

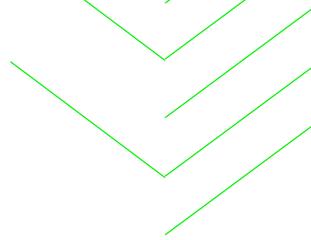
# HERRING- BONE 2.0

# HADI TEHERANI



*Hadi Teherani with design templates for the Parador Edition at his favourite place in his own office: never losing the curiosity to be driven by perfectionism.*

The architect and product designer, Hadi Teherani, has developed innovative laminate floors for Parador and reinterpreted the herringbone engineered wood floor almost as an aside. In the exclusive FLOOR interview, the man who now lives in Hamburg, talks about responsibility, the power of good ideas and about tales of the Arabian Nights.



Floor: Living spaces are an expression of our own individual demands and our individual attitude towards life. What part do floors play for you in this respect?

Hadi Teherani: For me floors are the first thing, something existential. He who has nothing and finds himself in a field will always make himself a floor first before starting on the walls and a ceiling. The floor is the platform. It talks with the room, with the walls and ceilings. The one is inconceivable without the other. Whether we have a white floor that reflects light and shadow, a quality floor made of natural stone or a timber with a ship's deck character: it is always about making a statement. What a poet can express with words, an architect can do just the same with materials on the floor, ceiling and walls.

F: As an architect and product designer, you design private apartments and office buildings, exhibition halls and furniture, lights and bikes – and now even innovative laminate and engineered wood floors for Parador. In this respect you are often called a perfectionist. How do you describe your pre-tension yourself?

HT: Whatever we do, we always try to do people justice. We feel the responsibility to develop sustainable, ecological architecture that gives people pleasure, good work conditions and an identity in the place. In addition: if you handle something, you also have to think it through to the end. If you design a house, go into detail, perfectionism automatically comes into play – particularly if you want to design holistically. In this way, not only do we ask ourselves how the floor should be designed in a house, we also deal with the nature of the objects that will later be placed on top of it. This is what guides us and what brings major benefits to our clients: the holistic way of looking at things. Because whoever can tell the whole and the dependencies of the individual elements from each other, is more predisposed to find solutions.

F: Frank Lloyd Wright is one of the first architects of the last century who developed his buildings down to the last detail of the interior design. Do you see yourself following his tradition?

HT: Wright exemplified that – it was the same in Bauhaus architecture, however, Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Corbusier saw the whole. They developed building systems born of industrialisation – systems that many architects can no longer conceive these days, because you are always pressed into some pigeonhole and are happy if you fulfil what is asked of you there. It is rare for anyone to really take the time to think about something over at length – and to thus also give more back. Yet it is precisely that which gives you the most fulfilment personally.

F: How does the perspective of the product designer differ from that of the architect in terms of all-round approach?

HT: The job of the architect is more complex. He must concern himself with the place, the culture and the religion – and create the framework that allows the other trades to do their job. The blueprint is already there – you just have to recognise it. Every place provides good ingredients for a design. Interior architecture can follow on from this. The products must be more neutral and apply to many places. They must be able to find their bearings in many places.

F: Your ›New Classics‹ edition combines marble and wood finishes, places oriental ornamentation over classic decors and reinvents herringbone almost as an aside. How do you actually come by your ideas – and what happens in your imagination with the products in the space?

HT: The space becomes a place of desire. The visitor asks himself: ›That looks good – what is that down to?‹ Then he sees that actually only the formats are put together differently. If you just move a few things, you suddenly create a different level, which draws the eye again in a very different way.

F: Wood especially is a material that is always very individual due to its specific cracks, textures and grains. Did that influence your work on your ›New Classics‹ engineered wood floors?

HT: Real things are often the most beautiful. In top quality architecture, facades are now structured so that disorders are introduced to the mathematical order – whether it is a cloud, a retreat that reminds you of something natural meaning that something living arises from the mathematical. In this context, wood plays a very crucial role.

F: For architects, ›good‹ products are usually those that are comprehensible, if not absolutely natural. When it comes to laminate flooring, you are working with ›fictitious‹ surfaces. Is that a problem for you?

HT: A wood floor should be a wood floor, and nobody wants to knock on a natural stone wall and see that it is actually made of cardboard. But it is precisely this question that we asked ourselves: how do we make a laminate that can produce the warmth, the interior feeling of a wood floor – and from which you can tell at the same time that it is not a wood floor? Maybe the day will come when timbers are no longer available at all. What is there then that has this radiance, the positive properties that we are looking for? Then we need something that you can rely on. In the case of laminate we are working with things that can be recycled – laminate is print on paper. From this point of view we have a tool kit that offers a variety of ideas. ...



