

## Antonella Romano, The Tile Oracle

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NORTH JERSEY HOMES

Antonella Romano is the owner of the Stone and Tile Emporium in Wycoff ([www.stoneandtilenj.com](http://www.stoneandtilenj.com)). A third-generation tile designer from legendary Italian stone manufacturing family, she is an expert on every aspect of stone and tile, from design and installation to geology and fabrication.

Send your stone and tile questions to Antonella at [emolo@northjersey.com](mailto:emolo@northjersey.com).



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**ANTONELLA ROMANO**

porcelain is waterproof and frost-proof. Also, there is now an array of porcelain tiles that can mimic the look of limestone, tumbles marble, slate and other stones, so you can use porcelain but have it appear like a natural material. Glazed porcelain is a perfect go-to tile when you don't know what to use!

Use through-body porcelain for bathrooms or entrance foyers. The body and color of through-body porcelain is the same as glazed, but it is fired only once at a very high temperature. It is very dense, with a smooth finish that is usually glossy, although sometimes it has a satin matt finish. Its virtue is that, if the material should chip, the color goes all the way through the tile, which makes the damage unnoticeable. With different colors applied, it can be made to mimic honed or polished marbles. Note: Be careful when using through-body porcelain in living areas, because it can be very slippery — you don't want to fall on your beautiful porcelain floors. However, it's great for bathrooms and entrance foyers, because it's strong and creates a sleek, formal look.

Finally, when looking at a display in a store or a catalog, remember that you are looking at a display. They're selling the product on looks, not always on function. So always make sure to find out the best function of a particular tile before you use it and then make sure it is installed correctly. A choice based on looks alone can easily result in chipping, breaking and all kinds of tile tragedies you didn't anticipate, rather than the remodeling reverie you and your wife deserve.

On Saturday, April 9, Antonella Romano will address the topic: "Planning Your Bathroom Design and Layout Like You Are Planning a Wedding."

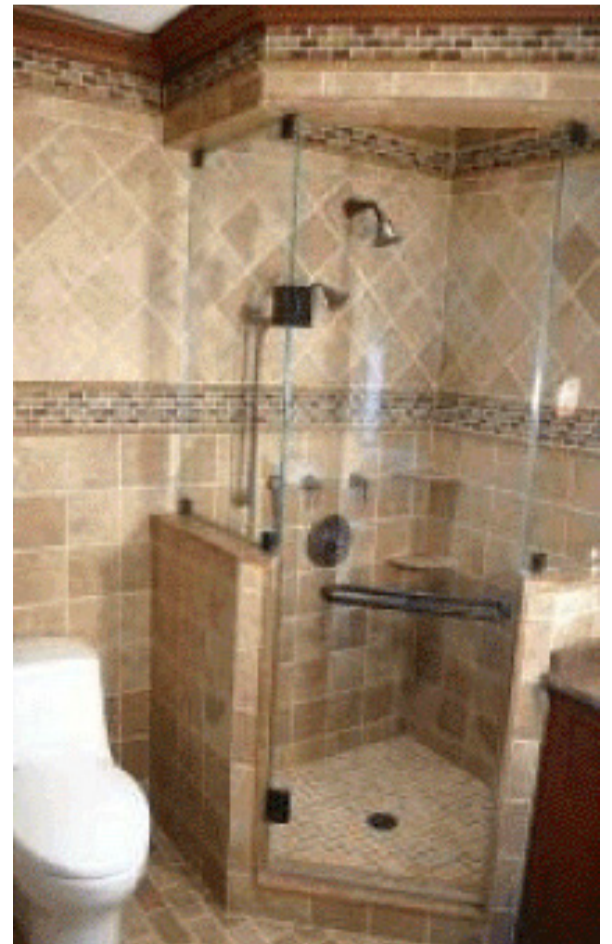
**THE CHALLENGE:** I am in the process of remodeling my home. My wife and I love the look of porcelain and ceramic tiles. Specifically, she wants shiny ceramic floors and I want porcelain. Is there anything we should know before we get started?

**THE SOLUTION:** Indeed.

When selecting a tile, you're first drawn in by its beauty. But as in love, the right tile isn't just about looks, it's about compatibility — i.e., where it's used and what it's used for. Here's what you need to know:

Ceramic tile should only be used for walls. That's because it is made from red or white hardened clay that is fired in the kiln, glazed, then put back into the kiln. Because ceramic tile is a soft clay and is fired in low temperatures, it will most likely chip and crack if you use it on the floor (especially if it's installed poorly). Ceramic tiles also absorb water, so they cannot be used outside. I suggest that, if your wife loves ceramic tiles, you use them in the kitchen backsplash or the bathroom walls.

Use glazed porcelain for floors and walls. Glazed porcelain has a white porcelain body that has been fired at a very high temperature, then re-fired with a layer of color and finish, which makes it very dense and much stronger than ceramic tile. Glazed por-



*Glazed porcelain tiles are ideal for both the walls and floor of a bathroom, because they are durable and waterproof. In this design, coordinating tumbled-glass tiles have been added as accents.*