

Product Trend Report

Shower Solutions

Shower and bath manufacturers are touting eco-friendly advances that won't sacrifice the spa-like feel.

1 | The Metallo shower system from Jacuzzi Luxury Bath has been upgraded with more than double the number of spray outlets per body jet. Features include thermostatic control valve, height-adjustable rain can showerhead and multi-function handshower.
Circle No. 58 on Product Card



2 | Made of high-gloss acrylic, the American Standard 5' Walk-In Bath features a low-entry walk-in door for easy access and a contoured chair-height seat with deep soaking dimensions. Built-in grab bars and textured tub floors contribute to stability.
Circle No. 59 on Product Card



3 | Authentically crafted in Great Britain, Rohl's Perrin & Rowe Edwardian Exposed Thermostatic Shower Package offers an Old World aesthetic. The package includes an exposed thermostatic valve, handshower and 8" showerhead.
Circle No. 60 on Product Card



4 | The ioDIGITAL vertical spa from Moen features the innovative ioDIGITAL vertical spa interface, which allows the user to set and maintain water temperature and flow with electronic precision. It also offers four custom presets and one-touch activation of multiple spray outlets, allowing for the choice of a shower or body spray, and handshower or rainshower.
Circle No. 61 on Product Card



5 | Sensori by Brizo offers a new thermostatic valve with state-of-the-art technology that keeps water temperatures within a precise range of plus or minus three degrees. Fully customizable and available with showerheads, body sprays and body jets, Sensori is available in RSVP, Vesi, Euro and Traditional styles.
Circle No. 62 on Product Card

By Steven Shaw

These days, the value of the bath as a haven increases exponentially. Of course water becomes critical to creating a spa-like space that promotes relaxation, and that means showers and tubs take center stage.

With shower systems and soaking tubs, there's no question that people like plenty of water to wash away their cares and stresses. But at the same time, the green trend that promotes water and energy conservation is also impacting design and product trends.

With two seemingly disparate trends at play, there's some debate about what consumers want.

"It's about wellness and rejuvenation," says Mike

Reffner, group product manager for Moen, in North Olmsted, OH. "Consumers [want] an experience that's spa-like – a bath experience that is a mini-escape."

Lars Christensen, senior product manager for Hansgrohe, in Alpharetta, GA, says that "green" is the hot topic of the day. "The trend toward custom spa-type showers that we saw in the middle of this decade has faded because of the economy," he states. "Today's trend is toward water conservation and water efficiency."

SHOWER SHOWCASE

Showering has become increasingly important for reasons beyond just hygiene, says Chuck Mistovich, director of marketing, Alsons Corp., in Hillsdale, MI. "People are looking to relax weary muscles, energize



6 | The Euphoria from Grohe is the first hand shower to be fitted with the company's SprayDimmer – a small lever that allows the user to control the water flow with one finger. The fitting has a rainshower design with spray options including Massage spray, Champagne spray or Pure spray.
Circle No. 63 on Product Card



7 | Graff's Luna Family features a vessel filler, a Roman tub filler and a thermostatic shower system, all offered in either polished chrome or Steelnox satin nickel. Matching handshowers and body sprays are also available.
Circle No. 64 on Product Card



8 | Aspen, a freestanding bathtub from Native Trails, is now available in a brushed nickel finish. Hand-crafted and hammered, the oval soaking tub features a textured surface that reflects light. The double wall design and the high heat conductivity of copper maintains water temperature.
Circle No. 65 on Product Card



9 | The Epoque Nouveau tub from Porcher is a traditional claw-footed tub available in either a freestanding design or high-back slipper style. The tub is graced with distinctively styled feet in white or chrome and finished with white titanium enamel. The tub's exterior walls and feet may also be custom painted.
Circle No. 66 on Product Card

with the morning shower or wind down with a shower or bath at the end of the day," he says.

This has led to an increased interest in shower systems with body sprays and multiple showerheads. "Consumers want options that will give them a fuller showering experience, with water hitting them from multiple angles and heights," says Paul Patton, senior product development manager for Delta Faucet Co., in Indianapolis, IN.

Creating a custom shower continues to soar in popularity, according to Robert Larson, director of business development for Danze, in Woodridge, IL. "Homeowners like the ability to mix and match elements such as a stylish showerhead, a hand-held shower/sprayer and body sprays," he says.

Indeed, many consumers are looking to increase impact and functionality. "A perfect way to change the look and performance of a master or guest bath, without all of the expense associated with a full renovation, is by replacing the faucets and showerheads," says Lou Rohl, COO/managing partner of Rohl, in Irvine, CA.

