

Choice Materials

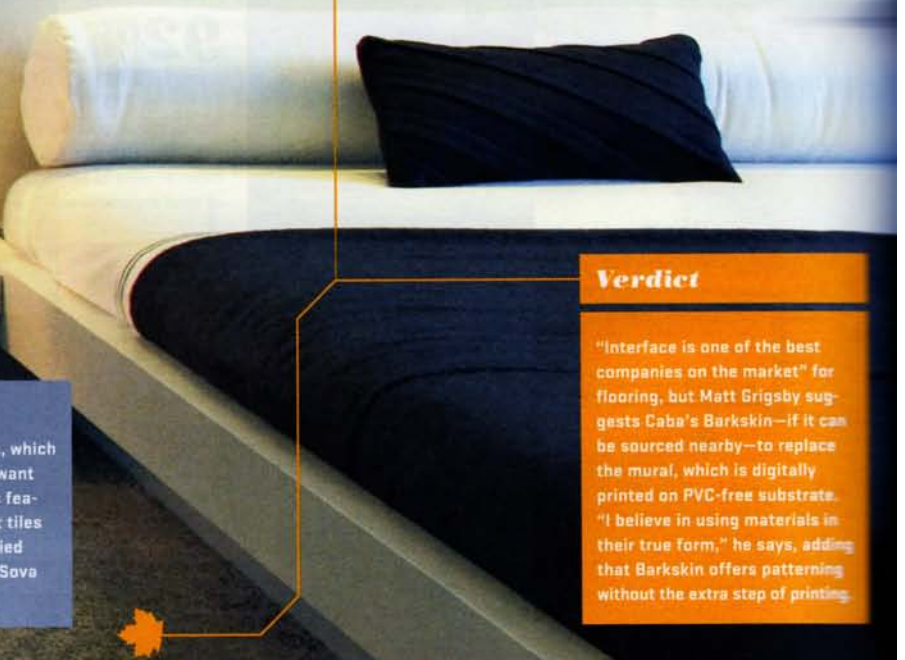
by
David
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Client
Tridel

IDEAL CONDITIONS



UNDERSTANDING
CARING



Master bedroom

Of the graphic flourishes that accent this and other rooms in the Eco-Suite, Andrea Kantelberg says to imagine the opposite: "An overabundance of objects would have detracted from the serenity of the space and

encouraged consumerism, which is the one thing we don't want to do." The bedroom does feature FLOR Mop Top carpet tiles and 325-count Skal-certified cotton sheets from Anna Sova Luxury Organics.

Verdict

"Interface is one of the best companies on the market" for flooring, but Matt Grigsby suggests Caba's Barkskin—if it can be sourced nearby—to replace the mural, which is digitally printed on PVC-free substrate. "I believe in using materials in their true form," he says, adding that Barkskin offers patterning without the extra step of printing.

Interior Designer
**Kantelberg
Design**

Three experts look at the green strategies behind a model apartment created as a showcase for sustainable thinking.



Eco-Suite
TORONTO



Wall-surface details from different rooms in the Eco-Suite.

Six years ago, Canadian developer Tridel announced it would embrace sustainability in its future building projects. That promise was first realized in 2006 with the opening of Element, a Toronto condo cooled by Lake Ontario water, and again last May with Eco-Suite, a sales-model unit inside Element that is finished to a higher level of decoration—and greenness—than the other homes in the

24-story high-rise. Eco-Suite “shows the public that Tridel means business,” says Lauren Gropper, green-building and LEED consultant to the company.

“It was really exciting to recognize that we can find the green materials to meet the aesthetic,” Andrea Kantelberg, Eco-Suite’s interior designer, says. To pair design with sustainable components, Gropper and Rambod Nasrin, Tridel’s

Verdict

"Countertops are tough," Nadav Malin says. "I don't consider stone chips in a cement matrix particularly green. But it's hard to do much better, other than an alternative with recycled content." On the other hand, Malin easily came up with alternatives to the Jamaica stool, noting that metal production "is toxic and energy-intensive, even with its recycled content. I would've liked to see a social conscience here."



Kitchen

"Here there are key things that people respond to: dark hardwood floors and kitchen cabinets, light-colored countertops," Kantelberg says. Cabinetry is fabricated from preconsumer recycled wood fiber, the countertop is 93 percent natural quartz, and Knoll's Jamaica bar stool is Greenguard certified.

Dining room

A black walnut dining table was built from trees salvaged from another Tridel site; the room divider features Pure Bond particleboard, a formaldehyde-free panel made from 80 percent postindustrial recycled content; the flooring is Kultur's FSC-certified white oak.

Verdict

After considering alternatives like Kirei Board, Biofiber Wheat Board, or Durapalm, Grigsby applauds the Ontario-harvested and -manufactured Pure Bond in the divider. "The most sustainable thing is local," he says, although he notes that it might have been even better to eliminate millwork altogether.



Master bathroom

The master bathroom is water-conscious. Delta faucets are low-flow. Refin tiles are manufactured in a water-recycling facility, and the custom Corian bathtub and sink don't require harsh cleaning chemicals that would run through sewers.

Verdict

The EU's Eco-label may assuage the guilt of shipping tiles from Italy, Malin says, but why not try recycled-content Terra Green tiles from Indiana first? "Corian is a reasonable choice in spite of its petrochemical origins," he adds. "It may also save energy by insulating better than a ceramic or cast-iron tub. But the biggest impact is in things one wouldn't see, like how the water is heated, how it's insulated on its way to the fixtures."



Second bedroom

Lauren Gropper says of the Ikea Morkedal bed, "We wanted to show people on a tighter budget that you can be green." The bed holds a Grassroots natural-rubber mattress, which does not contain toxic flame-retardants, and it sits beneath Topaz, a rayon-on-cellulose substrate from Dmexco. The drapes are made from Maharam fabric.

Verdict

Andrew Dent reserves most of his concerns for the second bedroom. "Much as I like Ikea's forest-management effort, I would prefer for it to be certified by an independent body." As for the rayon in Topaz, "just because it's natural doesn't mean it's better," he says, recommending Milliken's 180 Walls instead. And while Maharam has achieved Deko-Tex Standard 100, "there are better fabrics out there" in terms of nontoxicity, such as the Victor Innovatex line.

Second bathroom

Lifestyle Coyuchi organic-cotton towels are piled atop a Bio Glass countertop; the Delta faucet is low-flow.

Verdict

The Bio Glass encapsulates Dent's positive opinion of Eco-Suite: "It's completely recycled, it's not going to off-gas, you're not using natural resources, and it's actually quite beautiful." Although he knows of Cradle to Cradle organic-cotton towels to replace the Lifestyle product, "Who's going to ship them from Germany?" he asks. "That would throw all those good credentials out the window."



Verdict

Dent gives high marks to the strictly monitored locally produced furniture. And although the cement fireplace removes slag from the waste stream, he recommends that Tridel try using ceramic cement instead because its manufacture emits less carbon dioxide than Portland cement. He also looks forward to a day when materials like recyclable polyester foam become more common, since overfarming rubber trees for natural latex could damage ecosystems—and soy-based foams “are no different chemically” from standard polyurethane.

Living room

Custom couches are manufactured locally using wood from FSC-certified lumber yards, low-VOC stains and finishes, and Q Collection pesticide- and herbicide-free linen upholstery over natural latex fill. The living

room also features a custom cement fireplace with high slag content, PVC-free motorized shades from Lutron QED, drywall containing 99 percent recycled content, and Benjamin Moore Eco Spec paint.

