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Kitchen & Bath design news

Family friendly

A two-tiered island, easy traffic flow and influx of natural light address the needs of a multi-generational family

Showers Balance
Green Sensibilities,
Performance

PAGE 46

Bath Products
Help Promote
Accessibility

PAGE 84

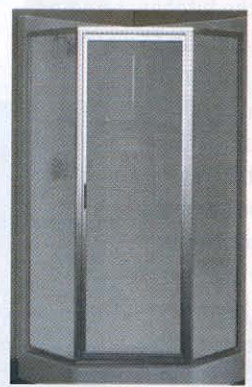
Period Design
Projects Provide
Profitable Niche

PAGE 38

1 | The Huron tub is one of many new tubs from Strom Plumbing By Sign of the Crab that offers a classic look with the durability of acrylic. This 5' acrylic slipper tub is available in white acrylic and a variety of leg finish options.
Circle No. 152 on Product Card



2 | The Guinevere Bath Collection from Toto USA includes a high-efficiency showerhead and handshower set with clean-lined style. Toto's Shape Memory Alloy Thermostatic Mixing Valves respond to temperature changes quickly, providing a comfortable shower even at the reduced flow rate of 1.75 gpm.
Circle No. 153 on Product Card



3 | Gelcoat Showers from Aquatic feature a two-wall, neo-angle corner design with center drain and smooth wall finish. The shower stall also includes a molded toiletry shelf and slip-resistant textured bottom. Options include grab bars, brass drain and a range of color choices.
Circle No. 154 on Product Card

4 | The StyleTherm thermostatic shower system from California Faucets provides the ability to dial in exact temperatures, and requires no diverter valve to toggle between shower applications – each is operated via its own volume control. The system includes anti-scald temperature protection. It is available in a range of styles and finishes.
Circle No. 155 on Product Card



Responsible Refuge

Luxurious showers and spa-inspired soaking tubs offer a retreat from hectic living, but must also balance eco-responsibility to keep up with current trends.

By Elizabeth Richards

While shower systems and tubs have always played a key role in the bath, the economic challenges of recent years have made these increasingly important in creating the refuge that stressed out consumers desire. For that reason, today's shower systems and tubs must not only be highly functional, but also create a soothing sanctuary where homeowners can go to relax and/or rejuvenate.

However, it's not just about beauty, functionality or even escapism, according to manufacturers recently surveyed by *KBDN*. Rather, these fixtures need to address all of the above, plus environmental concerns, accessibility and customization capabilities.

"Demand for home spa-like shower installations has grown dramatically as consumers seek the privacy, flexibility and



5 | The ioDIGITAL shower system from Moen offers the ability to set and maintain water temperature and flow with electronic precision. The shower interface can recall a preferred temperature and flow at the push of a button, with programming for up to four settings. The shower can be turned on via remote from as far away as 30'.
Circle No. 156 on Product Card



16 | To create PuraVida's chrome/white dual-finish, Hansgrohe and Duravit developed a proprietary method. The faucets and showers are free from sharp edges. PuraVida showers offer AIR technology, which infuses ambient air into the water streams.

Circle No. 167 on Product Card



17 | The Stainless Steel Contemporary Oval bath from Diamond Spas is a freestanding tub with a mid-contoured bottom, slight rise under the knee and bowed sides. Designed for two bathers, the tub measures 46"x72"24" and features a sloped reclining back on each end.

Circle No. 168 on Product Card



18 | The contemporary Evo line from Basco Shower Enclosures features concealed rollers at the header, which provides an open, all-glass look to the shower. Evo is available in three configurations, 12 finishes and a range of glass options.

Circle No. 169 on Product Card



19 | The Siena Tazza Bathtub from Stone Forest is hand carved from blocks of Siena Silver-Grey marble, a distinctive material with smoky tones and natural contrasting striations. The teacup-shaped soaking tub provides a 60" diameter.

Circle No. 170 on Product Card



20 | The design of the Wolo collection of square showerheads from Webert Italian Design was inspired by the flight of airplanes and the aerodynamics of their wings. A Handshower Kit includes a handshower, holder and flex hose.