Convenience and versatility are among the main concerns of consumers, manufacturers agree. To meet those needs, Alsons has created the In2ition Two Showers in One. "Consumers can use the showerhead by itself, the handshower by itself or both at one time," says Mistovich. The In2ition, which is an integral handshower mounting within the showerhead, is also a combination shower whereby the consumer uses a three-way diverter to control the flow. "This unit has a handshower mount and allows different spray options from the showerhead, handshower or both at one time," he adds.

Vacation themes are popular, says Reffner. "Creating a bathroom, as experienced in a luxury hotel room – with a showerhead/hand shower combination and/or a vertical spa – has become very popular," he says. Rainshower showerheads are a popular choice for those who want a home spa experience in the shower, and technological advances have only added to its popularity, according to Larry Brodey, CEO of Jaclo, in Cranford, NJ. "Our Rain Canopies have seen many advances in terms of size, shape and chromatherapy features," he says. "In addition to our Rain Canopies, our Renovator Swivel Showerarm with Handshower Diverter allows for the 'Rain Canopy effect' by converting the standard showerarm into a luxury showerhead and handshower experience."

TECH SPEAK

Technology is also playing a critical role, Reffner notes. "We're all getting very accustomed to the idea of customizing technology to fit our needs with a 'set and forget' mentality. Those 'set and forget' features have now entered the bathroom."

Larson says digital shower systems are emerging as the next big thing in luxury shower systems. "These systems offer all of the performance found in mechanical thermostatic valves, but have many other features including one-touch control, showering presets, remote and multimedia control," he says.

Moen's iDigital offers digital command of temperature and flow, with four custom presets and one-touch activation. An optional remote control allows the user to turn on the shower from across the room.



10 | Low-flow showerheads from Danze use only 1.5 gallons per minute, and are available in five decorative designs: 4" Victorian, 4" Round Sunflower, 3" Two-Function Massage, 4" Lamp Sunflower and 6" 305 Showerhead.
Circle No. 67 on Product Card

11 | The Roaring Twenties Collection of shower products from Jaclo combines a vintage aesthetic with state-of-the-art thermostatic shower valve technology. A variety of fixtures can be combined with rich finishes to provide a distinctive look.
Circle No. 68 on Product Card



12 | The Interlude Lago tub from Six Eleven Architectural Bath Design features a base that is available in wood, color, solid stone or steel to accommodate a range of room designs. It is available with the option of HTW or hydro-therapeutic whirlpool system.
Circle No. 69 on Product Card



13 | Delta Faucet Co. has expanded its H2Okinetic showerhead offerings to include traditional, transitional and contemporary models. H2Okinetic Technology produces bigger water droplets at a water-saving 1.5 gallons per minute for a drenching shower.
Circle No. 70 on Product Card



14 | Stone Forest's Rubix Bathtub is carved from a single block of Carrara Marble. It features a distinctive geometric shape, complete with tapering sides and angled corners.
Circle No. 71 on Product Card



15 | The ActivTouch hand shower from Alsons Corp. features three spray-selection buttons that allow the user to select up to eight spray combinations. Other features include a 5' extendable, stainless steel hose, anti-clog nozzles and a pause-control button.
Circle No. 72 on Product Card

Product Trend Report



16 | The Ametys freestanding bathtub from Produits Neptune is designed with an acrylic contour skirt and can be outfitted with a Spanish cedar base, trim and tray. Made of white acrylic, the tub can be customized with a square whirlpool system, Mass-air and Activ-air.
Circle No. 73 on Product Card



17 | When creating the Palomba Collection from Laufen, Ludovica and Roberto Palomba took their cues from the sea. A freestanding tub, it is simple and organic in shape and looks like it has been naturally sculpted, according to the firm.
Circle No. 74 on Product Card



18 | Strom Plumbing By Sign of the Crab offers a wide ranging product line that includes cast iron pedestal bathtubs such as the Peninsula, a 5' Dual Cast Iron Tub on Pedestal. The full line includes cast iron pedestal or clawfoot tubs, acrylic pedestal or clawfoot tubs and faithful reproductions of antique originals in a variety of finishes.
Circle No. 75 on Product Card



19 | The Lloyd Square SMA Shower Set from Toto USA includes a single-function high-performance showerhead that features copious spray nozzles distributed across an 8" spray face. The shower set features Shape Memory Alloy technology, which prevents scalding and drastic changes in water temperature.
Circle No. 76 on Product Card



20 | Cifal USA has expanded its Techno M3 bath collection to include a spa shower system. The shower system comes complete with six individual body sprays and a hand shower. It is available in polished chrome, satin nickel and polished nickel.
Circle No. 77 on Product Card

Circle No. 77 on Product Card

21 | The Acryline bath from Acryline Spa Baths combines both air massage therapy bathing and elegant showering capabilities in one bath. Featuring integrated steps for easy entry, the unit features a combined soaking and massaging bath, as well as an integrated shower system.
Circle No. 78 on Product Card

Circle No. 78 on Product Card



BIG FOOTPRINTS

In the bath, manufacturers and designers say that larger showers continue to be popular.

