

DESIGN SHOPPING

Finding the Perfect Tile

CHECK OUT THE LATEST TILE STYLES AND INSTALLATIONS AT THESE TOP TWIN CITIES SHOW ROOMS.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHANIE COLGAN

From tiny mosaics to pieces measuring two feet square, tiles suiting every style are available by the thousands at Twin Cities show rooms. And although products launched at trade fairs around the world once took a long time to reach local sources, savvy buyers now bring them to market faster than ever.

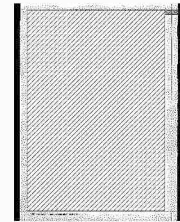
A source popular with architects and designers, **Fantasia Showrooms** at International Market Square carries the latest patterns and styles with an emphasis on lines produced by American artisans. **Waterworks**, also at IMS, boasts proprietary collections such as Architectonics, with styles available in more than 170 colors. Italian brands bring shoppers to peruse samples at the IMS storefront for **Ceramic Tileworks**; the company's larger location in Maple Grove carries the same tiles in vignette installations.

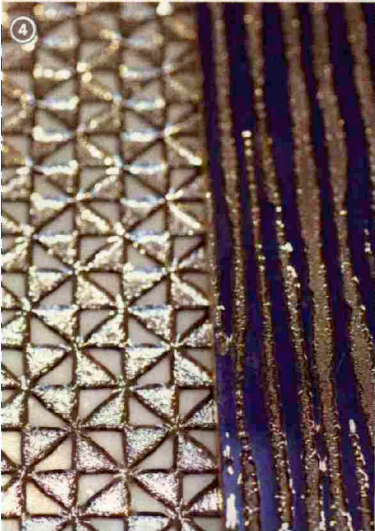
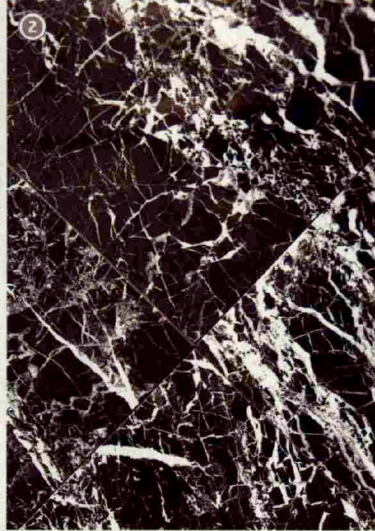
Rubble Tile, a longtime local favorite (this year it celebrates eighty years in business), carries high-quality lines from such manufacturers as Pratt & Larson and Country Floors in its 5,000-square-foot Minnetonka show room. Neighboring Plymouth is home to several of the best tile show rooms around, including one for **RBC Tile & Stone** (the other is in Roseville), which features Walker Zanger and **Oceanside Glasstile** lines. The 16,000-square-foot flagship store for **The Tile Shop**, in Plymouth adjacent to the corporate headquarters for the forty-three-store chain, showcases collections exclusive to the company in fifty-three vignettes. **Kate-Lo Tile & Stone** also boasts a Plymouth flagship store, with a wide range of styles displayed in 100 small vignettes, whereas the 7,500-square-foot **Tile By Design** show room close by presents products in an elegant art gallery format.

Minnesota Tile & Stone show rooms in Brooklyn Park, Woodbury, and Lakeville carry a wide range of options, including several made of glass and metal. The focus shifts at the Minneapolis studio for **Mercury Mosaics**, where the handmade mosaic designs are completely customizable.



Vignettes, such as one featuring metal-look ceramic tiles from Dutch company Royal Mosa, joins walls of sample boards at the Minnetonka show room for Rubble Tile.





① Hand-cut contemporary mosaics (\$92-\$276/square foot), from Virginia artisans at New Ravenna Mosaics, available through Fantasia Showrooms.

② Mystique Dark marble with a heavily veined pattern (\$5.49/square foot) from The Tile Shop.

③ Multi ristano travertine with a heavy texture (\$10.99/square foot) and multi round travertine with a clean graphic look (\$11.99/square foot), both from The Tile Shop.

④ Italian-made porcelain wall tile with a glittery metallic glaze (\$85.33/square foot) from Horus Art, available at RBC Tile & Stone.

⑤ Marble mosaics that can be customized in several colors and styles (\$47-\$150/square foot), part of a house line at Fantasia Showrooms.

⑥ Vibe Orbit mosaic (\$54.67/square foot), a new line from Walker Zanger, available at RBC Tile & Stone.



SOURCES

CERAMIC TILEWORKS 11225 86th Ave. N., Maple Grove, 763-493-5238; International Market Square, Mpls., 612-333-7100, ceramic.tileworksmn.com

FANTASIA SHOWROOMS International Market Square, Mpls., 612-338-5811, fantasiashowrooms.com

KATE-LO TILE & STONE 3201 Co. Rd. 42 W., Ste. 110, Burnsville, 952-890-4324; 1358 Helmo Ave. N., Oakdale, 651-730-1975; 171 Cheshire Ln., Ste. 100, Plymouth, 763-450-3636, kate-lo.tile.com

MERCURY MOSAICS 125 W. Broadway Ave., Mpls., 612-236-1646, mercury mosaics.com

MINNESOTA TILE & STONE 8400 89th Ave. N., Ste. 445, Brooklyn Park, 763-488-5218; 17615 Kenrick Ave., Lakeville, 952-898-1960; 9703 Hudson Rd., Woodbury, 651-730-0447, mntile.com

RBC TILE & STONE 1820 Berkshire Ln. N., Plymouth, 763-559-5531; 550 W. Co. Rd. D., Roseville, 651-635-0515, rbctile.com

RUBBLE TILE 5001 Culligan Way, Minnetonka, 952-938-2599; Becker Furniture World, 13150 1st St., Becker, 763-262-2222, rubbletile.com

TILE BY DESIGN 1720 Annapolis Ln., Plymouth, 763-551-5900, tilexdesign.com

THE TILE SHOP Six metro locations, including 14000 Carlson Pkwy., Plymouth, 763-541-9720, tileshop.com

WATERWORKS International Market Square, Mpls., 612-338-9991, waterworks.com