

M I C H I G A N H O M E

SUMMER 2017

and *lifestyle*

TENDING
the *Bees*

Native
GARDENS

**GUEST DESIGNER:
CAROL SOBIESKI-GALL**

\$6.75



A Long Soak

WRITER | KRISTIN ANDREWS | PHOTOS | MTI BATHS

SPONSORED CONTENT | DESIGN | A Long Soak



It's been a long, difficult day. You're both mentally and physically exhausted. You need to relax and recharge. We've all been there, and taking a long soak in a deep tub is just the thing to repair your state of mind.

Hydrotherapy has long been used to de-stress both our bodies and our minds. The body reacts to the pressure of the water; the warmth seeps into your muscles and relaxes them. The weightlessness you feel when under water relieves tension in the limbs, supporting aching muscles and easing the movement.

I'm often asked if bathtubs are still popular. The answer is a resounding Yes! In fact, freestanding bathtubs are the largest growing segment in the kitchen and bath industry right now. Homeowners are ripping out the old giant whirlpools and big decks to modernize the room and add a tub that's not only useful but stunning as well. The freestanding baths going in today are slightly smaller than the tubs of old, offering a cocoon of warmth without so much waste of water. There's no longer a need to build a giant deck around the tub that takes up nearly half your bathroom because the tub stands freely. This type of bathtub allows the space to feel more open and inviting and can become the focal point of the room's design.

The installation of air baths has long surpassed standard whirlpool tubs in popularity. What is an air bath, you ask? It is a tub that uses jets of air, rather than the jets of water used in a traditional whirlpool. Thousands of warm, tiny air bubbles surround your body and stimulate the production of our natural analgesic hormones known as endorphins. As these little bubbles burst against your skin, they draw the blood toward the surface and create better circulation throughout your body. You can also use the various settings of an air bath to give yourself a very efficient lymphatic massage. Not all tubs are created equal, however, so do your research. If you opt for a manufacturer with a closed system, the hygienic benefits are substantial and will save you both money and time in the long run. Another benefit of this type of system is that you can add things like Epsom salts and essential oils to the water to rid yourself of toxins and further promote healing. Today, tubs can be customized in the placement of jets so that even those who have had hip replacement or similar surgeries can experience all of the benefits of hydrotherapy. This customization is also gaining popularity with sports figures because it offers the most beneficial therapy for their particular bodies.

Many tub manufacturers have begun to offer heated surfaces within the tubs themselves, similar to heating pads. A consumer has the option to place them in zones, such as the back and bottom. This is especially helpful for arthritis, and we are seeing an increase in demand for this feature as baby boomers begin to retire and build or renovate their "forever homes."

If you're planning to sell your home and are remodeling the bathroom first, a deep soaking tub makes a big statement. If you don't have room for a freestanding tub but still want the "wow factor" and all the benefits of hydrotherapy, there are a lot of available solutions. A deep five-foot tub that has a clean and simple interior can offer plenty of room for a long soak. These tubs are excellent for kids' bathrooms as well; they help to keep the water inside the tub when the little ones splash around.

With so many models available, it's important for you to get out and sit in them to gauge their comfort. Look for one that has lumbar support, or a comfortable sloped back that not only feels good but can offer leverage as well. Whether you're building or remodeling, staying or selling... the right bathtub will pay for itself many times over in both pleasure and resale value. □



KRISTIN ANDREWS

Kristin Andrews, corporate showroom manager of Infusion Kitchen & Bath showrooms, is a 20-year veteran in the decorative plumbing industry.

DESIGN SPOTLIGHT



THE LANEY

This freestanding bathtub from MTI offers a classically transitional look. Its discreet, softly rolled lip, integrated pedestal base, and versatile design can be mixed with a multitude of design elements to create a customized look for your new bathroom.

Infusion Kitchen & Bath Showrooms

Grand Rapids, Grand Ledge, Holland, Kalamazoo, Traverse City, Wixom
InfusionShowrooms.com



BE LOVED

BY RANDI FORD

Randi Ford's stylized acrylic-on-wood landscape is instantly evocative of Northern Michigan. You can practically feel the breeze off the lake rustling through the twisted tree. Perfect for any lakeside home or homesick transplant.

Somebody's Gallery

302 East Lake Street, Petoskey
(231) 881-4745
SomebodysGallery.com

EQUINOX LOUNGE CHAIRS

These beautiful teak and stainless steel lounge chairs by Barlow Tyrie are the perfect fit for any modern outdoor living space. Visit Bell Tower's showroom to view the entire product line.

Bell Tower Lake House Living Co.
8880 N. 32nd St. in Richland
(269) 203-7163
EnjoyLakeHouseLiving.com



BLUE REFLECTIONS

Organic hardware and crystal accents make an alluring statement in this vignette. The Palma Two-Drawer Cabinet and the carved alabaster Horizontal Block Table Lamp are by Mark McDowell for John-Richard. The stunning painting, 'Slated,' is by talented abstract artist Carol Benson-Cobb.

The Quiet Moose

2666 Charlevoix Ave., Petoskey
(231) 348-5353 | QuietMoose.com



KELLER BY NORWALK FURNITURE

Keller has a traditional barrel back, curved sides and tapered wood legs, along with a loose seat and tight back. This chair mixes style with comfort and puts an updated take on a classic profile.

Edward's Home Furnishings

211 N. St. Joseph St., Suttons Bay
(231) 271-6600
EdwardsFurnishings.com



DRUM TABLE

The Bauble Drum is a small drum table that gleams with an organic hand-painted Geode pattern in Golden Geode. Evocative of both earthly and heavenly beauty.

Portobello Road

6820 Old 28th St. SE, Cascade
(616) 975-3002
PortobelloRoad.us

