

Build a better bathroom



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LIVING BY DESIGN

While bathrooms have certainly evolved over the years to include soaker tubs and walk-in showers, your bathroom may not be there yet.

Not all bathrooms are created equal, and yours may be perfectly functional, but it could lack that zen-like quality you desperately need.

Whether your bathroom needs a remodel or a simple facelift, here are a few tips and trends to bring it up to date.

Big ticket items

Splurge on the vanity. A vanity acts as the anchor and defines the space. Vanities come in two styles — built-in or freestanding.

While built-ins work in large bathrooms and provide more counter space, freestanding vanities look custom built and are ideal for smaller spaces.

Treat your faucet as if it's the crown jewel. Instead of everyday standard chrome, consider black, bronze, brass or brushed nickel.

For the ultimate spa shower experience, consider adding an open-concept shower that requires no curtain or door.

Apart from good drainage, include a ceiling-mounted rain showerhead that splashes less water, and a lighted mirror nook for shaving.

Look at stand-alone tubs that come in a variety of unique organic shapes and offer a touch of elegance to any bath space.

Marble, stone and ceramic are always popular choices in flooring. Add subfloor-heating for that year round warmth.

Consider adding feature floor tiles that will act as a focal point for any bathrooms that have no focal wall. Glass, with the vast color choices is now available and is quickly becoming a popular trend. Many manufacturers recommend however using smaller tiles underfoot, to distribute weight evenly.

Facelift on a budget

A bathroom remodel may cost anywhere from \$10,000 to \$40,000. If you can't afford that, consider giving your bathroom a mini facelift instead.

When designing bathrooms for our clients and for HGTV shows, budget obviously plays a big role in the decision process.

However, when there are good bones you can still make a stylish bathroom oasis.

Refresh the walls with a coat of matte, mould-resistant paint. Change your light fixture — nothing dates a bathroom more than an old fixture.

Great place to check out is Royal Lighting for affordable stylish options in the city. Install new faucets American Standard offers vast selection and swap the old hardware on your cabinet doors with new hardware that matches the finish on your fixtures.

Lastly, hide tired flooring with an exquisite bath mat, and stock up on plush face

and hand towels — white screams spa.

Renovations can be scary, and when taking on a bathroom reno, it pays to employ the keen eye of a designer. A qualified designer will handle all the details, and introduce you to the right trades for the project.

In addition, designers have loads of suppliers in their arsenal, where they can obtain superior discounts on custom products.

Tips

1. Because the bathroom is separate from the rest of the house, it can have its own personality. This year's design trend for bathrooms is clean and contemporary. So, even if the rest of your home is traditional, you can still opt for a contemporary design.

2. Sit in your bathtub before purchasing. Bigger may not necessarily be better, and when it comes to bathtubs, 60-inches usually suffices for most people. Look for a secure foothold to rest your feet, and an angled back for neck support.

— *Dvira Ovadia is principal of Dvira Interiors and an award-winning celebrity designer who appears regularly on HGTV. For more information, visit www.dvira.com.*



This year's design trend for bathrooms is clean and contemporary. Photos by Stephanie Buchmann.



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Stock up on accessories including vase and fresh flowers and on plush face and hand towels — white screams spa.