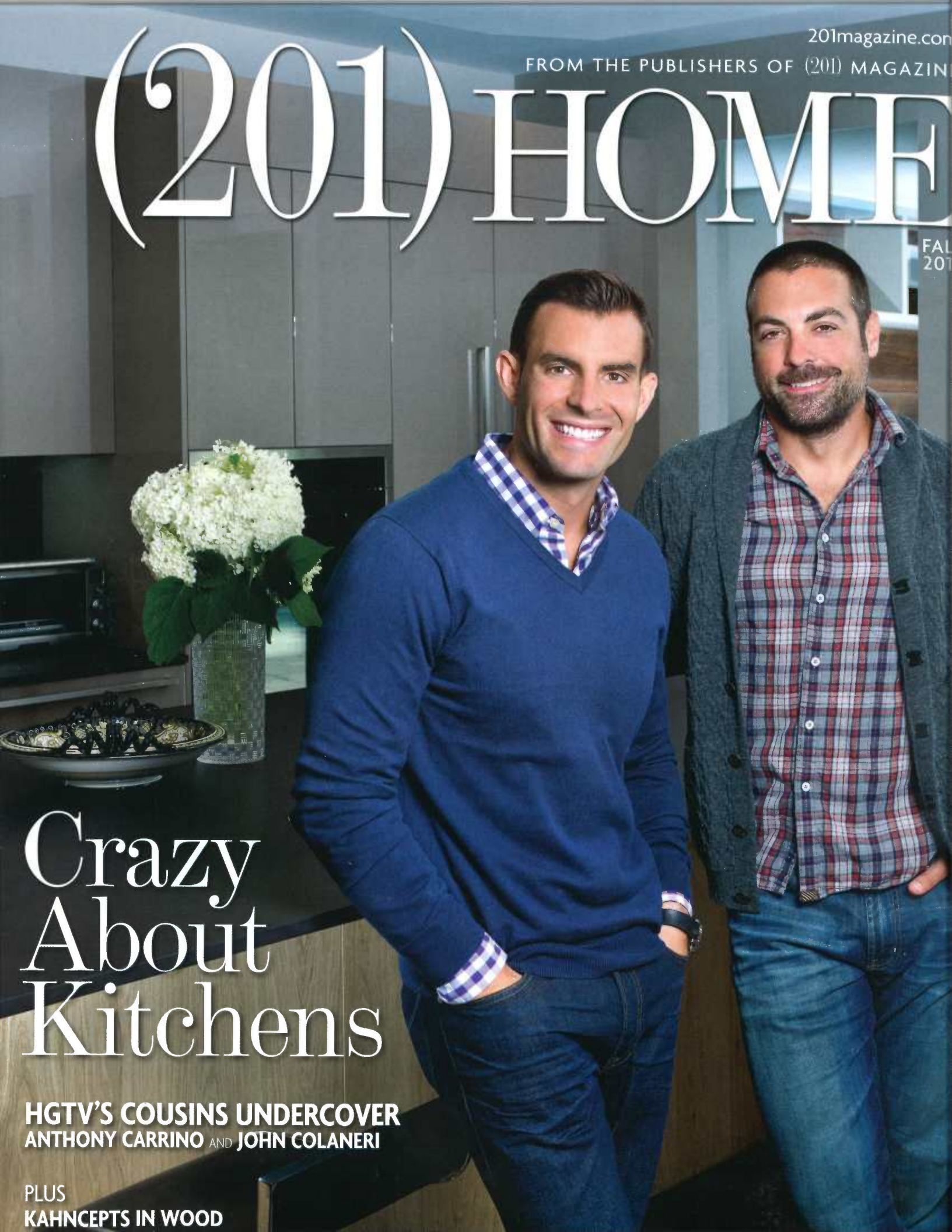


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Crazy About Kitchens

HGTV'S COUSINS UNDERCOVER
ANTHONY CARRINO AND JOHN COLANERI

PLUS
KAHNCEPTS IN WOOD

Classic Coverings

Selecting the best tiles to transform your space



SIMPLE AND SLEEK Ceramic tiles are considered a great choice to use in a bathroom because they are highly resistant and easy to clean.

Mildred Nzioki, showroom manager at Porcelanosa USA in Paramus, answers questions about tile and how to choose the right one for your household needs.



Q. What is the difference between wall tile and floor tile?

A. Wall tiles are thin and semi-porous, allowing them to adhere to glue on vertical surfaces. They also have a softer glaze and a body that's not strong enough to withstand weight. Floor tiles are thicker. They are rated by the Porcelain Enamel Institute on a scale of one to five. One is very low foot traffic; two to three, medium traffic; four for heavy traffic; and five for commercial floors.

Q. I have a small bathroom and I'm looking for small 12-inch by 12-inch tile, what do you recommend?

A. Contrary to what most customers think, a small bathroom will look bigger with a large format tile. There will be less grout joints thus making it look bigger. On top of that, it will reduce maintenance.

Q. Will tile change its appearance in sunlight?

A. Tile colors are permanent and do not change appearance with direct sunlight.

Q. What glass tile is recommended for a kitchen backsplash?

A. Any size of glass tile can be used on a backsplash. It is important to take into consideration the number of electric outlets present. If you have numerous outlets, use glass mosaics on a mesh as they are easier to work with around the electrical outlets. Subway glass tiles and 4-inch by 4-inch tiles are other options. You can use larger glass tiles with minimal outlets for a clean, seamless look.

Q. I want porcelain tiles for the walls in my bathroom that are resistant to the elements. What do you recommend?

A. Porcelain or ceramic tiles. The main difference between them is the water absorption. Porcelain tiles have a water absorption that is below 0.5 percent. Ceramic tiles have a higher absorption on the body of the tile so that it adheres better to a vertical surface. The face (or glaze) of the tile is

always impervious to water, regardless if it is a porcelain or a glazed ceramic tile.

Q. Is tile more expensive than carpet?

A. If you add the maintenance, replacement and disposable costs combined with the durability of the tile, at the end of the life cycle, tile is considerably more economical. Tile does not retain odors, and is cleaner and more ecological.

Q. What tiles can be used outside?

A. Is the area completely exposed to the elements or covered? Completely exposed areas need a tile with a high level of slip resistance or an anti-slip finish. Porcelain tiles work better in snow areas due to 0.5 percent water absorption ensuring frost resistance. Covered areas can have either stone (specified for outside use) or porcelain tiles. ■

Interior designer Mildred Nzioki has been part of the sales team with Porcelanosa USA for 10 years. She can be reached at (201) 712-0556 or mnzioki@porcelanosa-usa.com.