"The larger footprint allows for more elaborate shower systems, with ceiling-mounted showerheads, body sprays and handshowers with slide bar systems," says Larson. "Many homeowners are doing oversized shower stalls and eliminating a tub altogether."

Larson sees larger showers growing in popularity, as these more elaborate systems become "must haves" in upscale master bathrooms. "With this growth in interest, the category will continue to see improvement in technology and design," he believes.

Patton also has noticed the trend toward larger showers. "We're seeing consumers enlarging their shower area and starting to include other options like handshowers, multiple showerheads and body sprays.

We certainly expect this trend to continue, but some of the decisions of adding body sprays will also be influenced by water conservation and usage restrictions."

THE GREEN SCENE

American Standard, for example, is one manufacturer starting to see greater consumer awareness about water use in shower systems. "We've always encouraged shower consumers to use diverters and enjoy different spray experiences, rather than have everything going at once," explains

Gary Uhl, design director for American Standard, in Piscataway, NJ.

Delta is also focusing on providing a great shower experience that conserves water. "This is accomplished with our H2O kinetic technology, which delivers on that experience, yet uses less water," Patton says.

"Consumers want functional products that save water without curtailing comfort – that is, a low-flow product that feels like a 10" open-flow shower," says Christensen. "I think this trend will be with us indefinitely because of legislation and regulation."

Indeed, different areas of the country are mandating the installation of low-flow showers. The California state legislature is considering a bill that would permit only 1.5 gpm showers and only one per shower stall. A number of standards and ordinances are under development that would make low-flow showers a permanent part of the plumbing codes, effectively eliminating multiple showerhead systems.

The LEED standard for a bathroom is one 2.5 GPM showerhead per 2,500 square inches, says Christensen. "If you want to install two showerheads or a showerhead and a bodyspray or two, you must enlarge the showering space to 5,000 square inches," he says.

Jaclo is another manufacturer that takes eco issues seriously and has dedicated itself to developing shower products that do not compromise a user's experience.

Moen also supports water conservation, but is equally concerned about protecting the water experience. In May, Moen introduced the Envi Eco-Performance Rainshower, an 8" rainshower that has a flow rate of 2.0 gpm, 20 percent less than the industry standard, Reffner says.



22 | The contemporary Ravello, the latest bathtub design from Victoria & Albert, is rimless and sculptural in style. The tub tapers inward as it descends, creating an illusion of space for a sleek look. Featuring 68"x30" proportions, the tub is created from Englishcast, a limestone-based material.
Circle No. 79 on Product Card



23 | Walk-in tubs from Safety Tubs offer a variety of comfort-enhancing amenities in addition to easy access. Options for the tubs include: the Minute Drain; the T5 Door System, and wide contoured seats with color-matched handrail.
Circle No. 80 on Product Card



24 | The Shower Column from California Faucets accommodates in-wall valves, thermostatic systems and pressure balance systems. It is customizable with a diverter and hand shower. With 12 showerhead options, the Shower Column is compatible with any of the firm's 46 original handles and 30 finishes.
Circle No. 81 on Product Card



25 | Part of the Perfect Bath Collection from Kallista, the Perfect Deep Soak Bath features minimal, classic lines and is available in Stucco White or Linen. Measuring 48"x48", the tub has two raised corner seats and a 34" depth.
Circle No. 82 on Product Card

Product Trend Report



26 | The CR527P soaking bath from Jason Hydrotherapy, designed by Shawn-Ian Bruce, is crafted from the company's Carrera composite material in Matte White. The 60"x32"x24" rectangular pedestal features an ergonomic design, is stain resistant and features consistent color throughout.
Circle No. 83 on Product Card



27 | The freestanding Luxxo Duo Oval bath from Kaldewei is offered in black steel enamel. Self-supporting paneling allows it to be placed comfortably anywhere in the room, the firm says.
Circle No. 84 on Product Card



28 | Barclay Products offers an extensive selection of classic cast iron clawfoot tubs, including this 71" double slipper tub. This tub is available with or without deck holes.
Circle No. 85 on Product Card



29 | The Raindance Rainfall from Hansgrohe is a horizontal, multifunctional rain panel that features a trio of spray modes – including Rain AIR mode, Whirl Mode and Rainflow Mode, a 4"-wide torrent-type setting that mimics a tropical waterfall.
Circle No. 86 on Product Card

30 | The Riverdale Collection from Gerber Plumbing Fixtures includes low-flow tub and shower fittings that feature simple lines and contemporary styling. The fittings are available with solid brass lever handles, and are available in chrome and brushed nickel finishes.

