



Contractor Spotlight

A Craftsman With Integrity Builds His Business From the Customer Up

RAPHAEL HARDWOOD FLOORING, INC.
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Joshua Raphael, owner of Raphael Hardwood Flooring in Lodi California, didn't start out wanting to be in the flooring business. "I've always really enjoyed things having to do with art and creativity; working with my hands, that type of thing. So when a flooring contractor in town was looking for a kid to help him out, I jumped at the chance. He did a lot of custom inlay work—borders, medallions—he was very particular and had very high standards. I learned a lot in the years I worked for him and I realized pretty quick that this was something that I really enjoyed and that I could excel in."

Josh knew from a young age that he wanted to start his own business but had no idea what kind of business that might be. After learning the trade from the inside out he knew the wood floor industry was his calling.

Specializing primarily in high-end residential work, Raphael Hardwood Flooring is known for their custom, handcrafted floors, gearing their philosophy away from the mass marketed one-size-fits-all approach. "A customer may look at a pre-finished option and he may have something like five different color choices in three handscrape style options and that's basically it.

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"I use Glitsa because there's a strong track record of excellence with their products. I know I don't have to worry if I use Glitsa on an exotic wood like ipe or a more porous wood—I know that Glitsa will go on consistently, bond to the wood, and give me excellent results every time."

– Joshua Raphael, Raphael Hardwood Flooring, Inc.

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Take it or leave it. We work hard to narrowly define exactly what the customer wants. Give them something unique that they can be proud of. Even if it doesn't have extensive borders or a medallion, say; it's still very, very custom because it's exactly what that customer wants. From the color, to the finish sheen, to the wood itself. A practical work of art. And that's why we've been successful and why we've been able to compete with larger 'big box' type stores."

Depending on the job, Josh generally uses a 2- or 3-coat system—Glitsa Bacca and Glitsa Gold Seal—to enhance and protect his customer's investment because of its excellent adherence. "Glitsa products are consistent. I'm secure in the knowledge that the finish is going to bond very well with any wood I'm working with and because of that I can use it with a clean conscience." ♦

JOSH RAPHAEL GIVES TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

- **Care about what you do and do it with all your heart.** If you have pride in what you do and you care about the people you're working for, you're going to produce a superior product and you're going to rise above your competition.
- **Don't be afraid to try new things.** For a long time I was under the impression everything had to be brushed on but lately we've been using the snowplow technique and that's worked very, very well.
- **Own up.** If you make a mistake have the guts to fix it immediately before you get to the next stage in finishing.

WHY JOSH RAPHAEL PREFERS GLITSA

- **The Glitsa history of excellence.** I know Glitsa will work on a variety of woods and I know it will work every time.
- **Superior bonding.** I can feel free to be a little more creative and maybe try a wood that I haven't worked with before because I know Glitsa will perform as expected and bond to exotic woods that are more porous or heavier in oil content.
- **Durability.** I want my customers to enjoy their custom floors for years to come. Glitsa Swedish finishes allow the beauty of the burls and the grain to shine through while standing up to traffic and everyday use.