

Period Homes

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2016 PALLADIO AWARDS



True or Faux

Myriad choices exist when it comes to roofing for your period home project.

BY GORDON BOCK

Many people assume that all roofing is immutable—products that are off-the-rack and what-you-see-is-what-you-get—but folks who deal with period houses know better. Not only are there companies that will customize standard offerings to the needs and tastes of their customers, or recreate roofing patterns no longer in production, but also even create new products that cross over in appearance from one material type to another.

Should there be any doubt, the proliferation of shapes, colors, and materials that made roofing so interesting in the first half of the 20th century, but waned by the 1970s, is on the rise again, and propelled

by consumer interest. “We’re seeing a lot of growth in high-end custom homes,” says Sherrye McCabe at Ludowici Roof Tiles in New Lexington, Ohio, “but since these houses are trending not as large as in the past, clients are choosing higher-quality finishes, which really plays well for us.” She notes that while clay tile is among the more expensive roofing materials, it brings returns. “With that price tag comes quality, durability, and customization that allows a homeowner to really make this roof their own.”

Leslie Franklin at GAF Materials Corporation in Parsippany, New Jersey, reports that asphaltic shingles are also in a big upswing. “The market for creative roofing shingle types has never been better,” she says. “Homeowners are more aware of the different

types of shingles and how they can truly impact the overall aesthetic of the home.” She adds that roofs can represent up to 40 percent of a home’s curb appeal. “Homeowners certainly want to ensure that they are installing roofing products that will protect the contents of their home, but they also want to use the exterior of the home as a way of expressing themselves and showing a bit more of their personality.”

As for concrete tile, Michael Lukis of Vande Hey Raleigh in Little Chute, Wisconsin, sees a similar interest. “Our big goal is to give each customer exactly what they want in color and create one-of-a-kind roofs for people that really want to do something unique and different.” He explains that their point of pride is not only quality, but all the colors, color com-

binations, and sequences of color they can make—even different finishes on the surface of the tile. “Our plant manager tells me that, in the last 30 years, we’ve made over 4,000 different color combinations.”

CUSTOM CLADDING

In fact, color and customizing typically go hand-in-hand. For instance, Franklin says, “Several options exist to take the look of a GAF Designer Roof and customize it even further,” noting that this is especially the case with the variety of shingle styles available within the company’s Value Designer Shingle Collection. “A perfect example are Slateline Shingles, which have such a clean, slate-look profile. The line lends itself to customization through the combination of different shingle colors to create interesting designs on the roof.” She adds, “All of our shingle colors are designed with input from color and design experts who are well versed in current and forward-looking trends.”

Clay tile, where pigments are fired-on in the glazing process, is another roof material readily customized with color. “Most of our products are custom and made on an order-by-order basis,” says McCabe of Ludowici, which offers over 40 designer colors as well as their custom color development process. “Because we have the ability to customize not only the roof tile profile, but also the textures and colors, we’re also able to produce really good matches of existing tile or for the aesthetic of a house or building.”

Lukis says Vande Hey Raleigh uses different surface color sprays to produce in concrete tiles what are called color sequences. “We don’t just have three distinct colors, one after another, we will actually blend the colors softly and subtly throughout the tiles.” As he explains, some tiles will have distinct colors, but here and there the viewer will also see a flow of colors within one tile. “It creates a softer effect on the roof,” he says, “not this blotchy checkerboard-like appearance.” Being a smaller producer, he says they can be more custom-oriented. “We work closely with each customer and building owner to create the kind of look they want.”

For roofing tiles, customizing can also mean possibilities for recreating long-gone patterns. Lukis



Designed by Charles Hilton Architects this project has a natural slate roof. In between the hand-hewn timbering, are Ludowici tile.