

BATHING BEAUTIES

We all need a place where we can escape from the strains of modern life, and the bathroom can provide a haven of relaxation and pampering

Words by Karen Haller and Julie Stevens



TOP This Trevi Moonshadow base shower offers a more integrated and minimalist design, with water supplied through the wall bracket at the base of the slide rail, 01482 470788 **MAIN** Bespoke bath with Iroko wooden bath panel from £1,250, Rio Tinta honed wall and floor tiles in back slate, from £34 per sq metre, Grohe fixed rain shower, head and extended arm from £349, towel rail from £295, all from Ripples, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 61746, Canterbury, 01227 459525 **RIGHT** The Virtu wooden bath from CP Hart is available in either teak or Canadian Cedar, and starts at £24,428, 0845 600 1950

Want to nourish your health, both mentally and physically, and to soothe your soul at the same time? Then you need to make your bathroom a haven of quiet relaxation and comfort.

Bathroom trends for 2009 are all about creating opulence, individuality, colour and lighting, says specialist Colin Payne from Ripples, Tunbridge Wells: "We are finding clients are wanting more out of their bathrooms, the bathroom is becoming more of a centrepiece in the home with a greater emphasis on relaxation, rich colours, dramatic lighting and technology, creating a wonderful haven in which to relax."

Colour in your bathroom

Colour is finally making a comeback into our homes and it has now reached the bathroom. Over the last few years we have added colour in our accessories, coloured towels and candles and maybe a feature border tile, but now manufacturers are using bold colours such as red and black in their ceramic ware.

Adding such dramatic colour into the bathroom may not be your choice, but adding colour has now become easier if you choose bespoke built-in storage.

If your bathroom is small and with no natural light, select light hues which have the ability to reflect more light and give a sense of space. Border



tiles are still on trend to add both texture and colour and part tiling the room allows for painted walls, which can be easily changed.

Living with light

When a room is flooded with natural light, we feel energised and healthy. Our bathrooms tend to be small

Did you know...

The term *en suite* comes from the French meaning literally 'a following', in this case referring to the bathroom being part of the bedroom to which it is attached.



Healing light

The ability to absorb light energy has a positive effect on our health. Our bodies are best nourished from natural daylight.

and lighting them to achieve the soothing spa-at-home ambience can be a challenge. If you have no windows into your bathroom, consider installing a Sunpipe, you will be amazed at the difference it can make. Equally, consider installing directional spotlights that can be adjusted to illuminate close-up tasks such as shaving and applying make-up. >





Individual style

If you're looking for a change to white sanitaryware and want a very individual solution, consider wood or stone. Favoured by the Japanese for hundreds of years, a timber bath offers a wonderfully relaxing, soothing bathing experience, combining a warm tactile feel with the fabulous aroma of cedarwood when filled with hot water.

Stone is a popular choice when designing spa-like bathrooms, as it provides a feeling of warmth, nature and durability. Both materials are hardwearing and water resistant and have the extra benefit of immediately creating a focal point in the room.

TOP Axor by Hansgrohe Starck Shower Heaven overhead shower designed by Philip Starck. From £3,838, available from Ripples, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 61746.

RIGHT Bisazza mosaics are the height of luxury, and work wonders in this blue and gold combination called Caterina. Available from Ripples Canterbury, 01227 459525

Colour facts

- Colour choice is only 20 per cent conscious.
- Every time you make a colour choice you are making a statement of your state of mind.
- The English language has the highest number of basic colour terms – we have 11 in total.

Showers and wet rooms

Our busy lifestyles have also led for the need to bath quickly yet still in style and comfort. Oriental spa style walk-in rain showers and wet rooms have become increasingly popular and now there is a product that combines both shower and bath from the company Jacuzzi.

Our bathing rituals are set to continue. Creating a relaxing and opulent bathing space in your home is possible with the right selection of sanitaryware, tiles, colours, lighting and accessories. An investment in changing your bathroom is an investment in the quality of your life. ■



Le Corbusier Exhibition

Until 24 May, the Barbican has an exhibition featuring Le Corbusier's work, one of the most influential architects of the 20th century. Go to www.kent-life.co.uk and 'links.'