

# TILE

By Lila Edythe

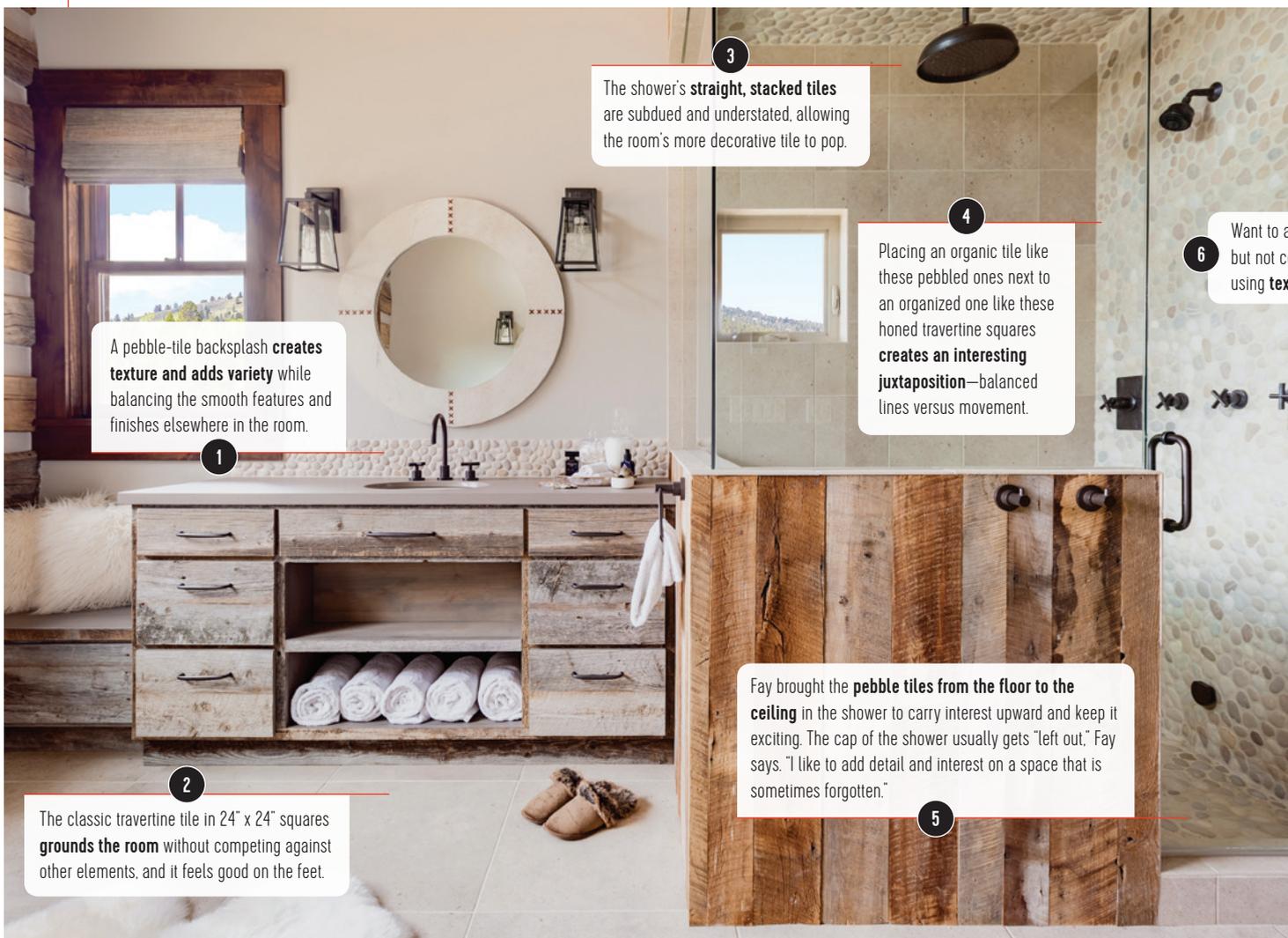
TILE PREDATES THE IDEA OF a Do It Yourself (DIY) project by many, many thousands of years. Glazed brick found at a temple in southwestern Iran has been dated to the 13th century BC. The most skilled of Mesopotamia's tile craftsmen traveled around the Persian Empire practicing

their art. It is only recently that ambitious homeowners have begun tackling tile projects themselves. "If you have access to the proper equipment, a small area of tile can be a great DIY project," says Meghan Hanson, architect and founder of Natural Dwellings Architecture and a tile DIYer.

