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CREATING A WELLNESS SANCTUARY

Once considered for utilitarian purposes only, bathrooms are now where it's at

EUGENIA TRIANDOS AND KORINA KHANIS

Given today's heightened focus on our home environments and how to maximize our time spent there, the theme of wellness has resurfaced to the forefront of interior design.

Indeed, the idea of home as a sanctuary is something we've explored with our own clients and not surprisingly, bathrooms are where it's at.

These once strictly-utilitarian rooms in the home are now being re-examined and reinvented as de-

adent retreats in which to relax and recharge. Manufacturers too have stepped up, enhancing their offerings for the ultimate in indulgence.

Here are some of our top bathroom trends for a bathroom designed with wellness in mind.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Chromotherapy and aromatherapy are a wonderful addition to your "me" zone, touted for their relaxing and restorative effects. Lighting should layer into the overall ambience of the space, so be sure to use dimmer switches. Also consider the "temperature" of your lighting, warm versus cool 'daylight' lighting is on the cooler side and mimics the outdoors to help energize you at the start of each day — which is something Canadians will especially appreciate during those dark winter months.

SPA-INSPIRED

Invoke elements of your favourite spa right at home. More often than not, this can be done within the parameters of your existing bathroom in the form of some strategic upgrades. Trade up your traditional shower with a steam shower — your skin and sinuses will thank you! If

you're a bath person, replace your builder-grade bathtub with a jetted tub for a heightened level of luxury. And if space permits, a sculptural, freestanding deep soaker tub is beautiful, functional, and an instant focal point.

ADDED "EXTRAS"

When it comes to achieving a specific look and feel in a room, it's all about the details. Go the extra mile with seemingly small things for an overall experience. This includes beautiful fixtures and lighting that illuminates and inspires you. Heated floors and towel bars, or an under-counter refrigerator drawer for storing make-up and serums are a pleasant surprise.

At the very least, opt for an all-white colour palette coupled with a dedicated make-up or meditation zone to deliver that customized spa experience at home.

SMART TECHNOLOGIES

Connected and voice-activated technologies are appearing everywhere in the home, from living areas and kitchens to bedrooms and yes, bathrooms too. Aside from the obvious convenience to simply voicing your desires, hands-free tech is also a popular choice as the cleaner, no-touch option. Motion-activated lighting and faucets, smart speakers and connected heated floors and towel racks are easy to integrate into your bathroom design.

Top it off with a smart mirror that can give you the news of the day, scroll through your social feed, tell you what's on schedule and even read your mood. Creepy or cool? You decide!

"Custom" is the key to a great bathroom — or any space, for that matter. We believe that there's no right or wrong way to do it, only your way. Whether you're renovating or building a bathroom from scratch, or you're in the market for a makeover, consult with a professional designer like us about how you can upgrade your standard space into a real personalized spa oasis this fall.

Eugenia Triandos and Korina Khamis, are designers and co-founders of Hibou Design & Co., serving the Montreal and Ottawa areas by creating designs that transform a house, condo or loft into your dream home. Visit hiboudesignco.com.



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