

2/12

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# Kitchen & Bath design news

A year-round guide to products & suppliers

# DIRECTORY & BUYERS' GUIDE





The Runtal Quadrato Towel Radiator is one of five models that are part of Runtal North America's Bisque Collection. The collection consists of radiators created by well-known designers and artisans from Europe. The angular towel radiator features a square tube design, and is available in three sizes in chrome and white finishes.



**Circle No. 160 on Product Card**



The Waterbridge Robe Hook from Sonoma Forge marries the look of industrial chic with rustic country elegance, featuring plumbing parts roots and an Asian-influenced spout. The entire line of Waterbridge bath accessories is available in a range of finishes.

**Circle No. 161 on Product Card**



The Edwardian collection of bath accessories from Top Knobs features traditional styling reminiscent of turn-of-the-century architecture. The collection includes six interchangeable back plates: Plain, Rope, Beaded, Ribbon & Reed, Hex and Oval. The line is available in nine finishes.

**Circle No. 162 on Product Card**



The Warmup 3iE fully interactive, touch-technology floor heating thermostat is designed to help lower energy consumption. Featuring an Active Energy Management, the thermostat prompts the user to test lower energy consumption levels.

**Circle No. 163 on Product Card**

for Casa Grande, AZ-based ACO Polymer Products, which manufacturers decorative shower drains under the QuARTz for ACO brand, says there are many variables that contribute to the style people choose, from geographic location and age to budget and size of project. "We actually try to fit our product into all of these design styles and more, by offering many different patterns, designs, finishes and accessories, and by incorporating lighting," he says.

### TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

When it comes to coordination, manufacturers note that many of the old rules no longer apply. "Traditionally, bathroom fixtures were matched in color, style and material," says Singer. "The latest trend in bathroom design has thrown these rules out, and texture, different materials like glass, crystal, brass and metals, and bringing elements from the outdoors in have become the future."

The style of the bath affects trends in the towel warmer and radiant panel lines, says Julia Billen, president/owner of Warmly Yours in Long Grove, IL. "Consumers are looking for towel warmers that are more square in design," she says. In addition, she adds, the future trend for towel warmers will be very minimal, simple heated towel rails.

Mockett says that as bathrooms are getting bigger, hardware and accessories are getting smaller, or cleaner, in design. "This trend will likely continue with the idea of making the bath not only a showcase of the latest fixtures, but also a personal comfort space that integrates technology and convenience. The grander

the design, the more that design calls for additional hardware. The trick is streamlining the hardware into the overall design and making it hidden and unobtrusive," he says.

### UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Universal Design, in particular, and sustainable elements are continuing to impact trends. Newcombe says, "The concept of Universal Design and aging-in-place is incredibly important."

Singer sees the demand for products that facilitate aging-in-place as an opportunity to design bath accessories with both functionality and high-end aesthetic appeal. She says, "I am looking forward to the opportunity to develop fashionable products [for aging in place]. It's our future, too."

Mockett agrees, stating that grab bars are showing up in a lot of contemporary bathrooms. "No longer just a tool for the elderly, grab bars are now just as much a fashionable accessory as they are a functional safety device," he says.

### FLEXIBLE FINISH

The wide array of product choices leaves a lot of room for individual choice, and there doesn't seem to be one clear trend in materials or finishes for hardware and accessories.

There is a leaning toward the warmer metal colors, such as nickel and bronze, over colder metals, according to Wood. "We see nickels used in environments that were once primarily chrome, while bronzes continue to be a top choice," he says.



Electronic Bidet Seats from Porcher bring the amenities of a stand-alone bidet to the standard toilet. The seats offer two separate nozzles for anterior and posterior washing. All models include warm-air drier with a two-speed adjustment. The heated, soft-close seat offers a choice of three temperatures.

**Circle No. 164 on Product Card**

The CPH6 collection of bath accessories from Doug Mockett & Co. combine cool metallic finishes with leather for an elegant, modern take. Shown is the CPH6 Cup Holder, part of a full line of accessories.



**Circle No. 165 on Product Card**



BainUltra introduces the Akasa Universal Massage Table, part of the company's wellness-focused Insuperience Bathroom. By placing the table over any freestanding BainUltra bath, the user can turn the bath into a massage table. It can also be set on the floor.

