



Spa-Worthy BATHROOM DESIGN

Retreat to a quiet space where peaceful privacy is a requirement

By Tina Smithers Peckham

Make the bathroom of your dreams a reality by taking inspiration from the timeless beauty and lavish ambiance of luxury day spas. Having a tranquil space to which to escape for a quiet dose of serenity is not only good for one's well-being, it serves as an optimal stress-reducer, especially during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. Because who couldn't use a relaxing retreat from wrapping gifts and nonstop baking?

In essence, the modern-day master bath should move well beyond function, not serving merely as a place where one conducts their personal hygiene — and it all starts with the design and decor. In-home spa status can be achieved by making a few key updates, which should include soft lighting and updated plumbing fixtures, surrounded by various textures and neutral shades from floor to ceiling. Once you've built a solid foundation of beautiful materials, you can further set the tone and rejuvenate the senses with all those pretty extras made to pamper.

A Flawless Floor Plan

When planning a bathroom remodel, consider it an opportunity to add more space where it counts — compact storage options provide a very real opportunity to expand upon the bath or shower (or both!), resulting in an even bigger spa-like feel.

Many homeowners are gravitating toward the best of both worlds by installing a freestanding bathtub and a separate shower enclosure. Whether it's an oversized clawfoot tub or a Jacuzzi-style whirlpool that strikes your relaxation fancy, there's nothing like soaking in a lavender-scented bubble bath after a long day.

But for everyday usage, an expansive, open-concept shower is where it's at with a spacious area housed in floor-to-ceiling glass walls. Safety is also worth noting with these larger-than-life showers, thanks to the addition of barrier-free installation, decorative grab bars and built-in bench seating.

Toilet placement can also aide in adding an element of much-needed privacy. Installing the porcelain throne just out of sight off to one side of the doorway, protected by a vanity or behind a privacy panel, can put one at ease without the slight claustrophobia that comes with a closed-off toilet closet.



Photo courtesy of Lisa Barton.

In addition, these once-beloved shapes from decades' past are given modern updates when it comes to texture and finish. Glossy tile accents such as glass or metallic can calm the mind and inspire relaxation. Materials such as smooth slate or beach-inspired pebble provide an earthy, rustic ambiance, while marble — especially of the timeless white and black variety — instantly ups the luxe factor. According to Carmi Canipe, co-owner Belmarmi Marble: "Marble not only makes for a sleek focal point, it also serves a superior function, seeing as the material absorbs water quickly due to its porous nature." So splash away!

A Zen-like atmosphere, along with visual and textural interest, can also be achieved by arranging multiple sizes or shapes of tile in a relaxing, monochromatic hue for a cool geometric effect. Or offer a mosaic spin on trim around mirrors or unexpected alcoves.

The sky (or should we say ceiling?) is the limit when it comes to bathroom tile, so just remember: Anything but basic is key.

Natural Elements

Bring the outside in and create a cozy oasis with warmer tones and natural accents, especially materials such as bamboo and the aforementioned pebble tiling — both a decorative staple throughout many day spas.

Wood in various shades, whether rustic reclaimed barn wood or a smooth stained cherry, can complement either light hues or dark colors and pairs beautifully with both vintage and industrial trends — it also adds a classically traditional feel to modern bathrooms with clean lines. In a nutshell? Wood works anywhere you want it to from drawers and shelf storage to deep walnut coloring in the shower.

Soft gray stone is another option that can be placed throughout the shower or around the sink area, either as an accent wall or a



Photo by Jessie Preza Photography and courtesy of Lisa Gielincki Interior Design.

portion of the flooring. Further promote a lush, natural setting with aptly arranged greenery, small trees or favorite plants in unique pots throughout the space. Rattan or bamboo furniture also provides an added au naturel aesthetic.

Above all, don't forget to let the light in — skylights make for a stunning touch, and there's nothing more soothing than a freestanding bathtub beautifully placed beneath a large window with a peaceful view.

Photo by Jessie Preza Photography and courtesy of Amanda Webster Design.



Two separate vanities or his and her grooming stations with oversized mirrors can also make getting ready for the day a cinch, alleviating any potential battles over teeth brushing or handwashing. A divider comprised of extra drawers, cabinets or shelving between the two provides ample storage space for plush towels and additional linens.

Inspired Statement Tile

The right tile can also help create the groundwork for your project, and the addition of a statement wall or floor section with out-of-the-ordinary tile shapes and placement can elevate your grand space from an everyday washroom to a luxurious lavatory.

No longer should basic subway tile be reserved for your backsplash. Say, "Later, gator," to any boring large-format tile gracing your shower. We've seen a resurgence in popularity of unique tile shapes such as hexagon, arabesque, diamond, Moroccan fish scales and even chevron, all look-at-me elements that are being spotted from top to bottom in some of today's most coveted bathrooms.



OCA STUDIO

Contemporary fine furniture, home accessories and object d'art from around the world plus interior design services.

330 A1A North, Suite 304 • Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082
 ocastudio.us • 904.827.3433 • hello@ocastudio.us • @ocastudio_home



Spa-Worthy Amenities

Ready to go the extra mile when it comes to the utmost in self-care? Take your spa bathroom to the next level with a few luxurious extras. For starters, add literal warmth to the room by installing heated towel racks and radiant heating throughout the floor to make stepping out of the shower a move you don't mind.

Additional shower amenities are all about convenience and include digital controls with smart technology, steam generators, mood-enhancing LED lights and hidden drains. For the ultimate in luxury, consider a vertical spa complete with a remote-controlled thermostatic valve, allowing you to set the perfect shower temperature from another room in the house so it's ready for when you step in!

As for toilets, high-tech varieties are making the rounds (pun intended), with those that self-clean, save water and offer hands-free components like automatic lid openers and built-in deodorizers.

Lastly, don't forget to set the scene with pamper-worthy additions like plush, white linens and bath mats, relaxing artwork, soothing aromatherapy, and a few prettily packaged shampoos and shower gels. Bonus points for the addition of a bamboo bathtub tray perfect for keeping your restorative must-haves within easy reach.

Your bathroom is often the first place you retreat to upon waking and the last place you go before hitting the pillow, so above all, make it count for the utmost in relaxation.

a long arm jutting out. As for the sink, a double-handle waterfall-style faucet is a must for further providing that spa-like ambiance, even better if flowing softly into a ceramic vessel sink on a gorgeous granite countertop.

No harsh overhead lighting here. When it comes to lighting fixtures, a chandelier or antique candelabra can be a warm alternative to traditional wall sconces, and dimmer switches to set a variety of moods are a given.



High-End Hardware

Industrialists will love this — exposed plumbing, previously prevalent in older, antique homes, has made a return with sleek, clean lines. Exposed hardware and piping that is meant to be seen provides an element of the unexpected in spa-inspired bathrooms — and according to Jill Baker of RayWare Hardware, is all the rage — be it peeking out from under the sink or throughout the shower.

As for high-end fixtures, matte finishes in black, pewter or gunmetal offer texture, depth and a touch of sophistication without the specificity of brass or gold. A rainfall-style showerhead (steam function optional but encouraged) is essential for any master bath, either installed on the ceiling for a true “rainwater” experience or high on the wall with