Circle No. 171 on Product Card

other areas of the home.

TJ Mullally, national sales manager for Jaclo in Cranford, NJ, agrees that most consumers do not want to compromise on their shower experience. "They want the shower that they want," he says. There are, he adds, a small group of people who are concerned about low flow showers, but the majority want their desired design and functionality more than anything else.

Terrill says that some of the smaller baths actually use less water than a shower. However, he adds: "It is the consumer's decision to choose a large bath [if that's what they desire], and we suggest using other water saving products [to balance that]."

With the growing interest in and demand for

conservation comes a need for innovative choices, says Petch. "Increasingly, a judgment decision is being made between saving and performance or efficiency. Consumers are demanding a choice of solutions so that they can make that informed decision."

Kulig states: "The consumer now takes advantage of the available bathing technologies, but is also still conscious of the green initiative," he says. "To be successful today, the industry has to meet both needs: It must offer functions or sophisticated techniques and at the same time it must be capable of developing systems with high attention to low consumption without sacrificing user/creature comforts."

Mullally also notes that any manufacturer that is going to evolve and grow with the current climate needs

to be one or two steps ahead of what is going to become code or law. Most manufacturers, he says, are part of the EPA's WaterSense program, and becoming involved in organizations that address green issues. Education around the codes and requirements is becoming more important across the board, he says, especially as counties and cities make their own requirements.

MULTIPLE SPRAY SELECTIONS

As the home spa market grows, luxury showers often incorporate more than a single spray. More and more, manufacturers say, showers are being designed with multiple sprays, rain bars and/or hand showers.

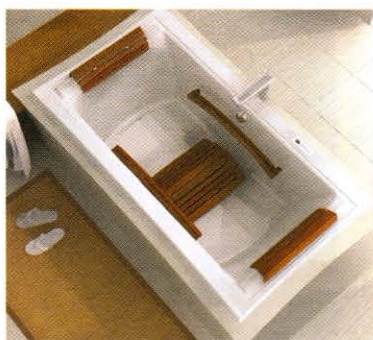
Larson says that many people want a fixed wall-mounted showerhead, along with a hand-held version with a slide bar, and sometimes a ceiling mount. In master showers, he says, there are often additional features, such as wall-mounted body sprays.

Petch agrees that body sprays have seen a surge in popularity in recent years, a trend he attributes in part to the aging population and growing interest in wellness and healthy living. "Body sprays give you the ability to target specific areas of pain or discomfort such as joints, lower back or neck, not only delivering stress reduction but also addressing the pains of aging such as arthritis or old sports injuries," he says.

DeGenova says that rain spray showers continue to be popular as they tie into the desire for a spa-like experience. However, he adds, a rain spray is a soft spray, and there are still many consumers looking for a hard spray as well.

21 | The Hydroslide Frameless Sliding Shower Door Kit from C.R. Laurence Co. is designed for full standing showers or to be installed above bathtubs. The kits can accommodate shower designs with fixed glass panels on either end or both sides at 90 or 180 degrees, and can be used for floor-to-near-ceiling glass panels with a sliding door. The kits are available in four finishes.

Circle No. 172 on Product Card



22 | Tekura by BainUltra is a concept designed around textures, forms and colors of nature. The tub features wooden or Acrystal accessories, as well as the MyBodyrest kit for deep relaxation, including a headrest, submerged armrests and a central leg support.

Circle No. 173 on Product Card



23 | The Tetsu Wide-Deck tub from Porcher is a fiberglass-reinforced acrylic bath reminiscent of Japanese aesthetics. Designed as a freestanding tub, the Tetsu Wide-Deck is also available as a drop-in. It can be used with deck-mounted Roman tub fillers.

Circle No. 174 on Product Card



24 | Produits Neptune's Believe bathtubs feature transitional styling and enough interior room for two people. The oversized tub features two curved, ergonomic backrests and integrated armrests for both users, and can be equipped with different massage systems.

