



{bathrooms} transform

trend report:
TAPWARE

Tap into new trends with our round-up of the latest and greatest bathroom mixers

WORDS ANNA KOOREY

BEAUTIFUL TAPWARE is the jewel in the crown of a stand-out bathroom. And with the amount of styles available, it's easier than ever to find a design that complements your space. Flowing lines, luxe finishes and scaled-down size are some of the key looks for the year ahead. "Whether it's a vibrant colour or matte black, a retrofit of bold tapware can instantly revamp a bathroom," says Belinda Geels of Reece. Read on for five of the top tap trends for 2013. >

For a similar compact tap that doesn't lose on style points, try the Guglielmi 'Sprint' basin mixer from Tradelink, \$315.

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Be space savvy with a wall-mounted tap – try Methven's 'Minimalist' basin spout, \$159.50, for similar.

trend 1: sized to fit

The growing popularity of powder rooms has created a need for tiny tapware. New pocket-sized mixers, specifically produced for small bathrooms, are starting to enter the market. "Smaller, single-lever mixer tapware is becoming more stylish and infused with European flair. Some manufacturers are even making petite versions of larger taps to provide consistency and synergy between bathrooms," explains Tradelink's Tim Dawson.

Wall-set tapware is designers' second solution to small spaces. Wall-mounting is ideal for either compact basins or lofty above-counter basins, which standard taps can't reach over. "They look amazing and can reduce clutter on the vanity top," says Tim. The alternative is, of-course, a tall tap, which is also trending this year. "I'm seeing a lot of extended tower mixers, which are typically paired with glass, vessel-style bowls," says Darcy Shaw of Beaumont Tiles.

shopping list

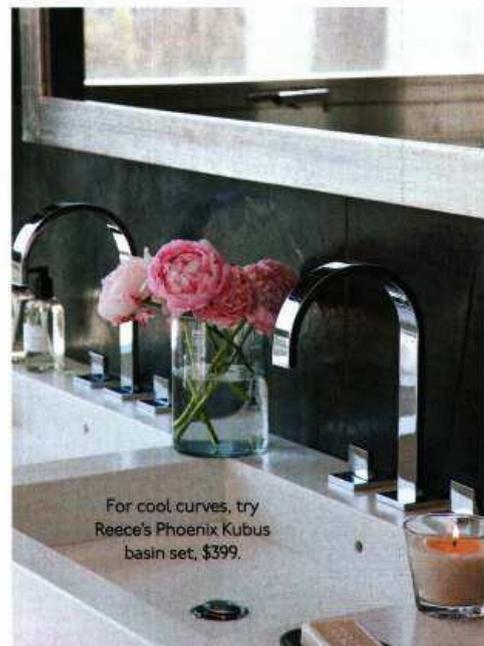
 Gessi 'Spa' tower mixer, from \$760, Candana.	 'Suttor' basin mixer, \$169, Beaumont Tiles.	 Kohler 'Singulier' basin mixer, \$235, Tradelink.	 Mizu 'Bliss' powder room basin mixer, \$239, Reece.
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trend 2: pure and simple

As the bathroom continues to evolve from a utilitarian space to a luxurious pamper zone, tapware is following suit. "Big and chunky is out; sleek and svelte is in!" Darcy advises. Designers are taking inspiration from shapes and silhouettes seen in nature, favouring soft, sculptural curves and flowing lines over harsh geometrics. "We're seeing a merging of indoor and outdoor materials and natural elements in the bathroom," says Dr Nicholas Matten of Hansgrohe. "This creates a sense of returning to nature and wellness, in the style of a relaxing day spa." To get the look, go for ergonomic organic shapes, oversized curved spouts, and flowing lines leading from lever to tap.

shopping list

 Kludi 'Bozz' 3-piece basin mixer, from \$369, Tradelink.	 Kludi 'Balance' basin mixer, \$449, Tradelink.	 'Carnegie' wall-spa outlet, \$428, Beaumont Tiles.
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For cool curves, try Reece's Phoenix Kubus basin set, \$399.

trend 3: the look of luxe

A mainstay of bathrooms the world over, polished chrome is a classic mixer material – timeless, durable and a dream to clean. This year, however, it's been treated to a makeover: it's available in an array of colours, such as this sleek white lacquered model from Rogerseller. Black and chrome taps are also making a splash. "A blend of black and chrome provides the perfect balance between statement piece and versatile grace," says Belinda Geels of Reece.

Alternatively, give your bathroom the Midas touch with a striking gold accessory for added shine. Gold and stainless-steel optic – a hard-wearing coating over chrome that resembles stainless steel – along with other look-alike finishes, such as brushed nickel, have gained popularity. This growing trend is seen in high-end designer ranges by Philippe Starck, Patricia Urquiola and Antonio Citterio, says Dr Nicholas Matten of Hansgrohe. "This way, the basin mixer becomes a signature piece in the bathroom – a design focal point, which may be offset with accent tiles." Pair with a glittering mosaic splashback, or contrast the high-impact metallic with tiles in honed natural stone. >

Rogerseller's 'Pura Vida' extended basin mixer in White Gloss, \$779, will add understated glamour.

shopping list

 <p>Sussex 'Pol' straight basin mixer in Black Chrome, \$549, Reece.</p>	 <p>'Metropolis' basin mixer in Brushed Platinum, \$519, Astra Walker.</p>	 <p>Bastow 'Georgian' large sink mixer in Brass Gold Plate, \$367, Reece.</p>
 <p>'Batio' coloured basin mixer in Turquoise, \$790, Paco Jaanson.</p>		

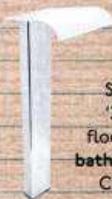




trend 4: waterfall effect

Flowing on from the trend of nature-inspired fixtures, cascade mixers are set to be the next big thing. Choose from two types: those with a wide mouth so water literally cascades out like a waterfall, or a design with an open spout that reveals the water as it streams through the tap. "Cascade mixers accentuate the true beauty of flowing water," enthuses Belinda Geels from Reece. The effect is especially powerful on bath spouts such as the Southcape X-Stream (pictured above), as the water has further to fall and can be admired for longer – the perfect beginning to a soothing soak.

shopping list

 Southcape 'X-Stream' floor-mounted bath spout, \$1650, Christiaan's.	 'Talis Natural' basin mixer, \$800, Hansgrohe.	 Finlay & Smith 'Falle' basin mixer, \$139, Masters.
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trend 5: water wise

"Conservation is key in 2013, with many brands working on improving the efficiency of their current lines," says Tim Dawson of Tradelink. "The new focus is on water delivery, ensuring technologies still provide that soaking feeling, while reducing water consumption." WELS (Water Efficiency Labeling Scheme) ratings indicate a product's water efficiency by ranking it from 0 to 6 stars – the higher the rating, the more efficient the tap. While most bathroom taps range from 4-5 stars, 6-star models are starting to trickle in. This trend is spreading, and countries without a WELS are beginning to make changes, too. "Even European nations are moving their regulations to 5 litres/minute, or even 3.5 litres/minute," reveals Hansgrohe's Dr Nicholas Matten. The new Axor Starck Organic tapware range can be adjusted from 5 litres to 3.5 litres/minute by simply turning the spout. To learn more about WELS ratings, visit waterrating.gov.au.

shopping list

 Axor Starck 'Organic' 5-star WELS-rated basin mixer, \$1026, Hansgrohe.	 Nobili 'Balance' 6-star WELS-rated basin mixer, \$165.99, Reece.
 'Minimalist' 6-star WELS-rated wall-mounted basin mixer with plate, \$399.85, Methven.	