- 1 *Man with perspective: The view from Hadi Teherani's office looks out on the no less spectacular office building, Dockland Hamburg, which the architect also designed.*
- 2 *Sketches from the hand of the master hang throughout the building. Many are not allowed to be photographed – trade secret!*
- 3 *Translating the special value, which the floor traditionally has in many cultures, in a team in contemporary design: Teherani, staff from the department for product design.*

... F: Some of the new Edition floors are heavily influenced by oriental ornamentation. What is your own personal relationship with this design language?

HT: Many of these patterns were conceived in Iran. The floor plays a special role there; in particular the floor coverings too. Persian carpets can never be beaten in the way they are produced and in terms of their ornamentation. That is a wealth of riches that is actually priceless. Generally speaking, the way that the floor is held in such esteem in Iran goes back to the nomads. They used to camp anywhere, had to set up a tent and needed a floor area. A carpet was easy to transport in this respect. We know this from films, from the ›Tales of the Arabian Nights‹: you can create worlds in the desert that can barely be beaten in terms of riches. The floor is a sign of wealth there: those who could afford it owned more elaborate carpets.

F: How do you manage, during the design process, to transfer what start out as two-dimensional views of the products and the atmosphere that subsequently emerges in the third dimension?

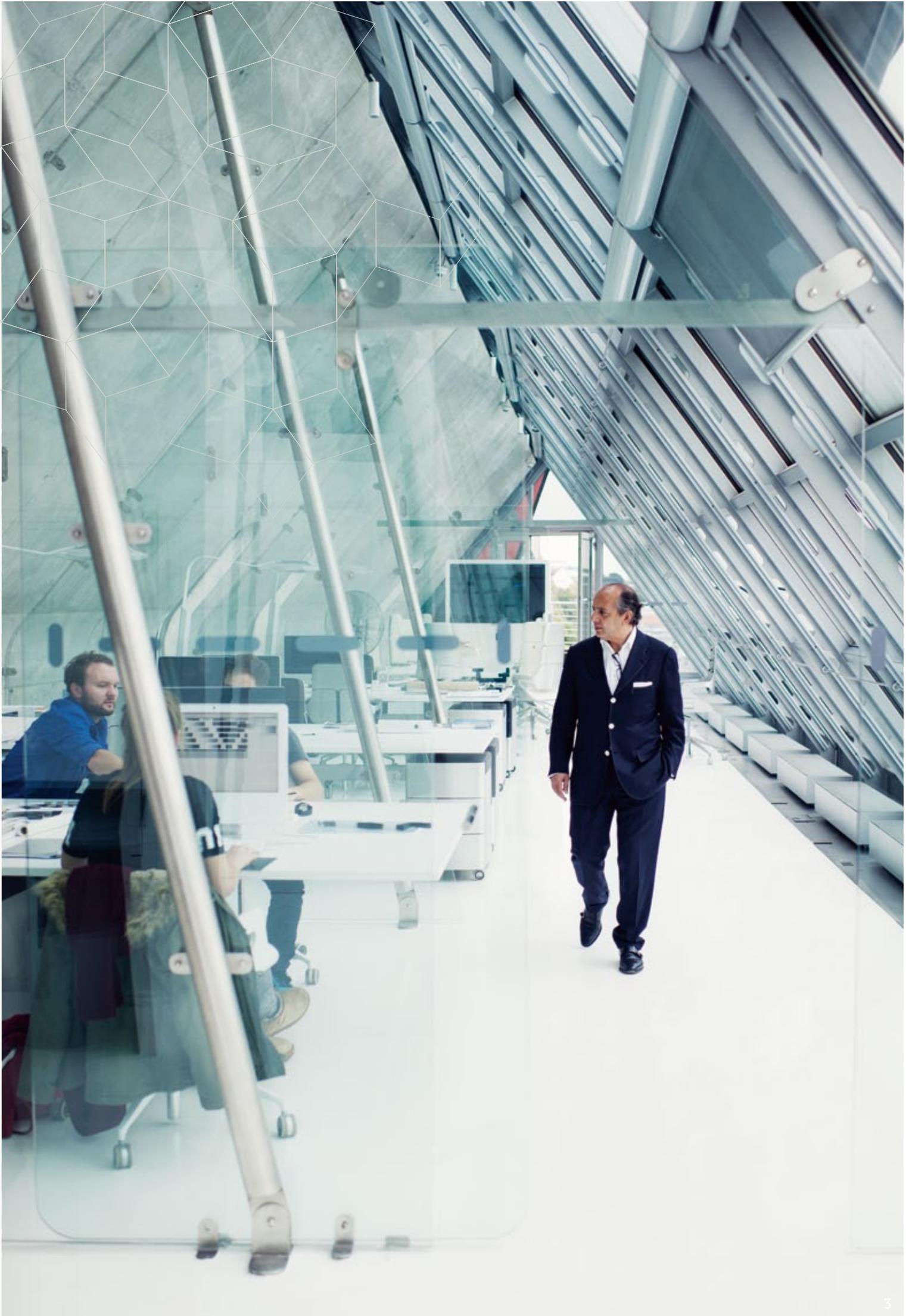
HT: By thinking about the whole space and not just the square metres that we are working on at the time. How does a floor react under artificial lighting, or in the morning when a ray of light falls on it? To answer these questions, when I imagine the floor, I also add the walls and ceiling. Then you know whether something interferes – or whether it adds more value. A space depends on many things.

