

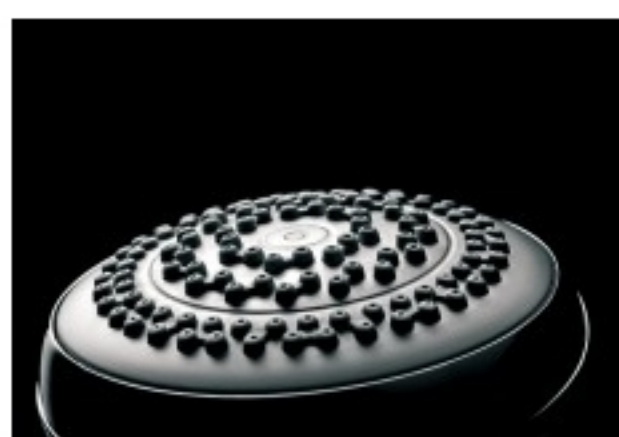
Luxe bathrooms

Team Hotelier India , *October 6th, 2010*

Bathrooms are no longer considered boring spaces. With a slew of new launches, this is a space that is seeing a clear shift in terms of designs, décor and products. Hotelier India does a reality check.

New Launches

Today, bathrooms are viewed as wellness zones with the emphasis on luxury. With big brands like Jaquar, Grohe, Hansgrohe, Duravit, Ess Ess, Kohler and Toto becoming easily available and giving great value for money, there is a lot happening in this space.



Grohe’s ‘BAU’ collection specially designed for hotels, uses German technology, has the highest grade of quality and is economical in the long run. Other brands like ‘American Standards’ offer packages on projects for hotel bathrooms.

Kohler recently introduced a new range of performance showerheads to address the Indian problem of low water pressure.

The innovative spray engine and internal waterways design provides the same shower even with low water pressure. Featuring anti-limescale nozzles, contemporary styling, multiple spray functions and a superior chrome finish, these showerheads blend form and function like never before.

Effegibi’s Touch and steam is a luxurious minimal sheet of glass with a clean and fascinating design; steam generating technology is housed behind this simple object.

Touchscreen controls magically light the glass and let you choose a variety of functions for steam, colour therapy, and hot air circulation. This is a unique and surprising mix of design and performance.

“Rain showers at Style Box are made to bring natural rainfall into the bathroom,” says Megha Srinivasamurthy, architect and design head, Style Box.

“Many of these feature a hydro massage system and fixed or changing chromotherapy lights. You can choose from spray selections that include rainfall, water blades and atomisation. The showerheads can be combined with wall-mounted spouts and adjustable wall-mounted mini-showers to create your ideal environment,” she adds.

The Icon range of hand showers from Grohe, come in bold colours and make the ultimate style statement. Shower channels have revolutionised the look of the modern bathroom. These are available not only in high performance profiles with high flow rates, but also in myriad patterns and materials.

Villeroy & Boch’s Memento, the purist collection design for the bathroom is a reflection of a successful reduction of form in unpretentious, rectangular bath elements – not just in radiant, pure white but also in deep, glossy black.

The BiancoNero tile concept relies on exciting contrasts and powerful harmonies drawn from the opposition of black and white: with crystalline forms, three-dimensional effects, relief borders, velvety soft surfaces and large formats based on the minimalist principle that “less is more.”

Creative use of ceramics to vary gloss levels, surface structures, grain size, looks and formats give the tiles their high-gloss surfaces and three-dimensional tone-in-tone motifs making it seem like the finest porcelain on the wall.

Some of the latest launches in bathroom fittings include products featuring Digital/Touch technology that allow you to have personalised settings, customised shower solutions for your very own spa experience and products with water saving technologies like Grohe EcoJoy.

Grohe Ondus allows you to set your personal preference of temperature, pressure and flow so that you have your perfect experience in a single touch.

Environment considerations

With the mantra of going green gaining ground and water conservation becoming a priority agenda, bathroom fittings are all geared to do their bit to conserve the environment.

According to statistics, the bathroom is responsible for 63% of total household water usage, certainly much of hotel’s water usage comes through guest bathrooms.

Bathroom design companies are quickly catching on to the change in attitudes and have begun to release more energy and water efficient products.

“Commitment to the environment is evident in a number of established products that employ cutting edge technologies such as thermostats, dual flush sanitary systems or electronic faucets.

Some hand shower models feature an eco spray button for easy reduction of water consumption. The speed clean nozzles provide for effortless cleaning of the spray plate and dream spray technology enables precise and even water distribution,” says Srinivasamurthy.

