

Floor Covering Media

Your Gateway to the Floor Covering Industry

Look for the milk bottle on the roof



John and Suzie LaRocco have it covered, literally. Their 41-year-old business, LaRocco Floor Coverings located at 1615 Franklin Street, is tough to miss with an enormous, old-fashioned milk bottle atop the roof, a reminder of the days gone by when the Scholl Dairy built their 19,000 square-foot building back in 1932 delivering milk by horse and buggy. Scholl Dairy's ice cream parlor was a high school hang out during the 1950s and 1960s. This was a memorable front corner of the building, which is now one of two showrooms for LaRocco Floor Coverings.



"Almost everyone over age 60 knows it," John said. *"Many worked there in high school. Some will come in, point to an area and say, 'That was my booth.'"* The LaRoccas were introduced to the floor covering business through John's father, John Sr. He began a dry cleaning business in a small shop in the 1800 block of Franklin Street in 1944 that made custom draperies and evolved into floor coverings.

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La Rocco Floor Coverings,
Serving Michigan City Since 1976

After completing his business degree from Indiana University, John joined his father in business in 1976 and together they purchased the Scholl Dairy Building in 1979. After working as a nurse at Saint Anthony Hospital for 13 years, Suzie joined John Jr. at LaRocco Floor Coverings.

"The building has been great for us," John continued. "It has allowed us to grow over the years and show products well." John noted that LaRocco Floor Coverings "differs in the products we don't carry. We thoroughly test products and sell ones that are made well, have tested well and perform well. What sets us apart is what we refuse to carry." And, its distinction as a local, family-owned business is noteworthy as well.

"We are a true Mom-and-Pop and proud to be that way," John said. "When you call us, you talk to Suzie or John — not a voice mail. You get to talk to someone who knows what they are talking about." The couple has seen many changes in the industry over their four decades in business.

There's been a natural evolution away from softer products to harder, longer-lasting flooring choices such as laminates, hardwoods and ceramics that are better for allergies and easier to clean and maintain, John explained. Ceramic tile installation has also seen some drastic changes too, migrating from the heavy traditional concrete board to thinner, lighter products. The completed tile flooring isn't as raised as it meets other flooring types in the home, and there's less weight for the home to bear.

"We've been using them for years. We keep up with the technology — lighter, better and stronger products for tile installation — because flooring is the only thing that we do," he said. One new product added to LaRocco Floor Coverings is Tuflex, offered by the carpet manufacturer Shaw Floors and made in California. "It's the latest and the greatest — innovative and the most up-to-date in style and quality," shared John.

And there's the impressive experience of their installers, who are qualified to install all the products they sell including carpets, laminates, ceramic, tile, vinyl, hardwood and cork flooring (an environmentally friendly product made from the bark of a cork tree). *"I don't send out anyone I don't trust explicitly,"* stressed John, adding that his installers routinely thoroughly clean up, including vacuuming, after the job is finished.

One installer, William "Rusty" Geisler, just retired in 2016 after 40 years with the company; he began with John's father. Rusty's son, William Jr., now fills his shoes. William is versatile, installing everything sold by the store, noted John. The installer has also been certified through the Karastan (carpet) Certified Installer Program, a distinction tough to obtain in the industry, John said.

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LaRocco
floor coverings, inc.



John pointed out LaRocco's Flooring Outlet, a new segment of the store that especially appeals to contractors, builders, homeowners and do-it-yourselfers. Its slogan is "LFO will save you dough!" Recognizing that many homeowners are DIY-oriented, John said, "We give discounts to people who are installing themselves. If you are doing it yourself, we will help train, educate and coach you as well as give you better prices because you are doing it yourself."

LaRocco's also offers free estimates and a full selection of floor care products for carpet, vinyl and laminate products. "We have earned our business through performance and word-of-mouth," Suzie emphasized. "We've survived through recommendations and the professional service we offer – not through a large advertising budget."

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Monday to Friday,
9AM-5PM

Saturday,
9AM-2PM



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