



Glamour kitchens

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from their holders and a mirror. Home owners who wanted to liven things up were largely limited to shower curtain, rug and toilet-seat cover combos.

Today, most decorators forgo the colorful frills. Now, they can go for the fixtures available in a rainbow of trendy hues, such as cranberry, velvet green, peach or bisque, as well as interesting shapes, textures and materials.

AND, IF THERE is no room for the new whirlpool tub, bidet or pedestal sink, home owners are simply allowing the bathroom to overflow into other parts of the home by incorporating hallways, closets or entire rooms into the remodeling project.

What they are ending up with is a luxury area with plenty of space for lounging, dressing and even exercising.

When planning your own bath, whether you are starting from scratch or remodeling, consider these trends cited by the National Kitchen and Bath Association.

Room enough for two: Today's dual working couples need their space — especially in the bathroom. To the rescue come fixtures and floor plans to suit both sinks and vanities placed or designed at varying heights to offer not only personal comfort, but plenty of elbow and mirror room: lift sinks that can be raised or lowered to the user's preference, and special features such as hand-held sprays or separate shower and tub units.

Special effects: You work hard, so indulge, say manufacturers. To make it easy, they have come up with a flood of posh appointments, such as faucets shaped like water sculptures, platform tubs with ascending steps and ultra-modern polished gold sinks.

Or you can pamper yourself with extras built for comfort, such as steam units that direct steam into the shower, neck vibration units, televisions and stereos built directly into the tub, or high-tech bathing "systems" that allow preprogrammed water temperature.

EVEN LITTLE extras, such as scented soaps, natural sponges, plushy towels, ceramic door pulls, warming drawers and rods for terry robes can help enhance water's soothing power.

Safety and water conservation: Say goodbye to scalding showers and sky-high water bills. The newest valves let you preset maximum water temperature and prevent sudden changes in temperatures when water is used elsewhere in the house. Even flushing has become more economical, thanks to toilets that require less water.

There also are fixtures designed for the disabled, such as faucet handles geared for those with limited hand strength or flexibility.

KITCHENS

Slaving over a hot stove, and the quintessential "work triangle" kitchen design are on the way out.

Instead, home owners are discovering that a sequence of inviting, private rooms provides the recipe for kitchen comfort, marking a return to smaller spaces — the butler's pantry, breakfast room, sunroom — that surround a workshop kitchen, according to Home magazine.

But that's not to say the kitchen is becoming less functional. Easy-to-clean solid surfaces are tinted all the way through, so nicks are less noticeable. Double or triple sinks equipped with trendy faucets and handles, hand sprays, water purifiers or hot water dispensers help accommodate more than one cook in the kitchen in light of today's working households.

Even storage ranks up there with good pots and pans in today's efficient kitchen. More architects are including pull-out or roll-out shelves, dividers, under-the-counter appliances and custom built-ins that range from spice drawers to wine racks in their master plans.

And, cabinets do more than hide the cereal. They are accented with punched tin, stained and painted glass, Roman grillwork, trompe l'oeil and stenciling. Sleek, Eurostyle cabinetry is also popular.

Following are a few additional trends from the National Kitchen and Bath Association.

White is right. Manufacturers are introducing lines of white-glass appliances and the newest wood cabinets have been bleached, whitewashed and painted with multiple coats of white enamel.

Appliance savvy: Commercial-type appliances are being developed for the home and others, such as cooktops that offer down-draft grills and even an extra burner, make meal preparation easier than ever before.

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