

Make your bathroom into your haven

Imagine yourself relaxing in a big spa bathtub, surrounded by bubbles, aromatic candles in the background and a soothing music to soothe your senses. Sounds relaxing? Yes, it is obviously sounding very relaxing and rejuvenating. All you need to do is just make your bathroom into a place where you can retreat from the stresses of the day.

Mridu Chopra pens down some of the recent trends for giving it a different look...

Your bathroom is a warm and private place of your house where you can go to take a luxurious bubble bath and let go of all the day's stresses. You spend more time in your bathroom than you even realise. It tends to be the first and last room you use at the start and end of each day. You can transform your bathroom into your own private oasis where you can just unwind your stress and charge yourself for some more tasks.

Over the years, the bathroom has transformed from a utilitarian space to a haven in the home, a place to relax and recharge with water experiences that soothe and excite the senses. No wonder homeowners with remodel plans are looking to blend spa-like amenities with their unique visions of comfort and style in the bathroom.



Teuco by HSIL

the bathroom.

"People are really enjoying their homes these days," said Sheetal Kapoor, a Delhi-based interior decorator who has designed more than 100 houses till now. "Even though they spend a lot of time at work, when they are home, they want to feel like they're walking into something amazing."

Undeniably if we talk about luxury it is about more than just style; it's also about value. After all, many of the most luxurious materials on the planet like diamonds, gold and marbles which are also extremely durable and timeless. And because consumers are looking at their homes in new ways-many refocusing on a longer-term commitment-they're planning spaces that will continue to deliver luxury and style many years down the road.



Personalised spa

We all need serenity and to attain that calmness the concept of spas have emerged. Spa visits continue to be plenty popular across the India, in large part thanks to their stress-reducing, health-boosting benefits. And now homeowners are looking for ways to recreate that experience at home. Because spacious master suites with features like radiant heated floors are almost standard in today's upscale homes, designers are seeking even more new ways to add comfort and value to the bath.

Extra deep tubs, soaking and air baths, once only found in a day spa, allow you to fully immerse yourself in tiny, effervescent bubbles. In fact, many of

the bathing technologies, from whirlpool jets to chromatherapy, have made their way into the home bath. For a truly unique experience, the Kohler VibrAcoustic™ bath sends ambient, sound-wave vibrations through the water, offering what may be the ultimate in deep relaxation.

Homeowners who want something special but who prefer showers to baths are opting for custom showers that combine a series of showerheads and bodysprays mounted on the walls and ceiling. There is even the option for electronic controls, allowing the user to preset sprays, temperature, music, steam and water use. The results are a highly relaxing from the mental and physical stresses of the day.

The feel of luxury

Whenever we visit or spend some time in a five star hotel, we always wonder that how luxurious their bathrooms can be. Savvy homeowners are taking notes on products and features that strike their fancy, making every detail a potential item for the bathroom wish list.

"People who travel a lot are seeing these amazing bathrooms in high-end hotels and they want to bring that experience home," said Sheetal.

Elegant vessels, sinks and upholstered chaise lounges are making their way from high-rise hotels to homes. Stylish wood vanities and elegant lighting that would look at home anywhere in the house are replacing store-bought cabinetry and medicine cabinets. Cappuccino makers and mini-refrigerators are even being installed right into walls or cabinets. Homeowners are also choosing materials and finishes that enhance the overall look of the space, but also provide lifetime value. Natural stone, gold finishes, honed surfaces and handcrafted tiles are being combined to create stunning visuals with durable appeal. Glass is also growing in populari-

ty-for sinks, floors, counters and toilet enclosures-it's a sleek and eye-catching alternative to traditional materials.

Take your bath with sound and vision

Old days are over and this is time to discover something new and interesting. The days of listening to music in the shower by way of radio are long gone. Now, waterproof controls and speakers bring music directly into the shower.

Now you enjoy a complete home theatre systems with plasma TVs and surround sound are practically becoming the norm in luxury homes. And they're being installed in some rather ingenious ways.

"I recently installed a flat-screen TV in a mirror above the vanity," said Sheetal. "When the TV is off, it looks like a regular mirror. But when you turn it on, the image shows through and you can watch TV. It's really, really beautiful."

Even more modest home improvement budgets are taking advantage of the lower cost of smaller flat screen TVs and are tucking them away with DVD players into vanities and medicine cabinets.

No matter your budget, adding little luxuries to the bathroom, whether high-tech or purely aesthetic, can make a huge difference in terms of your experience.

Experts say consider what it is you want most for your bathroom and shift your priorities accordingly. For example, if the floor of your existing bath is in decent shape, maybe you'll opt to spend more on a bidet-function toilet seat or towel warmer rather than new tile.

Achieving your personal vision for a luxurious bath can be extremely rewarding but make sure the space you plan will satisfy you in the long term.