



BUSINESS | RETAIL

## Making Flooring Dreams Come True: The Winners of the 2023 Outstanding Retailer Awards

Through years of honing their skills and procedures they've collectively raised the industry's standard of excellence. We are honored to share their stories and insights into their successes.

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**"W**hen you're working with things in housing, you are working with people's hopes and dreams," says Matt Capell, owner at Meridian, Idaho-based Capell Flooring and Interiors.

If that's the case, then the following recipients of the 2023 Outstanding Retailer Awards are making dreams come true day in and day out.

Through years of honing their skills and procedures they've collectively raised the industry's standard of excellence. We are honored to share their stories and insights into their successes. Every winner we spoke with feels optimistic about the future and is eyeing continued growth as they look to turn more dreams into reality.

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## Unique Hardwood | Costa Mesa, Calif.





From left to right: Marissa Meltzer, Sarah Tobin, who handles marketing for Unique Hardwood, and Wendy Meltzer.

**Number of employees:** 5

**Year founded:** 2018

**Locations:** 1

**Annual revenue:** \$3 million

**O**ne look around [Unique Hardwood](#)'s art-gallery-inspired showroom in Orange County and the company's modus operandi is clear: "We're selling luxury," says Owner Wendy Meltzer.

Meltzer has been in the business of selling high-end flooring for over 20 years. She cut her teeth working the books and later with designers at her own flooring retail business in West L.A. After selling the business, she was approached to become an exclusive dealer for [Legno Bastone](#), a European wide-plank flooring supplier. She packed up and moved to Costa

Mesa, where she put her "nose to the grindstone" to build Unique Hardwood from the ground up.



The company's core philosophy, Meltzer says, is relationship building. At Unique Hardwood, 90% of the clientele are designers, and Meltzer has molded her business to be a haven for a designer's needs. This has included providing educational presentations for designers' staff, custom samples, consultations and a PIN number to have 24/7 access to Unique Hardwood's showroom. "We want to be their partner," Meltzer says. "We pride ourselves on honesty and integrity, and we always recommend the right product for their job."

Meltzer works side-by-side with her daughter, Marissa, whom she says brings a perspective that complements her own and has had a huge impact on the business. "Marissa's really good at handling when designers come in and say they want something 'warm' or 'cool,'" Meltzer says. "She knows what to show them. And I'm really good at explaining how we do our

installations, what the flooring is made of, and making them feel comfortable that they're buying the right product."

Unique Hardwood offers installation in-house, and their crew loose-lays the boards on every job so designers can see it laid out before it's installed. "Without our installation crew, I wouldn't have a business," Meltzer says. "It's a team effort."

The Unique Hardwood team is always on the lookout for new designer partnerships. One of its most successful initiatives was hosting a virtual cocktail hour for clients that attracted a number of high-profile designers and helped to foster new partnerships for Unique Hardwood. "It just took off," says Meltzer of the online event, which was a brainchild of Marissa's during the pandemic. "A designer who came to our first virtual cocktail party is one of our best repeat clients."

In mid-2022, Unique Hardwood settled into SoCo, Orange County's central home design and shopping center. Surrounded by other luxury products and services, Unique Hardwood is right at home.

"We truly love what we do and the incredibly interesting and talented people we work with every day," Meltzer says.

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