

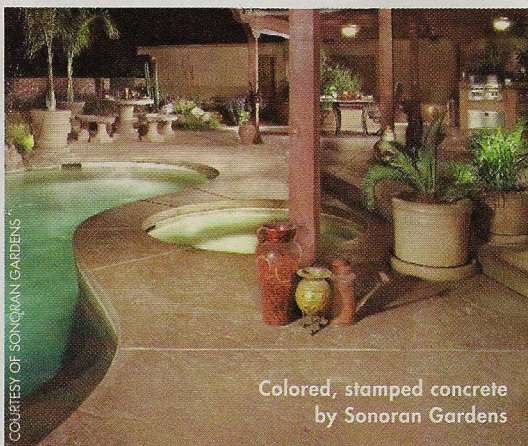
Patio Flooring 101

BY ELENA ACOBA

Spring weather beckons you to spend more time on the patio, relaxing, entertaining, cooking, and dining. A perfect backyard retreat starts with the appropriate patio flooring. The right material underfoot sets the tone for the rest of your furnishings and features—making your space comfortable and inviting.

POURED CONCRETE

Concrete has gone way beyond gray slab. “It’s the most versatile material,” says Paul Connolly, a landscape designer with Sonoran Gardens. “I think concrete is underused.” Depending on the techniques used, concrete can look elegant or informal. And when smoothed out, it keeps furniture stable.



Colored, stamped concrete by Sonoran Gardens

A rainbow of colors allows concrete to carry a solid hue, sport a mural, blend into nature’s textures or, through a stamping process, simulate laid stone, tile, or brick. A scored slab creates an illusion of tiles. It can be “broomed” or “swirled” to add texture. Exposed aggregate concrete provides lots of texture by bringing the rock in the mixture to the surface. That texture can range from grainy with $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch and smaller rock to very rough with river rock. Aggregate concrete also comes in a variety of colors.

Costs per square foot, installed: Pouring color concrete averages \$4.50. For scoring, add at least 50 cents. Water-based or acid staining adds around \$2.50–4. Stamped concrete averages \$8.50–10. Exposed aggregate concrete starts around \$4.50. ▶



Travertine and concrete pavers by Sonoran Gardens