

# Window shopping



From plain to patterned, the choice is enormous



This is the place to perfect your kitchen



# Salisbury Tile Store

We take a look at how this new business is gaining an ardent following throughout the region

**O**pening a tile shop was the very last thing on Philip Gosden's mind after being made redundant from The County Tile Warehouse in 2012. He was all set to leave the industry behind for pastures new and tile-less. On learning this, we were pretty intrigued to find out exactly how it's come to pass that he's now the proud owner of one of Salisbury's most vibrant new independent businesses, selling – you guessed it – tiles.

It turns out that his years of building a good rep in the industry went a long way to forming the decision to open Salisbury Tile Store. After his decision to leave the tile business behind for good, he was approached by a steady stream of former clients and contacts, all seeking

his experience in the business to help with queries and products, and many of them urging him to open his own place. Eventually the torrent of requests became too strong to ignore and Philip actually began to give the idea of his own tile store some thought.

That thought evolved to see us standing here today, in the packed warehouse that Philip opened back in February 2013. And 'packed' is an apposite word – this relatively small space is bursting with a metaphorical feast of tiles: glossy ones, matt ones, small ones, huge ones, patterned ones, plain ones... its enough to inspire an adjective-laden new children's book (should any authors be looking for ideas).

It's the enormous tiles that are the biggest news right now, Philip assures me.

Followers of interior trends take note: the large format tiles are where it's at and are flying off the shelves (well, as fast as an enormous heavy chunk of tile can do).

### Working together

With 80 per cent of last year's business coming from trade customers, this market forms the bulk of Salisbury Tile Store's custom, but as word gets around retail footfall is increasing too. Aside from the shop's impressive range (Philip stopped counting products at 2,500) this successful development of business during hard financial times could be down, at least in part, to Philip's business philosophy. He firmly believes in complementary companies working together to help customers get what they want. Call it 'synergy', if you want to get



Statement splashback by Off The Wall Glass



Salisbury Tile Store does what it says on the tin

"I AIM TO OFFER THE VERY BEST I CAN FOR THE BEST PRICES I CAN..."



We'd deck out our whole house in these if we could



There are plenty of bold options



Nice samples, and good taste in magazines too...

properly business about the matter. So, for example, if Salisbury Tile Store can't supply your needs, or if you need help with anything related to your purchase, you can be sure you'll be offered honest advice and considered recommendations to help you along.

In today's marketplace, this kind of direct and helpful approach goes a helluva long way. Of course, it helps that the prices are competitive too: "I keep my margins low and aim to offer the very best I can for the best prices I can," explains Philip.

It all adds up to a great business model, but on visiting, the attraction that most springs out to me is the potential for finding interesting and different products here. The magpie in me is drawn to the

very shiniest, jewel-bright tiles, while a statement splashback at the front of the store is enough to draw anyone's eye. This fused glass piece is by Ali Gibson of Off The Wall Glass and – as befits his business ethos – Philip directs anyone interested in this kind of beautiful bespoke piece directly to Ali.

I'm fairly bamboozled by the sheer scope of the range of tiles on offer here, but leave the store feeling safe in the knowledge that should I return to deck out my kitchen or bathroom in the future, Philip will be on hand to offer a helping hand with my choices. **SL**

**Salisbury Tile Store, Unit 2 Faraday Centre, Faraday Road, Salisbury; 01722 325306; salburytilestore.net**