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LINDA DENNINGS PRESIDENT
DENNINGS & COMPANY
436 WOODLAND DRIVE
SARASOTA FL 34234-3772

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The hottest trends in kitchen & bath

Part II

BY LINDA JENNINGS DECORATIVE PLUMBING SPECIALIST

This year's design trends are more inspired than ever. The current economic conditions have created a new breed of consumers.

The following is Part II of "The hottest trends in kitchen & bath." Part I of this story ran in the November issue of phc news.

The remaining k&b trends are as follows:

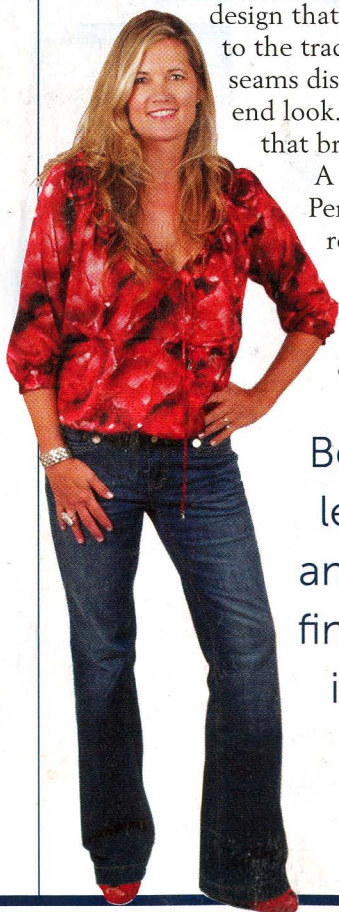
Trend #3 – Stainless in the spotlight

The trend toward stainless steel for kitchens and baths is stronger than ever and products like Lenova's Entertainer Sink are taking center stage with innovative new features and a multi-tasking design style. The Entertainer bar/island sink features a drain board, wine cooler and three condiment trays that can be used for olives, a selection of nuts, sliced lemons or whatever you wish to serve. A two-piece cutting board covers the unit when not in use, providing additional counter space. The kitchen is the hub of the home and stainless products provide function and durability while making a modern statement. We're also seeing stainless kitchen and bath sinks evolve into a full range of shapes and styles, like the kidney-shaped bath sink and even a stainless steel apron-front farm sink for the ultimate in transitional style.

And when we talk about stainless, there is no doubt that less is more. Seamless drains are aesthetically superior, as they create a seamless modern look, but they also do away with the grime and eyesore of drains and glue. The new PermaClean drain system from Lenova has a streamlined modern look and an innovative drain design that provides a stylish and sanitary solution to the traditional kitchen sink. Disposer and drain seams disappear for a smooth and sanitary high-end look. No seams mean no dirty water or debris that breed bacteria. Drain kits become obsolete.

A fundamental shift in sink design, the PermaClean drain system features removable splashguards that are dishwasher safe, and strainer baskets that seal to both the drain fitting and the garbage disposer. The sink line complements any décor with premium

Bellbottoms and patent leather are so in vogue, and leading designers are finding a renewed interest in funky-kitsch designs of the '70s.



16-gauge 304 stainless and a light European brushed finish; fully undercoated plus quality sound pads combine to insulate and reduce excess noise and vibration.

Trend #4 – Retro is white hot

Bellbottoms and patent leather are so in vogue, and leading designers are finding a renewed interest in funky-kitsch designs of the '70s. Remember The Beatles' White Album and go-go boots? This groovy trend is spilling over to fixtures, faucets, sinks, tubs and hardware. We're seeing a new wave of white — white faucet finishes, white hardware, white leather. Composite bath sinks in matte white is where elegance meets edge, combining minimalist design with the beauty of solid surface construction. Atlas Homewares stepped up to the "hot" plate with refreshing new lines of white leather and high gloss white knobs and pulls. Think minimalist with options for these collections: choose from whisper-soft curves to dramatic right angles; geometric forms that are the hallmarks of modernism. A nod to the 70s, this trend will have you getting your old vinyl records out.

Trend #5 – Partnering with designers

The trend today is about infusing products with high style and so it's no surprise that some of the most successful companies are collaborating with leading architects and designers to inspire product design. And the results are electrifying. Matthew Quinn, one of the nation's leading designers in the luxury kitchen and bath design industry, and MTI Whirlpools recently embarked on a design partnership. The two have collaborated on the design and development of a new luxury collection of baths, sinks and bath furniture.

Reveal Designs also recently partnered with Quinn to design a new hardware line. Reveal and Quinn pair decades of experience and a strong national marketing and distribution campaign throughout U.S. and international markets. The partnership has added new dimension and perspective to the cutting-edge modern aesthetics of the Reveal Designs portfolio. The synergy of respected branding, common thinking and inspired design concepts allow for a continued fresh approach to architectural door and cabinet hardware designs.

