

Aside from the illusion of extra space, the Reflective Steel laminates on the wall and ceiling emanate a sumptuous glow.

Opposite: A living room ceiling features the characterful Reflective Steel Lava laminates, while the Midnight Mill laminates on the side cabinets provide stylish contrast



METALS MAKE MAGIC

Laminates are a great way of incorporating the lustre and magnificence of metals into your spaces, says Tony Tan.



Mention metals and interior design, and images of the corrugated iron frame of a dining table, side console with hand-crafted brass legs or retro-inspired aluminium cabinet may come to mind. Metals are also common in functional and decorative pieces such as lamps, vases and sculptures, as well as dining ware.

If you really desire to have a sizeable piece of real metal on the wall or ceiling of your living room or dining area, you must be prepared to spend tens, even hundreds of thousands, to have it done. Aside from the potentially astronomical cost, there is the tedious process to consider. This includes the time required to source for the piece of metal, cutting it to the correct shape and size, and then installing it. Altogether, it is a huge challenge, even for the best contractor with the commensurate experience and expertise.

Still, metals are very sought after, especially when it comes to embellishing surfaces.

“A metallic finish is regarded as a premium finish. If you have visited any luxed-up spaces, often, there will be metals used that are designed to catch the eye,” says Dennis Cheok,

creative director of UPSTRS. A trained architect, Cheok founded the Singapore-based collaborative spatial studio in 2011 and since then, it has garnered multiple design awards.

A SCINTILLATING CHOICE

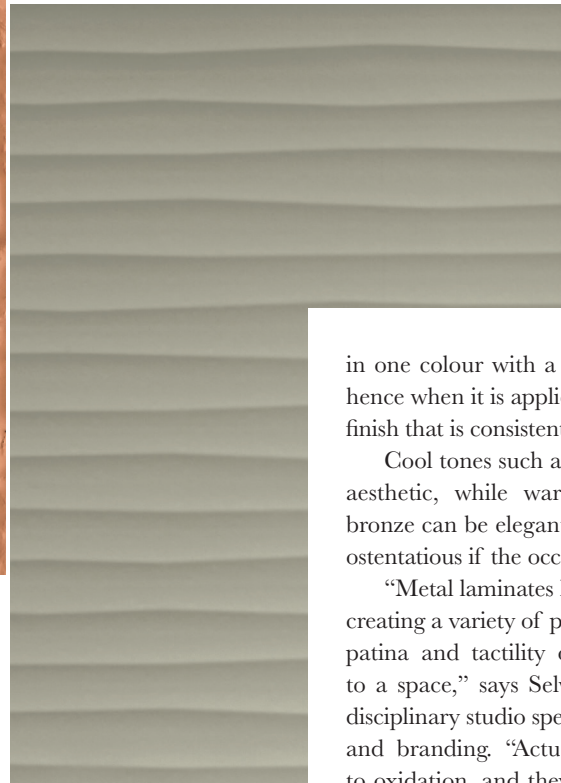
The good news for all metal-loving aficionados is that a more cost-effective surface solution exists nowadays – metal laminates. Unlike marble- or wood-like laminates, which mimic the real thing by imbuing the uppermost surface of the laminates with similar characteristics, genuine metal laminates are endowed with a topmost layer that is made from real metal.

Metal laminates can also be finished in myriad textures like polished, brushed and even patterns as well as a host of colours to create infinite possibilities as they complement other materials on furniture and furnishings. A good example is the layering of softer textures like suede upholstery or linen curtains, which will soften metal laminates that tend to have a cold and hard effect.

Another advantage of using metal laminates over a sheet of real metal is the consistency of tone. Many designs come



Clockwise from above:
Reflective Rose Aqua
laminate; Chardonnay Wave
laminate; bathroom walls
adorned with Chardonnay
Verti laminates



in one colour with a regular shade throughout the surface, hence when it is applied onto a vertical surface, the result is a finish that is consistent in hue and reflectivity.