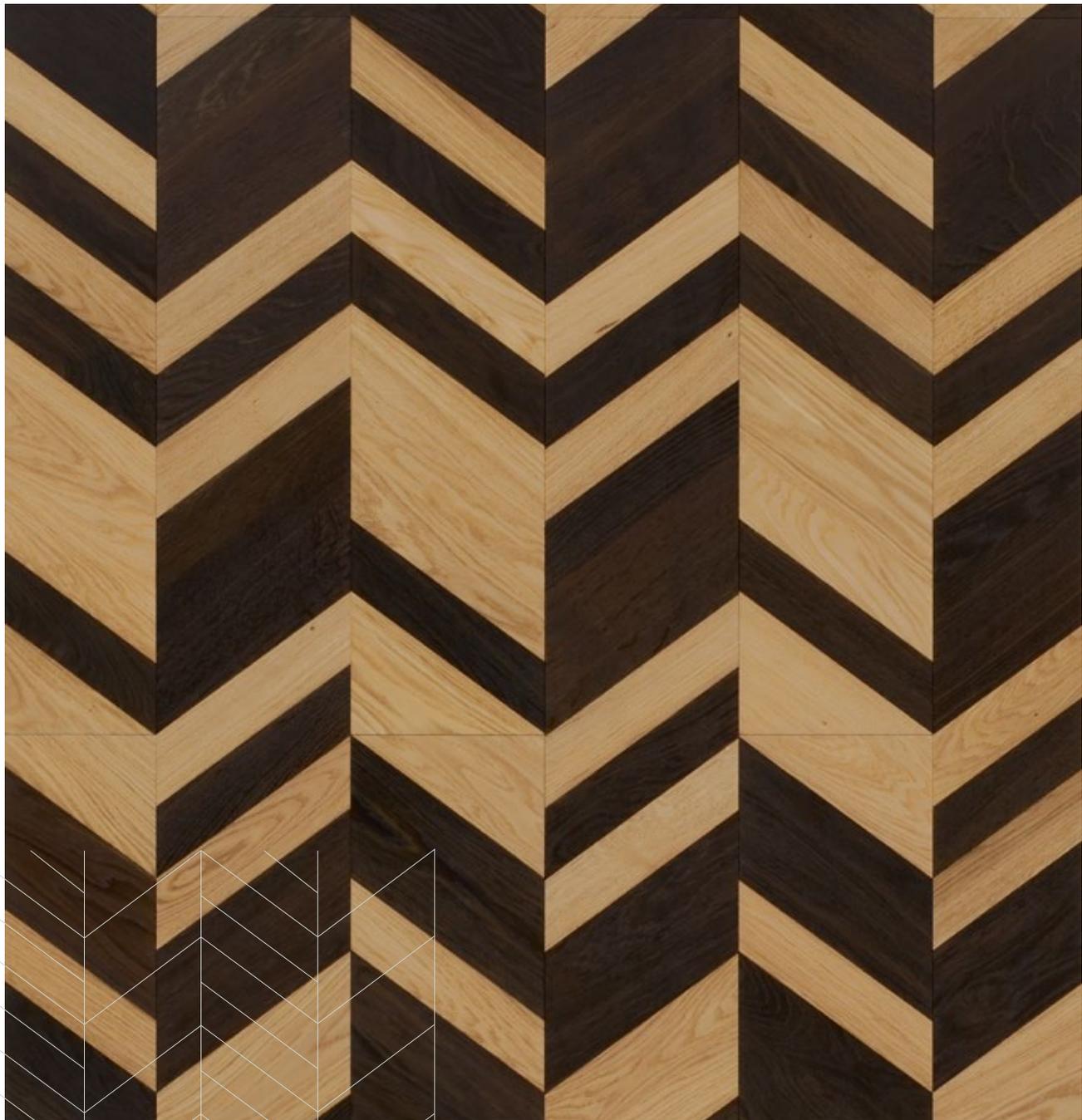
F: Going back to herringbone again: besides the ability to combine various sizes with each other here, you now also bring different colour schemes into play. Can you tell us what your inspiration is for this idea?

