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## **Süddekör designs get dark and exotic**

LAS VEGAS – Look for another successful design portfolio from Süddekör LLC at Surfaces 2008. The company’s designers have created an even greater, more colorful portfolio for this year’s show. After years of predominantly light colors, a new trend has evolved: dark, earthy, rich and vibrant colors. Exotics also continue to fill the market’s need for a higher-end product with style.

Industry forecasters say that laminate flooring is no longer considered a cheap alternative to natural products, but stands as a viable, quality product in itself, and that the trend continues toward using laminate flooring as an alternative to real wood or marble.

“Floors are no longer accenting their environment, but are instead setting the décor theme, which is then complemented with furniture and accessories. Therefore designs are more sophisticated and expressive,” Marcel Albert, Süddekör’s Design Director says. “This trend has evolved due to advancements in printing technology, new developments in overlay technology resulting in greater clarity, and increased precision in embossed finish technology, creating a more realistic product.”

Albert also says that versatility is key. While design trends continue to focus on the natural look of woods and stone, the desire is for designs that are richer, sophisticated and often more exotic. Exotics in laminate tend to have a special allure, since many of the natural woods are extremely expensive or rare and unavailable for purchase. These are

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considered to be luxury products with unsurpassed beauty and quality and, in laminates, practicality.

“This year’s line includes many exotics from around the world, such as Del Rio Bubinga from Central Africa, Emberwood from Brazil and Paldeo from India – as well as some native woods with very new attitudes such as Fumed Oak, Liberty Elm and Artisan Cherry,” Albert says. “The wide variety of available designs allows individuals to express their unique styles.”

According to Albert, embossed finish is also becoming more of an industry standard than a novelty. The added realism boosts the quality of the product. Simple, elegant styles in homes and offices have led to a demand for similarly clean, but striking, designs in laminates. Consumers continue to purchase non-wood grain laminates, with a growing interest in tiles, usually in natural marbles. Wood grains with smooth, white ticking fit into this category well, as do the new exotics with heavy black detail. Abstracts, on the other hand, tend to have a watery, luminous appearance.

As always, the laminate consumer is looking for realism in the finished planks, so Süddekör’s designs reflect sophisticated natural images with depth and a sense of light and shadow that distinguish them from other, less true-to-nature designs.

Süddekör LLC in Agawam, Mass., is a subsidiary of 2D-Group (Süddekör/Dakor), one of the world’s leading décor printers and impregnators, headquartered in Laichingen, Germany. Süddekör LLC supplies printed decorative paper to the North American laminate industry and is the only company to offer North American laminate manufacturers a complete design service from scanning and separations, cylinder engraving, proofing and printing through to treated products, tailored to our customers’

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needs. Süddekör, with its plants in Agawam and East Longmeadow, Mass., and Biscoe, N.C., is the only single source supplier for finished, treated papers for the North American market.

More information is available at the website [www.suddekorllc.com](http://www.suddekorllc.com).

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