

TOUGH OF *glass*

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Since man first witnessed the vitrification of quartz when lightning struck sand some 5,500 years ago, we have embraced the use of glass in our homes and buildings.



Glass is used for everything from common household items – glasses, bowls and bottles – to significant architectural components, allowing the manipulation of light and the enjoyment of its historical contribution as an art form. Not surprisingly, this very environmentally friendly and adaptable substance is an even more popular building material choice today

as a result of huge technological advances that offer seemingly endless design options.

In recent years glass has taken on a new architectural role, moving from its usual use in windows and doors to becoming an integral part of the structural design itself. Glass walls, floors, stairs and roofs are reshaping the nature of our living spaces. More and more designers are taking advantage of innovations in strength and durability to incorporate the light and sound-controlling properties of glass with creative flexibility.

Bend it... shape it... melt it... paint it... laminate it... or etch it. Only your imagination will limit how you can incorporate glass into your home decorating projects. However, each application requires professional know how. Glass production is a complicated business. It can evolve from the original production of sheet goods through additional manipulation with either heat, colour or surface etching.

Among the most exciting developments is the inclusion of additional materials within the interlayer of laminated glass, including

fabrics, coloured films, wood veneers, LED lights, stone veneers and papers and dichroic films. The results are definitely delivering the WOW factor at affordable prices with the added benefit of relatively seamless installations.

Sheet glass is particularly well suited for backsplashes, countertops and shower walls, offering clean, grout-free and maintenance-free, non-porous hygienic and stain-resistant surfaces, which can be custom finished to offer unique textures and colours. The reflective characteristic of the glass surface set over either a laminated or applied substrate can give a unique three-dimensional quality to the surface, particularly if textured. The surface can be reflective or matte depending on the finish chosen, and by further strengthening the glass through the tempering process, it is safe to use behind the cooktop.

So, if you think glass might be the answer for your next interior project, remember product knowledge and expert handling, from templating and fabrication to installation, requires specific skills. So be sure to choose your designer and supplier carefully to ensure many years of timeless, carefree “feel good” living with your touch of glass! **OH**