Trend #6 – Shed some light

Creative forms of lighting have taken the spotlight from the most inspired manufacturers of bath products, the most trendy of which is LED. Why? Because LED (light-emitting diodes) brings fun, function and beauty to home decor. It's also economical, safe, maintenance-free and lasts for decades. Novellini's new Sparkle shower screen is elevating the bath experience to a level not before achieved in bath design. As a stand-alone

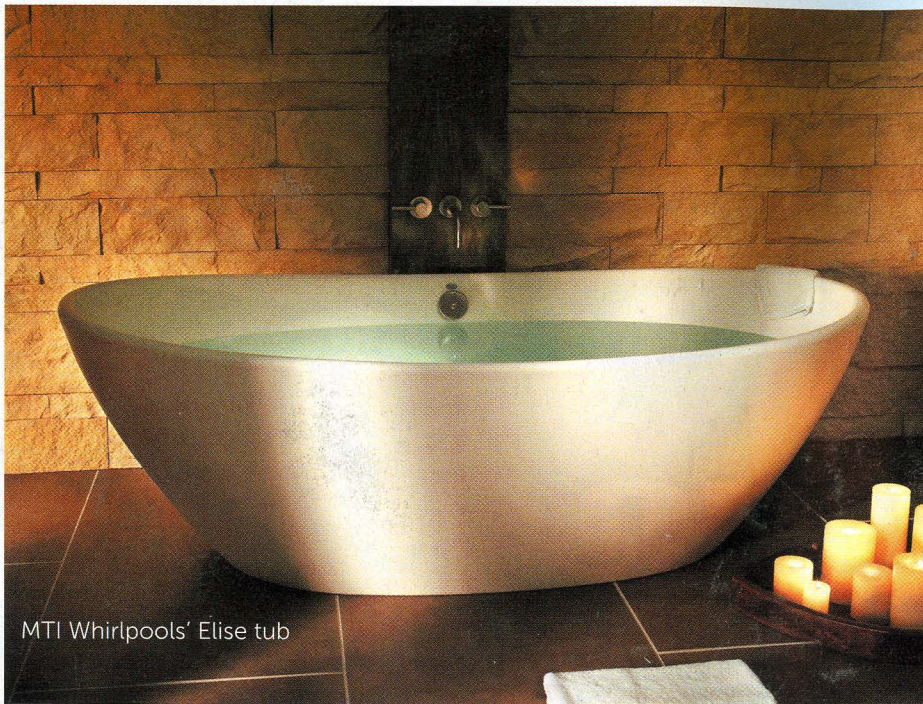
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shower screen with embedded LED blue lights, Sparkle lights up the shower experience. Part of the Elysium Collection, Sparkle is an eye-catching piece of art as well as a fully functional shower.

Trend #7 — Personal style!

The bath continues to evolve as a private refuge; an escape from the rigors of life's daily challenges. It's no wonder that homeowners are seeking to personalize this space to the max. Today it's all in the details! Bath accessories fill the bill and are at the forefront of cutting-edge design. Tub and bath shapes are getting more simplified while the accessories and amenities are evolving, raising the bar on customization. MTI Whirlpools offers everything from teak bath inserts to floating hydro-remotes. Carefully chosen items such as these make any bath spill over with personal style. It's all about creating a space that can evolve based on our moods and needs of the moment. So get inspired and check out a lifestyle of options that will wash away the stresses of everyday life.



MTI Whirlpools' Elise tub

to live like a movie star with a few minor touches. Add bling with striking stylish hardware. We all know that simply changing out knobs and pulls on tired cabinets can create an entirely new, luxurious and sensational look. Look for quality products without the high cost.

Trend #9 — Warm up bath design

Why settle for cold, damp towels when you can cuddle up with a soothing, warm towel after every shower or bath? Add a little luxury to your bath design with a towel warmer and keep your towels fresh and dry all year long. Not only will they be dry and warm when you use them, but they will also stay mildew free. The newest towel warmers out today exceed expectations in quality and craftsmanship. These modern towel warmers are designed to create a light and open atmosphere in any modern home. Consumers are drawn to unique designs that feature flowing shapes, gentle curves or exotic flair that make the ultimate style statement.

Trend #10 — The future is clear

In an age when consumer confidence is low, the future is clear. It's all about being transparent! And that trend has transferred over to the luxury kitchen and bath market. We're seeing bath furniture crafted out of clear glass, vessel sinks hand blown out of glass that echo minimalism, and clear acrylic Lucite bath accessories that infuse a spirit of pure optimism!

Linda Jennings is president of Jennings & Company, a public relations, advertising and marketing agency, specializing exclusively in the decorative plumbing and luxury hardware industry. Throughout a 20-year tenure, she has worked with the most significant editors and journalists in the consumer home market, identifying trends and providing newsworthy products. Based in Sarasota, Fla., her agency represents some of the most progressive manufacturers in the kitchen & bath industry. Jennings is also a member of the DPHA and writes for their monthly Newsleak newsletter.

Trend #8 — Bring on the glam!

It's all about glamour. Let's face it, with homeowners caught in the economic doldrums of recent years, more and more consumers are looking to create a major splash for a minimal investment. Many still desire a Hollywood home despite severe budget restrictions. Show them how

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