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# KITCHEN + BATH

## New trends emerge on the design scene *Sophisticated and balanced: Simplicity is key*

BY LINDA JENNINGS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I've always had a deep appreciation for design, and I'm delighted that staying on top of home design trends is an ongoing part of my daily life. There's nothing I enjoy more than tracking down the latest innovations and discovering all the fantastic new offerings that are so much a part of our industry. One of the highlights this year for me was the *Architectural Digest* Home Design Show held recently in New York City. Talk about design heaven! The creativity of the exhibitors and the sheer variety of design ideas sent me home wanting to remodel every room in my house.

One overall design theme that has emerged in recent months is an emphasis on the beauty of simplicity. We all want to surround ourselves with beautiful things, but we don't want to have to stress about them. Today's movement in bath design is very much one of balance. All the bells, whistles and gadgets are being replaced with classic products that merely hint at glamour. Think of traditional soaking baths and stylish faucets with exposed plumbing. The lines are classic and flowing, the colors soft and subdued. There's a greater emphasis on transparent and ethereal surfaces such as glass, along with sheer fabrics and shimmering finishes that reflect light and have interesting textures.

Subtle elegance is the look the best designers strive for — and that consumers ask for — but it can be difficult to achieve. The trick to putting together an effortlessly chic design is to start with quality timeless products, ones that make a statement without shouting for attention. Some of the world's most accomplished design teams are unveiling products that are simple, tasteful, polished and refined.

Here are just a few of the emerging trends we're seeing in the luxury decorative plumbing and hardware industry:

### Curves ahead

Straight lines certainly have their place in life, but today's most celebrated designs are all about the elegance of curves. Victoria + Albert recently

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unveiled their newest premium tub, a curvaceous design that is a delightful fusion of modern art and ergonomics. The Cabrits tub is about more than just good looks; the shapely silhouette offers contoured support for the body and superior bathing comfort. Its eco-friendly design uses less water and heat than traditional tubs, yet still provides a luxurious soak due to the natural insulation of its trademark ENGLISHCAST® construction. Named in honor of an exotic peninsula on the Caribbean island of Dominica, the Cabrits collection also includes a matching basin that can easily stand alone or be combined in pairs for added impact.

Designed as a follow-up to the popular, rectangular-shaped U-Turn Collection, the Roundabout Pulls drive



The Furniture Guild took the mirror off the bathroom wall and incorporated it into a spectacular new line of modular bathroom cabinetry.



*BainUltra gives us a new perspective on the tub, literally, with a dramatic new installation option known as Theatre Stage®.*

home curvaceous style. This new collection from Atlas Homewares features a modern semi-circle design that looks great solo or mirrored on a neighboring cabinet. Love the simplicity of style. Atlas also has a beautiful new finish known as Modern Bronze that is a lovely cross between oil rubbed bronze and graphite grey. This exclusive Atlas finish is great for kitchens or bathrooms and is available on several of the company's most popular collections.

### Reflected glamour

A tasteful amount of bling is always a good thing, and it's even better when it's used in unexpected places. The Furniture Guild caught my eye for taking the mirror off the bathroom wall and incorporating it into a spectacular new line of modular bathroom cabinetry. The Phantom Vanity combines art deco and modern motifs to create a contemporary collection that adds a singular sparkle to the bathroom. The mirrored panels are encased in decorative cabinetry that can be hung on the wall or used free-standing and come in a pallet of eight matte and three high gloss colors. Thoughtful options include a stainless steel drawer system, soft closing drawers and automatic internal LED lighting.

### New elevation

BainUltra gives us a new perspective on the tub, literally, with a dramatic new installation option known as Theatre Stage®. Here, the tub is elevated from its humble position on the floor to a dramatic platform that enhances its architectural beauty and focuses attention on the wellness benefits of therapeutic bathing. Think of it as a freestanding tub taken to the next level. The concept is definitely generating some buzz with its fashion-forward spin on space planning. It also deserves props on a practical note for its ease of entry and exit, an appealing feature for seniors, children and people with mobility impairments. Theatre Stage installation is available with four distinctive BainUltra tubs as part of the company's signature Inspirence Bathroom concept.

### Industrial chic

Sonoma Forge has introduced the new Brut faucet, whose name has wine country origins and which features a strong, solid design softened by the Asian-influenced waterfall spout. The single-handle faucet has a distinctive open-spout construction that is simple yet modern and is available in rustic-inspired finishes including nickel, copper and oil-rubbed bronze. The look is versatile and timeless ... aged to perfection like a great wine.

### Eco-friendly innovation

Companies are continuing to innovate in their quest to produce all manner of eco-friendly products. One that I particularly admire is ThinkGlass, a renowned glass design studio and manufacturer that uses sustainable production methods and 100% recyclable materials. Equipped with

LED lighting, the glass vanity countertop bathes the room with a soft, relaxing luminescence. Glass is a great option in residential bath design and makes a strong design statement.

### Geometric design

The classic elegance of simple geometric lines never goes out of style. I am impressed with the latest contemporary Series 2300 Stixx from SIGMA Faucet. Here, strong architectural angles inspired by nature are softened by cylindrical shapes. Available in standard height and tall versions, this faucet comes in 30 different finishes and is equipped with a low-flow aerator for high water efficiency.

The striking linear Slip Sink from Diamond Spas is crafted from sustainable 16-gauge stainless steel and features a streamlined self-rimming design with an innovative slot drain. Water flows down the angled side and vanishes into an obscured slot drain. The minimalist geometric design is well-suited for today's urban modern style.

### The vibrancy of white

White has always been one of my favorite colors — so sophisticated and sleek — and now it seems to be enjoying renewed popularity among leading designers. Victoria + Albert sinks and tubs are naturally white throughout, being made of volcanic limestone, and are hand-finished by craftsmen to create a beautiful glossy finish. The Arroyo collection of knobs and pulls by designer William Harvey for Du Verre Hardware Company now includes a new white finish for the first time. ThinkGlass has its own take on white with built-in LED lighting that gives its custom countertops a pale glowing beauty. White is always fresh, always clean-looking. It can be bold and dramatic, or soft and subtle. It is the perfect "neutral" base, ready for any pop of color that you might choose to add but also equally beautifully alone, in its own pristine way.



*Available in standard height and tall versions, the Series 2300 Stixx from SIGMA Faucet comes in 30 different finishes and is equipped with a low-flow aerator for high water efficiency.*

As an observer of design trends, I must admit that I'm pleased with this movement toward simplicity and balance. Well-made products with classic lines never go out of style. Design teams from across the bath industry seem to be rediscovering their roots, so to speak, and creating new product lines that blend the best of traditional and modern design. Consumers, too, seem to appreciate this new approach and are eagerly responding to these trends that celebrate the art of living in simple, stress-free and beautiful surroundings. ●