Cool tones such as silver and steel bring a sleek, modern aesthetic, while warmer hues like gold, rose gold and bronze can be elegant, subtly glamorous, or even downright ostentatious if the occasion calls for it.

“Metal laminates have a lustre and sheen that work when creating a variety of palettes. Depending on the tone, texture, patina and tactility of the laminates, they add character to a space,” says Selwyn Low, director of Farm, an interdisciplinary studio specialising in architectural work, interiors and branding. “Actual metal sheets are more susceptible to oxidation, and they are also less malleable, making them unsuitable for certain applications.”

GAME CHANGER

While there are several laminate brands that have a range of metal and metallic offerings, there is only one brand in Singapore that is solely dedicated to real metal laminates.

Dekodur Distil (dekodurdistil.com) is a premium brand of specially curated German engineered high-pressure metal laminates (HPML) from Dekodur, a world leader in laminate technology for over 150 years. In fact, Dekdour was the first to introduce HPML back in 1959.

Headlining Dekodur Distil is FLUX – a compelling portfolio of genuine metal laminates with five series that showcase a wide selection of eye-catching designs and colours. The series comprise Structures, Reflective, Brushed, Mill and Magnetic – each with its own personality that will get the creative juices flowing.

Structures, as its name implies, features metal laminates with surfaces that are truly three-dimensional, matched by a tactility that makes you want to run your fingers over them. This series has five patterns in total – the most of any series – and three of them were just launched this August. Lava is inspired by the vitality and potency of molten lava while Aqua is influenced by the ever-moving surface of a river. Crater is sure to attract eyeballs as its distinctive and characterful finish looks like the surface of the moon.

For those who prefer metal laminates with a more subtle, refined finish, then Brushed and Mill are two series that fit the bill. Both exude sophistication and elegance with surfaces that commingle with light for a soothing radiance. When cleverly


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used on vertical surfaces like walls and pillars, they endow the space with classiness.

However, if a space needs something that will turn heads at an instant, the Reflective series will do not only so, but keep one’s attention on its captivating, mirror-like surface. Imbued with a super reflective finish, these metal laminates enliven interiors by creating contrast that shines. Wherever it is applied on, that is where everyone’s gaze will be. Also, it has the magic to make a room look larger, replicating the effect of a large mirror.

“I like the core metal tones that form the basis of the four FLUX series as well as the way the brand continuously builds textures and finishes to it. It is a focused and well-curated collection that consistently evolves in a highly sophisticated way,” adds Cheok. “In particular, I love the simplicity of the Brushed and Mill laminates, and the artisanal textures of Lava, Aqua and Crater.”

With the advancement of laminate technology, genuine metal laminates offer wider variety, more flexibility, easier application, and cost effectiveness when it comes to embellishing metal surfaces in your spaces. Best of all, you can do so without any compromise to the gleaming beauty and exquisite allure that this lustrous material is renowned for. 

PHOTOS: LIVING ROOM (SUMMERHAUS D ZIGNI); KITCHEN (PINS STUDIO)

SHEER MAGNETISM

Rounding out Dekodur Distil’s FLUX Portfolio is a series that is different from the other four. The Magnetic series doesn’t flaunt head-turning aesthetics but utilises the magic of metals to showcase functionality like no other.

All laminates in this innovative series are embedded with a special metal core which attracts magnets hence you can attach anything on its surface with magnets. Select any Writeable Magnetic laminate and you can write, draw or doodle with whiteboard and chalkboard markers. Additionally, the Matt White design can also be projected on hence it is ideal for presentations.

There is even a laminate which can be painted on or applied with decorative materials such as wallpaper and other laminates up to 3mm thick. Named Raw Magnetic, you can now have any colour or design on a wall with the added usefulness of it being able to attract magnets. The possibilities are endless.

With working from home being so prevalent nowadays, the Magnetic series is an asset in making any room in your home, conducive for both study and work.



Above: Rose Mill laminates on the ceiling and bar counter add a touch of luxury to a living room
Right: A kitchen wall applied with Matt Black Magnetic writeable laminates