**Circle No. 166 on Product Card**



Gerber offers bath accessories, including a 24" towel bar, toilet paper holder, towel ring and robe hook, in contemporary and transitional styles in Chrome, Brushed Nickel and Oil Rubbed Bronze finishes. Shown is the Transitional Collection, suited for Gerber's Elite Faucet Series.

**Circle No. 167 on Product Card**



Panasonic Home & Environment Co. is expanding its WhisperGreen vent fans to include two new 100 CFM WhisperGreen fans. The models include SmartFlow Optimum CFM Technology, which detects and compensates for additional static pressure by increasing airflow.

**Circle No. 168 on Product Card**



The NuTone LunAura Collection is designed to create a relaxing, spa-like atmosphere. It comes in three clear light panels — round, square and diamond — that give the appearance of natural glass when the LED light is off. It features a 36-watt GU24 main light for brightness and efficiency.

**Circle No. 169 on Product Card**



# Creative Counter Effects

Countertops can provide a creative way to let a client's personality shine through.

By Kim Berndtson

While kitchen design still seems to favor clean and simple looks, countertops are one area where consumers are willing to make a splash. Far more than a place to perform practical tasks, these surfaces are increasingly being used as a focal point for the room. Unique materials, assorted textures and finishes, elaborate edge detailing, one-of-a-kind stones and mixing surfaces can help define a particular style or theme, as well as enhance functionality.

The following kitchen projects just touch the surface of what's being done by creative design professionals using everything from glass and granite to marble and wood.



Photos: Joe DeMain Photography

**Designer:** Jill Dybdahl, Dybdahl's Classic Kitchens, Middleton, WI

**Materials used:** ThinkGlass with circular glass inset (island); Verde Butterfly granite (perimeter)

**Desired look:** Since the kitchen can be seen from the foyer, the homeowner wanted a spectacular raised countertop

**Challenges:** Justification of the cost of the glass countertop

**Achieving the look:** "This kitchen is part of a whole-house remodel of a ranch home," says Dybdahl. "The homeowners loved the location and the lot, but the home needed an update. We gutted everything except the bedrooms, and even moved the stairwell. As the project evolved and as we were moving walls and opening up spaces, we realized that as you come into the foyer you can look all the way across the hall, through the family room, beyond the new stairwell and into the kitchen. Because of that, I feel the client was driven to make the raised countertop spectacular."

"The ThinkGlass countertop is perfect in this application. The angled design allows family members to see who they're dining with. And the circular mosaic inset is a piece of art that is functional as well as beautiful, set off by the Verde Butterfly granite and custom walnut cabinetry. Although my clients were hesitant at first to spend the money, every time I see them, they tell me they can't believe they questioned using the glass. They say it's their favorite part of the remodel."

"This glass countertop is not a trend. It's a work of art that's timeless. I've used it in a lot of settings where I've successfully mixed it with traditional as well as contemporary designs."



**Designer:** Cheryl Hamilton-Gray, CKD, Hamilton-Gray Design, Carlsbad, CA

**Materials used:** Calypso Gold granite with chiseled edge (island); Calypso Gold granite with handmade tile edging (perimeter); Carrera marble; solid maple butcher block

**Desired look:** Hacienda-themed kitchen with rustic/Mexican overtones

**Challenges:** Maintaining authenticity of the project with a well-worn appeal; matching kitchen tasks to the most suitable surface materials

**Achieving the look:** "From the beginning, my client didn't want a countertop with a sophisticated, complicated ogee reverse edge done by a machine," says Hamilton-Gray. "Although she wanted a solid surface slab, and granite was a natural choice because it's maintenance-free, she didn't want a stone edge, so the perimeter countertops are edged with a contrasting, handmade, glazed tile. The island, which was thickened to about 2.25", features a chiseled edge to give it a rustic feel."

"Additional countertops include a solid maple, custom butcher block at one end of the island that looks like antique furniture. We sanded an area in the middle to simulate the appearance of an old butcher block with indentations from years of use. At the other end, we added a custom furniture piece, topped with marble. We lowered the level so she can roll dough on it. To keep it from looking too slick or too contemporary, we added a wood edge."

"This kitchen stands out in its uniqueness because it's a theme kitchen, and these countertops enhance the design to suit that theme and the period."

