



# PAMPER PALACES

Forget about the quick splash-and-go – the bathroom is becoming a place to luxuriate and unwind from the pressures of life

**F**EW rooms in the home have had quite such a design overhaul as the bathroom in recent years. Ari Zorlu, director of Paco Jaanson Australia, has noticed the transformation more than most and says it's a change for the better.

"In the past decade, no single room in the average household has undergone a more dramatic transformation," Ari says. "Once a purpose-built utility room lacking warmth and imagination, the now-modern sanctuary has undergone a stunning facelift, thanks to some of the world's greatest designers."

Karine Lim, marketing co-ordinator and product developer at Rogerseller, says the bathroom as sanctuary looks set to become the norm in Australian homes.

"We will see more and more technology coming into play in the bathroom and a focus towards personal wellness and well-being," Karine says. "The bathroom will become a relaxation area, a getaway from the daily stresses."

Caroma-Dorf designer Royston Wilson agrees: "As kitchens become more integrated into the house, the opposite can be said of bathrooms. They are becoming more personal and more intimate, so the bathroom becomes a special place."

This was particularly evident at Cersaie, the international exhibition of ceramic tile and bathroom furnishings in Bologna, where the latest bathroom trends were showcased.

"The bathroom is blending into the living room, with a focus on health and wellbeing a key element in the increase in bathroom spaces," says Rogerseller manager Jonathan Cleland, who attended the trade fair.

"As a result of people spending more time in the bathroom, furniture and technology such as televisions and MP3 players are new, almost essential, additions."

Royston Wilson says this increased emphasis on "wellness" will result in the return of the bathtub.

"A continuing strong trend in bathrooms, particularly with generations X and Y, is the bath," he says. "With the hustle and bustle of life, people are increasingly looking to relax in the bath."

Showers are becoming similarly indulgent.

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“Coinciding with the wellbeing theme, showers have additional new functions to drench and mist,” says Jonathan Cleland.

“Showerheads are not just getting bigger, they are getting massive!

“It is no longer about getting a quick shower – it is about relieving the stresses of the day with a rainforest-like effect on your body, rejuvenating, stimulating and reviving your senses.”

Ari Zorlu believes that 2011 will see the introduction of elegant curves and structures into bathroom designs.

“Australian bathrooms in particular are adopting a lot of curvaceous taps, basins and bathtubs to create a natural tranquillity within the bathroom for all members of the household to enjoy,” he says.

Karine Lim agrees: “The trends in interiors and bathroom furniture are all about softer, more feminine aesthetics. So we are seeing a paring back of hard, square lines, with basins, furniture and tapware all moving to softer curves and edges.”

Jonathan Cleland adds: “As the use of a bathroom expands, the lines between bathroom furniture and living-room furniture will be blurred. There is a definite move away from linear, angular lines into softer, smoother shapes, especially with washbasins.”

Another clear trend is towards colour, pattern and texture – a dramatic move away from the stark, white bathrooms that are commonplace.

“This year we have seen a kaleidoscope of colours splash around the bathroom, from

the tiles, to taps and beyond,” Ari says.

According to Royston Wilson, people are becoming braver with tile patterns and feature walls.

“Earthier tones and colours are making an appearance again through the return of romance instead of the industrial look,” he says. “It has also brought back the combination of black and white, with flashes of brights, like red. Green is another colour that is making a comeback, with a move towards more sophisticated soft grey-greens.”

Of course, environmental considerations continue to play a huge part in bathroom design.

“For the Australian climate, water preservation and conservation is imperative,” Ari Zorlu says. “The bathroom is at the forefront of this environmental issue and designers are increasingly under pressure to create fashionable and environmentally friendly product and fixtures.

“The consumer is desperate for an ‘eco’ option and I predict that within the next decade all new designs will by law have to incorporate a large water-saving element.”

In Australia water conservation is vital, so products with good WELS (Water Efficiency and Labelling Standards Scheme) ratings are high on the list of must-haves.

As Karine Lim explains: “The more stars, the more water-efficient the product is.”

**Lisa Amphlett**



**AXOR URQUIOLA**

**Features:**

- \* New bathroom range designed by Patricia Urquiola for Axor
  - \* Collection includes basins, mixers, showers, bathtubs, accessories and radiators
- Price on application from Hansgrohe, [www.hansgrohe.com.au](http://www.hansgrohe.com.au)*



**HAMMAM TOUCH & STEAM PANEL**

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**BUDDY BASIN**  
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- \* Single basin features a hidden, built-in drawer

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**ZERO.3 BY PANARIA**  
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- \* Can be laid over existing flooring
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- \* Three sizes available

**Price on application from Tile Boutique, www.tileboutique.com.au**

**PURAVIDA**  
**Features:**

- \* The latest bathroom range from Hansgrohe
- \* Recipient of international design awards
- \* White/chrome finish
- \* Product range includes mixers for washbasins, bathtubs and bidets, and hand, overhead and side showers, plus accessories

**Price on application from Hansgrohe, www.hansgrohe.com.au**