Circle No. 87 on Product Card



At Rohl, "Products, especially showers, are designed with a respect for the need to comply with EPA standards, and eight of our showerheads perform at 2.0 gpm, saving homeowners thousands of gallons of water per year," says Rohl. "Many Rohl products also offer anti-calcium components to prevent calcium buildup, making them easier to maintain," he adds.

BASHING IN BATHS

The "green effect" has also carried over to the tub market. "Green products and materials are at the forefront," says George Gruber, president and owner of Six Eleven Architectural Bathtub Design, in North Hollywood, CA. "Cast polymer products by nature are readily conducive to a green goal."

Gruber says potential replacement of the solid component of cast polymer is being researched, with materials such as recycled glass, walnut, pecan and almond shells being considered.

Recycled glass is not only environmentally friendly, it adds strength, durability, thermal insulation and, in certain cases, aesthetic value to the finished product, adds Gruber. "The use of recycled and other by-products as a replacement of ground stone will lessen energy costs and reduce weight, making it an environmentally friendly choice," he comments.

Michael Zimmer, president of Stone Forest, in Santa Fe, NM, agrees that as designers and clients become more interested in the "spa" bath, they want natural materials. "We've started working with bamboo, and have introduced designs in various stones including onyx, travertine and carrara marble," he says. "These materials bring a natural

look without negatively impacting the environment."

Frank Liebetrau, area sales manager, North America, Laufen USA in Miami, FL, adds that the focus with tubs is now on new materials rather than technical features. "It's about the natural look with soft, organic forms," he says. "Water, in its pure form, has become a muse for bath design. We see it for cleansing and as an elemental force."

Steel enamel in bathtubs is also gaining traction, says Martin Koch, chief communications officer for Kaldewei USA, in Indianapolis, IN. "It's lighter weight than cast iron; plus, it's 100% recyclable at the end of the product life cycle, so there are no sustainability issues."

Koch says designers and consumers are mainly looking for dramatic design profiles, color options and comfort. "Freestanding tubs are becoming more popular because their design is not confined by space limitations," he explains. "And, geometric designs that break out from standard bathtub architecture, dual tubs where two people can relax together and colors beyond white are being introduced more often. There is a lot of interest in black in the bath right now."

Demand is also high for richly featured tubs, says Anthony Pasquarelli, communications manager for Jacuzzi Luxury Bath, in Chino Hills, CA. "Our freestanding tubs make a strong visual statement with a fresh perspective," he says, adding that "products with furniture-grade decorative wood trim, for instance, are capturing the attention of homeowners and design professionals alike."

In the end, Uhl sees experience and comfort as bigger than just a striking design alone. "In tubs, it's about soaking and relaxation," he concludes.

KBDN



31 | WaterBridge exposed showers from Sonoma Forge complement the faucets in the collection, with several standard models and finishes available. Each WaterBridge shower is available in rustic nickel, pizzazz nickel, rustic copper or oil-rubbed bronze.

Circle No. 88 on Product Card

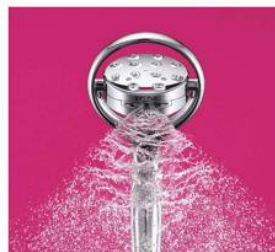


32 | The Yume freestanding bathtub from MTI Whirlpools is a Japanese-inspired tub that measures 52"x52" and is 35.5" deep. A crescent-shaped seating bench is positioned low to the floor for maximum immersion.

Circle No. 89 on Product Card



33 | The Satinjet Tahli Shower System from Methven is an ergonomically designed shower system that emits a waterfall of 3,000 droplets per second and consumes 2.3 gallons per minute of water. The handshower offers twin jet performance and consumes 1.9 gpm.
Circle No. 90 on Product Card



34 | The Flipside handshower from Kohler features Flipstream technology, where the sprayface rotates on its axis, with each of the four sides of the sprayface being dedicated to one of four spray options: Koverage, Kotton, Komotion and Kurrent.
Circle No. 91 on Product Card



35 | From MGS Designs comes its new Rain Showers, composed of 100% solid stainless steel. The exposed shower systems are available with a round or square rain canopy and feature a thermostatic mixer.
Circle No. 92 on Product Card