Grohe leads the way on water conservation with its EcoJoy range, which combines outstanding design, high performance and water usage efficiency.

“These products deliver a defined flow volume of 5.8 litres per minute, allowing one to save up to 50% on their water bills, meeting the requirement for the sustainable code for homes and building regulations. A 100-bedroom hotel can save up to 6.8 million litres of water and 186,000 kWh of energy per year,” says Nishant Grover, director – Institutional Business, Grohe India.

Technology First

Although it may sound surprising, the bathroom space is witnessing new technology being deployed. Fast and most accurate shower thermostats are available today. The desired temperature is reached in a fraction of a second and maintained for the duration of the shower.

Super fast and super accurate temperature control delivers convenience, comfort and total safety for the user. Sensor technology in faucets contributes greatly to water saving, especially in public areas.

These are employed for both faucets and flushing cisterns which avoid wastage of water. High efficiency faucets are introduced in the market which consume very little water using aerators and built in flow reducers.

Digital controls on faucets ensure desired temperature of water for desired amount of time therefore minimising wastage. High efficiency showers have reduced flow rates but combine air with water droplets to give a fuller spray therefore not compromising on the showering experience.

New products feature integrated water-saving technologies that restrict flow rates, allowing you to reduce water consumption without sacrificing on performance or design.

The result is less environmental impact and reduced running costs. The process of fittings has evolved with new technologies and the demand for concealed single lever fittings is growing over exposed twin handle fittings.

“The infrared sauna is another clever innovation, which offers a modern take on the traditional version, sporting digital controls and an instant sauna experience without the wait.

Another latest innovation in bathrooms is the innovative use of digital technology. Digital technology provides home-owners with a custom shower experience, enriched with a custom digital hydrotherapy system controlled by a single, easy to use digital interface panel.

The technology can accommodate up to eight showerheads for an ultimate hydrotherapy experience. You can set the system to provide personalised showering experience. Each person who uses the shower can program his or her showering preferences, which can be activated simply by pressing a button,” explains Anjum Jung, managing director, Morph Design Co-Prestige Group.

Trends

Today’s bathroom is being transformed into a softer space offering much more comfort and the look and feel is less clinical.

Rachita Sood, housekeeping manager at the Courtyard by Marriott, Pune Hinjewadi says, “Many are opting for digital showers and faucets, to music and aromas, which help in stimulating all the senses. If one wants to enhance the ambience of a bathroom, lighting, temperature controls and sound can also be used. For an eco-friendly bathroom, sensors are being used to control basin mixers, flushes etc, for water-saving and hygiene purposes.”

There is also a lot of activity in the portable bathroom storage space. “Tall or low trolleys, with drawers, boost bathroom cupboard space and take up little room. Ranging from four to eight drawers, they help keep the bathroom sink area clutter-free. Ever loc and Power loc Screw Suction shower storage puts what you need right where you need it – on the shower wall.

Add an overhead toilet storage rack to use wasted wall space. Sleek Shelf Trolleys create instant bathroom storage for towels, with drawers for a tidy finish. Their cool chrome won’t clash with any colour scheme so they match bathrooms of any vintage and like a good Little Black Dress; they never go out of fashion,” explains Balachandra Yadalam, managing director, India Master Franchise, and Howards Storage World.

Some of the latest trends in our industry are thermostatic mixers, wall mounted basin fittings, concealed cisterns, free standing tubs and tub fillers, retrofittable shower systems and water saver fittings.

Ketan R Sheth, director of Goldmine Project Consultant says, “One trend we are seeing in hotels catering to business travellers is rooms without bathtubs. Owners find these business customers are more likely to take showers than baths. Hotels love it.

It also cuts minutes off a housekeeper’s routine with only a shower to clean. Another concept which can be used wherever possible is the ‘barn door.’ A barn door stays outside the bathroom and slides in front of the room opening. This allows for a wider opening into the bathroom, and gives the illusion of more space.”

Jung adds, “As far as bathroom fittings goes, the traditional three-piece tapware sets are firmly on the way out and are rapidly being replaced by the much easier to use mixer taps and single lever taps.

Color wise, both chrome plated or stainless steel tapware are in depmand for their timeless look and as they complement all colors and finishes. Another current trend in taps is water efficient ones. The taps, while being water efficient, do not compromise on the delivery of water, so that you don’t suffer from poor flows or low water pressure.”

Bathrooms have never seemed more exciting, so go ahead and indulge yourself!