Circle No. 175 on Product Card



25 | The Traditional Water-Amplifying Fluidics Shower Head from Alsons is WaterSense compliant, featuring a 1.5 gpm flow rate. Fluidics Technology controls with water's shape and velocity, producing larger spray droplets that retain heat longer for the sensation of a high-flow shower.

Circle No. 176 on Product Card



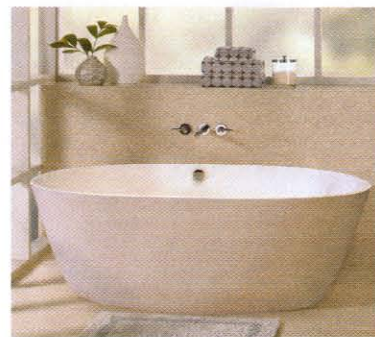
36 | The KT series of baths from Jason International are rectangular in shape with subtle curves. The tub is available in a soaking version, as well as whirlpool, AirMasseur and Air-Whirlpool. Ten different acrylic colors are offered.
Circle No. 187 on Product Card



37 | The Profil Collection, designed by Jamie Drake for THG, blends delicate shapes with bold modern lines. The collection includes showerheads, handshowers and thermostatic valve with cross or lever handles. It is available in 25 finishes.
Circle No. 188 on Product Card



38 | The Hansaclear and Hansaclear Lux shower series from Hansa has transparent fittings to reflect the purity of water. The Hansaclear Lux mixes water, light and color – using red and orange for an invigorating shower and blue and green for a relaxing experience.
Circle No. 189 on Product Card



39 | The Elena freestanding tub, part of the Boutique Collection from MTI Whirlpools, is fashioned from solid surface derived from a mixture of ground natural minerals. The tub is available with a rolled or flat rim, and comes standard in a White or Biscuit matte finish.
Circle No. 190 on Product Card



40 | The new Thermostatic Exposed Shower options from Sunrise Specialty include tub-mounted, wall-mounted and floor-mounted units. The shower systems can be customized with a choice of handle designs and six different finishes, including brass, nickel, chrome and bronze.
Circle No. 191 on Product Card

every price point has been and remains a key factor in its growth in popularity.”

People are becoming more creative, adds Mullally. “They want more unique items, they want items that everyone doesn’t necessarily have.” Rather than “keeping up with the Joneses,” he says, they want something different than what the Joneses have.

Mike Teresso, executive director of Laufen North America, says “consumers are figuratively ‘banging on their bathroom doors,’ demanding a customized bathroom suite based on functionality, budget and personal aesthetics. Taking the entire house into consideration as one giant design project, the bathroom must also transform into a culture of its own.”

From glass tubs and ceramic enclosures to a host of quirky customization requests, he’s seen it all. “Overall, it seems that original designs, the ability to scale units to an appropriate size, cost and the advancement of technology are all integral factors to how much (or how little) consumers will yield to these trends,” he says.

Teresso sees the size and shape of bathing products changing dramatically. “Consumers seem to be favoring differently proportioned showers and tubs, like preferring a freestanding shower rather than a drop-in mold. Homeowners who are downsizing seem to favor taller showers and narrower tubs,” he says.

In enclosures, consumers are looking for more interesting designs than the smooth walls that dominated the industry 10 year ago, says Charlie Kopplin, associate product manager for the Sterling brand, based in Kohler, WI.

ACCESSIBILITY WITH STYLE

Even when consumers require features such as a walk-in tub or grab bars, they still want a stylish design. “The trick is to deliver both aesthetics and functionality, but it is very difficult,” says McFarland.

McFarland notes that Aquatic designed the Ava tub with this in mind. The best feature of the Ava tub, he says, is the patented drainage system, which evacuates 70 gallons of water in under 30 seconds, eliminating the need for users to get cold waiting for the tub to drain before getting out.

Mike Schulze, president of Home Living Solutions in Temecula, CA, agrees that with more Americans aging in place, there’s a growing need for accessible tubs. Most of these are in the remodeling sector, he notes, which creates some challenges – and some design limitations. “When dealing with remodeling, you can’t get too crazy with your [tub] designs,” he says, noting that tubs need to be able to be transported into a house, often up stairs and through hallways, which can limit options.