HT: It comes from men's fashion, where there are traditionally herringbone suits that combine light and dark ›bones‹. Incidentally, I started with fashion in 1990, at the same time as I did with architecture. That was a coincidence: when I opened my first architect firm, it was on the first floor – underneath it there was a vacant shop space. I was scared that something would come in there that I didn't like – and thought: ›I will rent that too!‹ That is where I started with fashion. I always thought: Bauhaus, they did so many things – you can do that too. By the way, I got my first order – a showroom for Rolls Royce and Aston Martin – through the fashion business as well. The general rule when designing is to push boundaries. Most of the time, different paths lead to your destination. You just have to take things that are actually already there and combine them, think about them in a new way and ask: ›What can you make it into now?‹ That is what has always driven me: really I don't stop at anything that stimulates the senses.

F: It sounds like entrepreneurial courage when you say that you simply rented the ground floor underneath as well – probably without a secure financial basis at first.

HT: I am brave and prepared to take risks. When it comes to ideas whose success seems logical to me, I immediately go with them. That also applied to my first own firm. Back then I had only been working for four years and I did not even have the financial scope that was really necessary. ...





## Engineered wood flooring French Oak nature/barrique

»Here we have a herringbone pattern that I love very much personally. With reference to textiles, we simply rethought this very lively texture in a more playful way. People know herringbone as being symmetrical; we changed the formats and worked with dark and light. This suddenly creates quite different patterns. The simple ideas often produce the best results. Innovations, behind which the question lurks: Why didn't we always do it like that, are mostly obvious in retrospect.«

... I taught as a lecturer to earn a bit of money. I used this money to keep my head above water and to set up the firm. What I didn't know about at all, however, was how I was supposed to come by clients – after all I was new to the city. With the platform of a fashion business, I had the ideal multiplier at my disposal, a lever. I was suddenly surrounded by great people who wanted to buy men's fashion. My label was called ›Herrenhaus – Made by architects‹. Even back then, born from the feeling of doing things right, I thought in terms of branding.

F: Why is brand communication so important for you?

HT: You want to send people a message. If this message comes to the point and is precise, if it is received really well and can be read, your own name automatically becomes a brand. Just take Giorgio Armani. In actual fact it is a normal

name, like Federico Pazolini, for example. Only through his work was the name Armani underpinned, it became a brand that stands for something. At first I had misgivings about using my own name – Hadi Teherani, back then it didn't sound like something nice. It sounded like a country where there had just been a revolution, and not necessarily like Tales of the Arabian Nights. But people didn't look at it that way. My clients do not associate the name with a country, but with the work that I did. Brand names and company names stand for products, and that gives customers security. Just take Parador. In the case of products from this company, you also know what sort of floor you are buying – and not just any import from China.

F: Mr Teherani, we would like to thank you for this interview.

End

## Laminate flooring Ornamental Oak

»In the case of laminate flooring, we wanted to make it clear that it is a modern, innovative floor, which in terms of the decor we have developed from the elements of engineered wood flooring. Based on geometric structures of panel parquet, we applied white, transparent glazes, which in one decor are inspired by the ornamental art of the orient, in the other by the geometry of parallelograms. Due to the exclusive impression, but also to the obvious overlapping of different printed layers, no onlooker would say we have imitated wood. Everyone will see that ›New Classics‹ is something that has been newly conceived: an image of overlapping, a special moment where a light has fallen on the floor. We have frozen this moment; when you walk across this floor, you get the feeling of interacting with something living. It is not a dead area.«



You can find all the Edition floors designed by Hadi Teherani in the App Store in our Parador Floor app.

