

HAND PAINTED TILES FOR THE GARDEN

MIZNER INDUSTRIES

Centuries after decorative tiles were first used to adorn ancient palaces, mosques and Mediterranean and Persian gardens they are still part of exterior design today. One of companies of craftspeople making these today are Mizner Industries in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who take commission worldwide. I found them to be extremely efficient as they turned round an order for me (including delivery time) in four weeks.

Addison Cairns Mizner lived as a teenager in Guatemala City where his father was Envoy Extraordinary and Minister to Central America. He was captivated by the Spanish style of architecture and trained as an architect. He worked as a draftsman in California for Willis Polk, the leader of the Spanish “mission” style of design. Mizner had studied in Spain, travelled to the Far East, Australia, and lived for a few years in Hawaii. In 1918, staying in Florida as a guest of Paris Singer (of Singer sewing machines), he found he could not find the required quality of decoration for a project he was undertaking as an architect. He started Mizner Industries, which by 1925, was an established and highly regarded company. Unfortunately, an investment in a large hotel project at Palm Beach failed and Mizner was left in debt in 1926.

In 1998, Brenda Lusher, a long-time admirer of the Mizner products, re-created the company to make high quality hand-painted tiles for interiors and exterior use. The tiles are based upon original tiles imported from Europe by Mizner in the 1900s, and the company has an archive of designs to help clients to make a choice. Tile patterns can be seen on the website:

<http://www.miznerindustries.com>

“Not only do hand-painted tiles contribute a sense of elegance and artistic expression, but by being custom, they provide exclusivity. Even in this market’s downturn, our artists are working almost around the clock to produce custom designs for those in that higher echelon where being one-of-a-kind truly matters



Photograph: © Mizner Industries

“We’ve been told that hand-painted tiles add charm, a sense of history and are quickly becoming a ‘must have’ commodity” says Brenda Lusher.”

Custom designs have taken the form of lily pads for an indoor pond, around a magnificent pool, in a Mediterranean garden for an outdoor summer kitchen, and for a decorative staircase.

While some projects have unlimited budgets, Mizner industries are quite happy to supply a small number of tiles (my order was for 12) for a small courtyard feature.

On of the many tile designs, suitable for a Persian themed garden



The tiles themselves are of glorious colours and are weatherproof (although I would, being a designer who is anxious about her art pieces, want to protect them with fleece if a really hard frost threatens in Scotland, for example).



The pool



More tiles

Photographs: © Mizner Industries

“We travel extensively to locate unusual tile designs from the past which will appeal to architects, builders and designers today. I was immediately drawn to the classic and unique Arabesque patterns, which date back to the mid-1500s and represent an

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extraordinary blend of influences from ancient China, Central Asia and Greece.”
– Brenda Lusher

The new Arabesque line by Mizner Industries is replicated from the opulent interiors of ancient temples of Kusadasi, Baghdad and Istanbul.



Tiles made by Mizner Industries range from approximately \$26 (£16.30) to \$78 (£89 – October 2009 conversions) per tile, depending upon the tile design.



An outdoor summer kitchen

A decorative staircase





For more information on tiles by Mizner Industries, please visit online at www.miznerindustries.com or by calling Mizner Industries at +1 954 492 8710.