He does see a demand for customization in walk-in tubs, but says this comes mostly on the therapeutic side.

Kopplin says that consumers are looking to incorporate grab bars and seats into enclosures to customize their showering space to fit their needs. He cites Sterling’s Accord Seated Shower as an example, with a removable seat that can also be switched from the right to the left side. The product is available with factory installed grab bars, he says, adding, “We designed grab bars specifically for this shower because we believe that they shouldn’t take away from the enclosure’s design.”



41 | The Ravello double-ended tub from Victoria & Albert is composed of ground volcanic limestone. It is hand-finished on the inside to provide a glossy white solid surface that measures 68-5/8” long, 30-1/8” wide and 23-5/8” high. Coordinating vessel basins are also available.
Circle No. 192 on Product Card



42 | The Atmosfere Collection from Hastings Tile & Bath features a minimalist tub that is fashioned from eco-friendly polymineral composite material. The tub features a glossy exterior and matte interior that provides a non-slip surface.
Circle No. 193 on Product Card



43 | The Artos faucet line from Westover Co. includes this rain head, which is set to deliver its shower experience through a matrix and 96 easy-clean nozzles. The nozzles are designed to ensure an even flow pattern at any angle and prevent dripping after the shower is turned off.
Circle No. 194 on Product Card



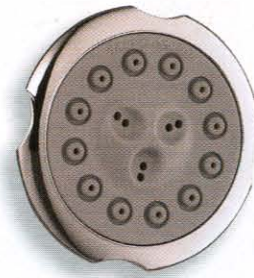
44 | The Jado Three-Function Body Spray is a compact and unobtrusive bath fixture that provides ease of operation. Turning the center dial changes the three functional modes – spray, mist or a combination of the two – while tilting the center face alters the direction of the spray pattern.
Circle No. 195 on Product Card



6 | D-Force Multi-Function Showerheads and Handshowers from Danze provide up to five different spray functions yet are WaterSense compliant at both 2.0 gpm and 1.75 gpm. Danze's D-Force showerheads and handshowers are also available in standard flow 2.5 gpm max.
Circle No. 157 on Product Card



7 | The Lawson drop-in bath from Sterling features a curving back and arm rests for increased comfort. The 5'-long, 20"-deep tub provides room for deep soaking, and is also available as an Air Massage bath with three-speed blower as well as a whirlpool bath with optional heater.
Circle No. 158 on Product Card



8 | The Extender flush-mounted, multifunction body sprays from American Standard provide the choice of three spray patterns. The spray heads automatically extend from the wall when the water is turned on and retract when turned off.
Circle No. 159 on Product Card



9 | The Michael Berman Thermostatic Shower Package from Rohl features a Transitional/American Moderne style and includes Thermostatic Trim, Shower Arm, Eight-Jet Adjustable Showerhead, Handshower Set, Volume Control Trim and Body Sprays.
Circle No. 160 on Product Card

convenience of stress reduction in the home," says Les Petch, marketing manager for performance showering at Kohler Global Faucets in Kohler, WI.

Robert Larson, director, new business development, for Woodbridge, IL based Danze agrees: "Most people want a relaxing and spa-like experience in their home shower. This drives the demand for more features and better quality shower products including valves, controls and showerheads."

As daily life becomes more hectic, manufacturers have seen a surge in demand for upgraded shower systems. "Lifestyles have changed over the past few years," says Ziggy Kulig, president of Graff Faucets, in Milwaukee, WI. "We see our customers' main desires being based on an increased demand for comfort and sophisticated functions, to easily enjoy within the short available time of the day."

This growth in showers, however, has not displaced the bathtub entirely. Kulig says, "The bathtub is a luxury [for when] people want to dedicate more time to their comfort. The bath stands for an oasis of well-being, therefore the size and the freestanding versions become the main features for those who wish to immerse themselves in a relaxing atmosphere."

Michael Terrill, marketing manager for Kohler bathing products, finds that in the master bath, the combination bath/shower enclosure is being replaced with larger, dedicated shower and dedicated bathing spaces. Kohler is also seeing a resurgence in freestanding baths, he says.

