

THE TIMES

INTERIORS

Latest and loveliest tiles for your home

Perfect for unifying indoor and outdoor spaces

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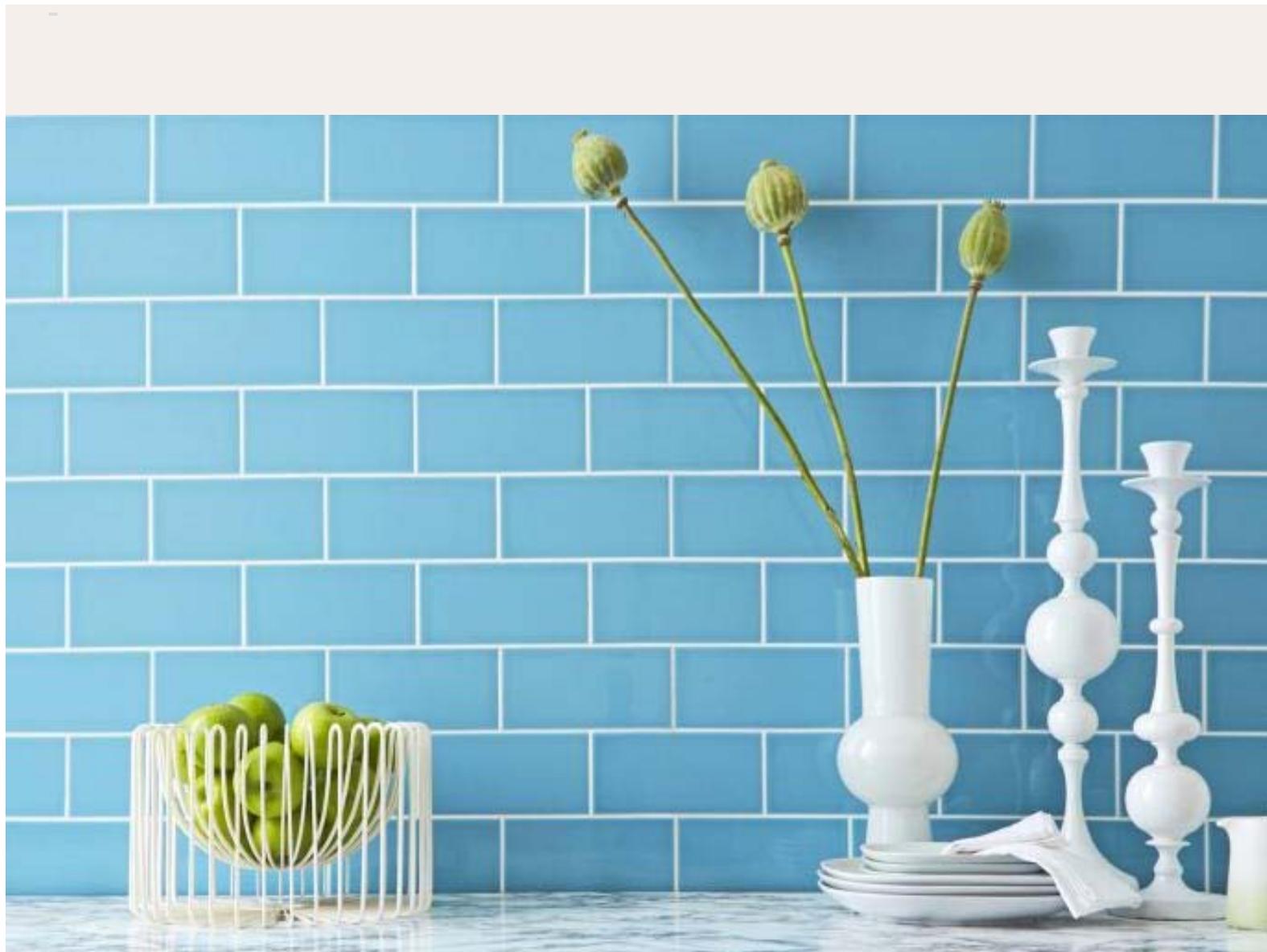
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Meet Fired Earth's new spin on its famous Metropolitan ceramic tiles. The slightly lengthier bevelled tiles measure 22.5cm x 7.5cm. Brompton Road colourway pictured. £89 per sq metre; firedearth.com

Anyone familiar with the cushion-related section of the newsstand probably feels the same: my head is set to explode if I read one more interiors article about bringing the outdoors in. We have had a surfeit of rattan and ficus this summer; enough already with the styled herb walls. I don't want to kick sand in anyone's ice cream, but you know those chives will be dead when you get back from holiday, don't you?

So is this another "outdoors-in" story? Not really. It's drawing your attention to the latest and loveliest tiles and how they offer the perfect flooring to link terrace and kitchen, dining and living area, in one seamless, flowing surface. Flowing, that is, from the interior to the exterior. Think of it as taking the indoors out.



Colour-blocking for the kitchen or bathroom wall. These Prismatic tiles from Tile Mountain are shown in Duck Egg Gloss, 20cm x 10cm. £28.50 per sq metre; tilemountain.co.uk

Tiles have always been the flooring of choice for entrances and exits — high-traffic border regions between kitchen and garden, front door and hallway. But there's no need to use them in such moderation. Jeremy Harris, the managing director of Tile Mountain, has seen tiles move into open-plan spaces.

“With many house extensions featuring large expanses of glass, in particular, bifold doors that allow you to completely open up the space between living and garden, consumers are looking for flooring that will help to merge the two areas. We have noticed an increase in demand for large-format tiles, not only in terms of ease of installation, but because the fewer grout lines in a floor, the larger the area will appear.”

The same goes for roof gardens, says Jamie Robb, managing director of Marlborough Tiles: “For city-dwellers, the use of porcelain tiles on roof terraces and as decking, particularly with wood-effect tiles, is increasingly popular.”

My favourite find is a quirky collection by Marga van Oers, called StoryTiles. Inspired by “Old Dutch Whites”, the tiles that have been made in Holland for centuries, StoryTiles get their name from the tiny figures playing out a narrative in a landscape of colour and pattern. Mostly used as art pieces or integrated sparingly in a wall of plain tiles, they are heat-, water- and frost- resistant — and really would look just as great outdoors.



The British artist Marianne Smink designed these 20.3cm square encaustic tiles, with geometric circle and square patterns. Perfect for use inside or out. £6 per tile; cletile.com



Porcelain with the appearance of exposed brick, from Craven Dunnill's Renaissance collection. Vintage Brick Marrone tiles, 28cm x 7cm, work well on walls and floors. £36 per sq metre; cravendunnill.co.uk



Hamar, from the Maori range by the Spanish brand Vives, is a porcelain floor and wall tile with a matt finish, 20cm square. The collection is frost resistant and suitable for use indoors and out. £48 per sq metre; solusceramics.com