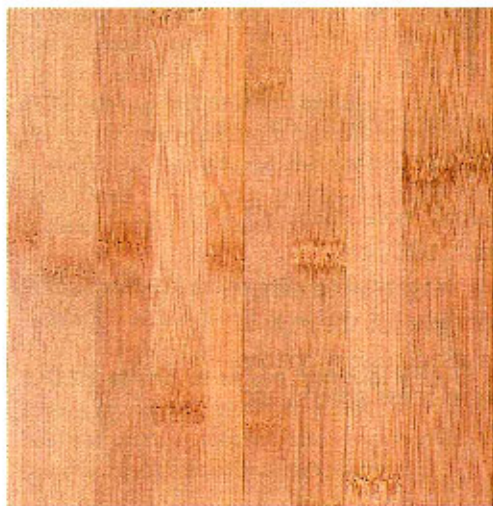
Central Floors. Avanti brand bamboo flooring is grown for at least six years, according to the manufacturer, and features six layers of premium quality aluminum oxide that create a highly durable and scratch-resistant surface. It is available in a variety of patterns, colors, and finishes, including vertical, horizontal blocked, and horizontal random. 408-943-8599. www.centralfloors.com. Circle 249.



Teragren. The manufacturer offers five types of bamboo flooring: Synergy Strand, Signature Naturals, with a traditional random-length look; Signature Colors, in espresso, cherry, charcoal, and walnut stains; Craftsman, which features a wider, longer plank look; and Studio, which features Teraloc, a patented self-locking system that requires no adhesive. The maker says it uses only Optimum 5.5 Moso bamboo to produce flooring 25 percent harder than oak. 800-925-6333. www.teragren.com. Circle 250.



Bamboo Hardwoods. Premium engineered bamboo flooring includes a bamboo wear layer above a solid rubberwood core with an aluminum-oxide finish and square edges. It is offered in vertical or horizontal grain, in carbonized or amber colors, or with a cherry or fruitwood stain. The manufacturer also offers engineered Moso flooring, prefinished or unfinished solid Moso flooring, woven strand flooring, and other options. 800-607-2414. www.bamboohardwoods.com. Circle 251.



Yanchi Flooring. This bamboo flooring from BuildDirect is finished with six coats of satin-finish UV-cured urethane with aluminum oxide. It carries a lifetime structural and 10-year finish warranty. The flooring complies with the European E1 standard for safe levels of formaldehyde emissions. Strand-woven flooring is also available. 877-631-2845. www.builddirect.com. Circle 252.

woven, or OSB bamboo that compacts small strands of bamboo fiber with resin to create a composite type of floor board that is about twice as hard as standard bamboo flooring.

"The product I like most is the strand-woven," says Rainforest Carpentry's Yoder. "It's crushed and compacted, so it's denser and higher quality." He says it can be glued directly to concrete slab or with several types of insulation or barrier. "It's what I install most now because I don't have to charge much more and it's a better product."

While traditional bamboo flooring may be too repetitive or "perfect-looking" for some tastes, the strand bamboo has a more random pattern and a unique look. "It's different, it doesn't look like bamboo," says John Dale, product manager for wood and laminate at Memphis, Tenn.-based distributor Building Plastics. "It looks like an exotic wood species, but it gives you the same advantages of bamboo."



LOOK AGAIN

The woven look isn't the only way manufacturers are expanding the variety of bamboo options. Homeowners can choose their own aesthetic with a variety of scrapes, stains, and colors.

"People are applying the same sorts of methods or techniques that are being applied to wood to bamboo," Bamtex's Grant says. His company's hand-scraped bamboo, for example, has a more uneven surface with a rustic character.

Smith & Fong's woven Neopolitan bamboo flooring combines strands of different colors to create a unique look like zebrawood. "It's a very design-y, hip, fancy-looking thing," Eberlein says.

Even stains are available in more distinctive colors. For example, Teragren's Signature Colors series is available in espresso, walnut, cherry, or chocolate, and Smith & Fong has shades such as cinnamon red. More importantly, homeowners are buying into the unique, brightly colored hues.

"It's niche-y. It's becoming more popular," says May. He worries these colors may go the way of lime green tiles in the 1960s, but says the purple and red stains constitute a trend. **BP**

Sustainable Flooring. Strandwoven bamboo flooring is a compressed and densified bamboo composite. The maker says it does not use aluminum oxide in its prefinished coating because it scratches white. Colored Strandwoven has color infused into the wear layer before compression. Traditional bamboo flooring also is available in two shades of carbonized or natural. 303-544-6076. www.sustainableflooring.com. Circle 253.