Dave McFarland, director of marketing & new

product development for Aquatic in Anaheim, CA concurs that freestanding tubs are becoming more popular. He calls these pedestal tubs "art pieces for the bathroom." An acrylic freestanding tub can allow a designer or homeowner to mix and match colors – perhaps a black outer shell with a white inner shell, for instance, which McFarland is seeing happen frequently.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

Designing a bath that balances consumers' desires for a spa experience with eco-responsibility can be a difficult task, particularly when multiple sprays are desired. Equally challenging is the fact that many homeowners simply aren't willing to give up the drenching shower experience or deep soak they've come to rely on as their escape from all of the stresses of day-to-day life.

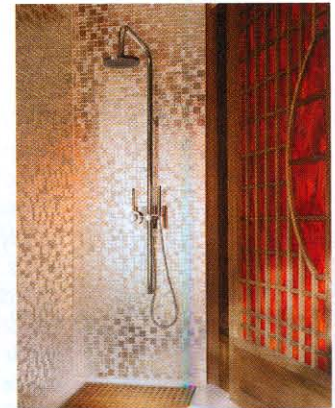
"The green aspect is huge and has been growing in significance, but there's always been a bit of conflict in this product category between [delivering the desired] benefit to the user and [being] environmentally responsible," says McFarland.

Al DeGenova, director of marketing communications and training for Grohe America based in Bloomingdale, IL concurs: "People want to conserve, but they don't want to sacrifice a good shower."

While new technology has helped to create showerheads that offer a richer-feeling shower while still conserving water, those who desire multiple body sprays may need to seek out other options for staying green, for instance, taking shorter showers or using less water in

10 | The Rain Showers by MGS are exposed shower systems composed of 100% solid stainless steel. The systems are available with a round or square rain canopy and exposed thermostatic mixer that incorporates a volume control that operates independently of the temperature control.

Circle No. 161 on Product Card



11 | Delta Faucet's H2Okinetic Technology enables larger water droplets to be released by the showerhead, which retain heat longer, and provide a massaging effect along with a denser spray pattern, according to the company. The Transitional showerhead, shown, is one of the designs available, and provides a 1.5 gpm flow rate.

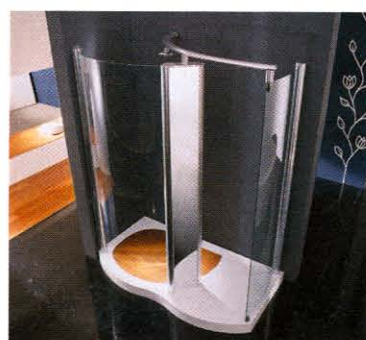
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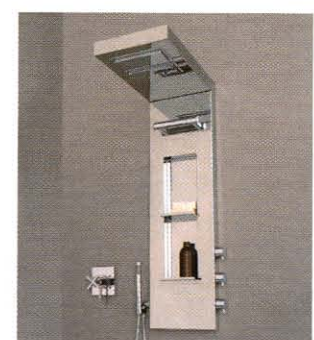
12 | The Expanse bath from Kohler has a curved apron to provide additional room in the tub, bowing out to 38" at its widest. The tub also has a wider-than-normal top and bottom bath well that forms a pillowed square, and 17" step-over threshold for easy entry and exit.
Circle No. 163 on Product Card



13 | The Grohe Rainshower Rainbow Collection color options include MoonWhite with EcoGreen or chrome, as well as vibrant blue, purple, pink, red, orange and yellow. The rainshower is available in three silhouettes: the Icon hand shower, the Solo and the Eco.
Circle No. 164 on Product Card



14 | The WALK contemporary shower from Novellini is crafted from safety tempered curved glass, reflecting Italian minimal styling. The WALK shower is available in four styles, and the enclosures are offered in two different sizes.
Circle No. 165 on Product Card



15 | The York Column from Jaclo is an all-in-one stainless steel shower fixture featuring two overhead adjustable-angle rain tiles in addition to a waterfall showerhead and hand shower. The unit works with existing shower valves and outlets.
Circle No. 166 on Product Card