A week after Hanson weighed in, while standing in line at Ace Hardware, I overheard a thirty-something woman in front of me say, "It was the best and worst home project I ever did." Even if she hadn't gone on to specify that it was tiling that she was talking about, the grout embedded under her nails and in her hair gave it away.

Whether you're looking for a project to do yourself or are ready to hire a tile professional, you should find inspiration in the following tips from three area designers/architects.

**KRISTIN FAY OF TRAUNER FAY DESIGNS, AND A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERIOR DESIGNERS (ASID), REMODELED THIS MASTER BATH FOR CLIENTS. "THEY WANTED TO STAY TRUE TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THEIR HOME AND COMPLEMENT ITS HAND-HEWN RECLAIMED OAK WALLS WHILE MAKING THEIR MASTER BATH MORE MODERN WITH CLEAN LINES," FAY SAYS.**



1 A pebble-tile backsplash **creates texture and adds variety** while balancing the smooth features and finishes elsewhere in the room.

3 The shower's **straight, stacked tiles** are subdued and understated, allowing the room's more decorative tile to pop.

4 Placing an organic tile like these pebbled ones next to an organized one like these honed travertine squares **creates an interesting juxtaposition**—balanced lines versus movement.

6 Want to add interest but not color? Try using **textured tiles**.

2 The classic travertine tile in 24" x 24" squares **grounds the room** without competing against other elements, and it feels good on the feet.

5 Fay brought the **pebble tiles from the floor to the ceiling** in the shower to carry interest upward and keep it exciting. The cap of the shower usually gets "left out," Fay says. "I like to add detail and interest on a space that is sometimes forgotten."

Photograph by Ryan Hittner

DESIGNER **AGNES BOURNE**, ASID, SAYS, “THE FINISHES OF AN EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR COMPLETE THE FORMS STARTED BY THE ARCHITECTURE. TILE FILLS AN IMPORTANT FUNCTION PROVIDING DECORATIVE, DURABLE SURFACES IN HIGH-TRAFFIC AREAS, GUARDING AGAINST WATER AND ABRASION DAMAGE.” BOURNE’S NEW JACKSON HOME, ESPECIALLY THE MASTER BATHROOM, IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THIS.

Wyoming consists of wide-open spaces and beautiful, verdant landscapes: textures and varied colors are authentic to that. Heath Ceramics glaze differs from tile to tile within a single color range. Here the variation in Heath’s Heron Blue glaze provides **visual depth and rhythm** to an otherwise flat surface.

1

Tile and stone combinations tell stories about natural and manufactured environments, and contrasting shapes and scale **enliven the narrative and energize** a room.

2

Using cut stones native to an area’s geologic composition gives a **natural connection to the outdoor environment** and brings a sense of place inside a home. Various colors of pebbles offer color options for accessories such as towels and wall finishes.

3

Natural stone like this slate can be used elsewhere—in the foyer, kitchen, and other heavy-use areas—as a **functional, unifying element**. When sealed, its surface and the grout lines become water- and wearproof. Install natural stone tile for **maximum durability**.

4



YOU'LL BE HARD-PRESSED TO FIND A MORE COLORFUL HOUSE THAN THIS **CARNEY LOGAN BURKE** ONE IN DOWNTOWN. THE HEART OF ALL OF THE COLORS—TURQUOISE, BAMBOO, DARK BROWN, AUBERGINE, ORANGE—ARE THE GLASS SUBWAY TILES IN THE KITCHEN.



Using a bold tile color can make a kitchen feel larger and give it more **visual depth**.

1

A backsplash is the perfect place to play with color. Modwalls' 3" x 6" lemongrass glass tiles pop here against neutral cabinets and counters.

2

Look for unique places to use tile, like the exposed back of a kitchen island, but don't go overboard. Because this kitchen's backsplash already makes a statement, a **neutral textural tile** (Dune tiles by modularArts) was chosen for the island.

3

Whether shopping at a local store or online, be sure to **order sample tiles**. This is especially important when using colored tiles. Place the sample in the space you plan on tiling to get an accurate idea of what it will look like. 

4