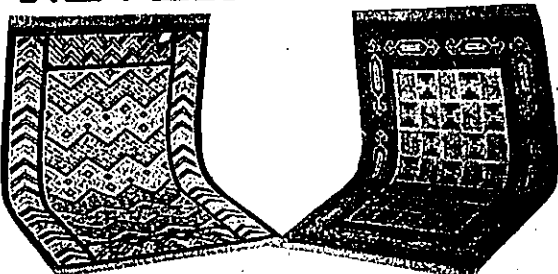


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Don't get soaked installing a hot tub

As more homeowners remodel an old home rather than build a new one, two extras are popping up again and again — spas and hot tubs.

More than 100,000 families installed one of the two last year. And the National Spa and Pool Institute (NSPI) estimates that more than 500,000 families now enjoy the relaxing effects of a long, hot soak in the privacy of their own backyards or homes.

Almost everyone considering the purchase of a spa or tub knows the therapeutic value — both physical and mental — provided through these swirling pools of hot water.

But very few have a clear picture of what these products offer or how to bring the hot water experience home — without, ah, getting soaked.

Here are some specific guidelines for choosing the best form of hot water relaxation.

THERE ARE SEVERAL types of hot water products currently on the market. Hot tubs are generally constructed of hardwood such as redwood, mahogany, cedar, oak or teak. Some tubs are made of wood on the outside with fiberglass liners inside. The vessels are usually round or oval and are placed above ground.

A hot water spa is generally made of fiberglass, gunite or acrylic material and is placed in the ground.

Fiberglass spas are divided into two categories, depending on the method used to create turbulence. One type employs a blower or compressor to force air through a duct system and out through tiny holes in the bottom of the shell. The effect on the skin is light and vibrant, much like a fingertip massage.

The second type pumps large volumes of water through small hydrotherapy jets. The velocity creates a suction that mixes air with the incoming stream of water.

Portable spas are a popular choice for many families because they can be easily moved and used — either indoors or outside — depending on available electrical outlets.

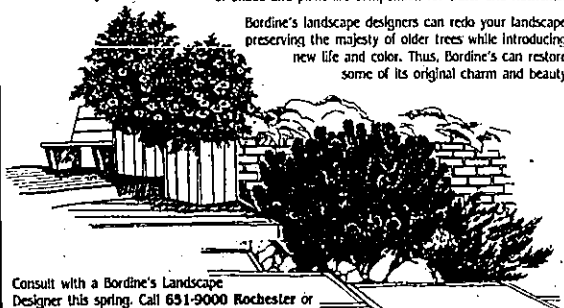
Jetted bathtubs are now replacing traditional tubs in many bath remodeling projects. These tubs usually have an acrylic finish with a fiberglass backing and are drained after use.

BOTH SPAS and tubs operate on the same principle. Water is heated and circulated through jets that create a soothing turbulence. The products are equipped with similar pumps, filters, heaters and water jets. All products on

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