



PRIVACY MATTERS

As spaces that allow guests to relax and rejuvenate, bathrooms are increasingly commanding an important part in a guest room's design

BY BINDU GOPAL RAO

➔ Bright shiny tiles and surfaces are no longer in favour; matte, nude and neutral colours are in trend.

What do guests typically seek in a hotel room in addition to a clean and comfortable bed, great view and plenty of space? Well, a spotless and pleasant bathroom does earn hoteliers extra brownie points. This is exactly why they are ensuring that bathrooms become the talking point of their guest rooms.

Modern bathrooms are designed keeping simplicity in perspective; yet exude a sense of luxury and elegance. Increasingly, these spaces are becoming private refuges for travellers where they can spend some me-time. And the design of the room therefore has to match to this need.

DESIGN MANTRA

Understanding that guests seek bathrooms that help them relax and rejuvenate, Marriott International has some key parameters on how these rooms should be designed across its various brands. Some of the core thoughts behind this standard design practices is to ensure the safety and comfort of the guest, while also warranting the brand's core ethos are adhered to.

"While designing our guest bathrooms, the interior designer has to comply with the standards and design features as specified by our company keeping in mind the colour scheme and layout features," said Kingsley Pereira, housekeeping executive, Four Points by Sheraton Navi Mumbai. Other features that are

usually included in the bathroom design are anti-skid floorings and grab bars, branded high quality bathroom fixtures and fittings, health faucets, telephones connections, audio and video connectivity, lighting moods and international multi-use plug points in the bathroom.

Also, many interior designers and hoteliers have realised the need to design these spaces intelligently as space is a premium. Smita Rathod, director of services, Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel & Lakeside Chalet, Marriott Executive Apartments pointed out,

"Guests earlier enjoyed soaking in a lavish standalone bath tub with beautiful marble-clad walls around and soothing lighting. However, many hotels are doing away with these bathtubs, as space

tems to ensure that the desired temperature is reached in a fraction of a second and maintained for the entire duration of the shower." Talking about other solutions that are similarly available in the market, he said that high-efficiency faucets consume less water using aerators and built-in floor reducers.

Contemporary bathrooms are a wonderful amalgamation of technological efficiency and aesthetics: opulent, yet sleek. This integration of technology with bath-ware fixtures has revolutionised the segment and its adherent offerings.

Highlighting some of the latest solutions available, Manish Bhatia, president, Building Products Division, HSIL Limited said his company has various innovative technologies like Aquasheet flushing technology that is the first of its kind in India, which offers 100% clean and rimless range of WCs, integrated jet, rimless combined with integrated jet.

"These products are very easy to clean, which is a huge benefit for clients' house-keeping staff. In washbasins, we have ceramic waste coupling that gives a more contemporary and clean look to the bathroom. We also have thin rim basins



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GET FLOORED

Flooring is a key element of the bathroom design and surface products that offer better grip and are easy to clean are more preferred.

Vivek Talwar, CMD, NITCO said, "We have a wide range of floor tiles in many sizes with matte surface that provide more grip. Apart from this, they are easy to install, are easy to clean and prevent water seepage. These also have an inert anti-bacterial property, which makes it the ideal product for walls and floors. Tiles that offer the look and feel of natural slate, sand stone or cement are slowly gaining a strong place in hotel interiors."

Vikas Kesarkar, VP, marketing, Classic Marble Company added, "Kalinga Stone marble offers great options for flooring, cladding, framing windows and doors, countertops, shower areas, tubs and are largely in demand in the budget and mid-range hotel projects due to its user-friendly characteristics. These products are in demand mainly in four and five star category hotels and are used in flooring, wall claddings or even as highlighters."

that are better in terms of aesthetic: sleek and edgy and suit the modern day consumer's requirement better."

"In terms of materials of the future, Nano Technology is making waves. We currently use Silver Nano Technology for our germ free sanitary range of Johnson Bathrooms. This technology adds unique anti-bacterial properties, giving superior hygiene and protection," said Pankaj Sharma, president, Johnson Bathrooms & Kitchens.

NEW VISTAS

In design trends, this year marked a return to the organic and natural décor, according to Abhishek Somany, MD, Somany Ceramics. While the use of wood is not essentially advisable for wet places, the advent of faux wood tiles and planks has made it possible to have wooden floors and walls in bathrooms and kitchens. These faux wooden floors bring a warm and rustic elegance and these tiles and planks are easy to install and far more durable than their natural counterparts.

"Another interesting trend that has come to the forefront are colour-bodied tiles. These have longer durability and retain their original colour. This unique quality enables the Tesoro tiles to maintain a uniform front and back colour that makes any kind of chipping, wear and tear unerring, thereby increasing the durability of this range," Somany added.

Seema Ramakrishna, head, interiors, Brigade Group noted that the tried and tested material remains imported marble, be it for an accent or something that



Many hotels are doing away with bathtubs and instead have modern cubicles with overhead rain shower fixtures.

Trend Check

Most forward-thinking hotels have steam/heat proof vanity mirror glass that prevents steam from settling on the surface, leaving the mirror clean and clear at all times. Also, bidets, speakerphones, speakers, iPhone, tabs and mobile charging ports, etc, are discreetly hidden behind magazine/newspaper shelves, clothes drying racks and even washing machine units.

As far as space is concerned, showering with controlled water flow is more preferred. The usage of big size whirlpools and enclosures has reduced. Customised showering trend is more popular where customers can design their showering space as per their need. Brass is becoming the new fashion material for bathrooms in 2017.

blends with the surrounding environment. "The sanitary and CP fittings are curvilinear to add to the ease of use. Their use sees the space as less of a 'toilet' and more as an extension of the guest room," he noted.

Moreover, materials like stainless steel and copper have found their way to the design aesthetics of modern bathrooms through faucets and fixtures. These tones not only accentuate the room's appear-



● Gaurav Malhotra, MD, Hansgrohe India.



● Seema Ramakrishna, head, interiors, Brigade Group.



● KE Ranganathan, MD, Roca Bathrooms.



● Emanuela Tavolini, director, sales-Europe, GRAFF.

ance, but are far more resilient when it comes to fighting rust, wear and tear.

While brass can be quite eye-catching and designers have been using them in bathrooms often, Emanuela Tavolini, sales director, Europe, GRAFF stated that for the showers, stainless steel is better preferred to brass, especially for showerheads.

"GRAFF offers a wide range of stainless steel products inside its wellness program: from the ultra-slim showerheads to the ones with LED chromotherapy or mist function; from the multifunction Aqua-sense shower system to the awarded Ametis showerhead and shower column," she claimed.

The market has a plethora of options as far as materials that give an organic

look to the bathrooms are concerned. "Use of glass allows easy passage of natural light making the bathrooms appear bigger. Other materials like stone and wood provide bathrooms with a spa-like feeling. Adding the right finish to faucets and showers lends another eye-catching panache to the bathroom. Ultimately, though, it is the hotel's sense of style and their guest preferences that is taken into consideration," said Gaurav Malhotra, MD, Hansgrohe India.

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Manufacturers are taking great pains to ensure that bathroom products are as eco-friendly as possible. "Through innovation we recently added the eco-flush facility that can conserve lots of water by using only 4.7 litres for full flush and three litres for half flush. Additionally, our wide range of bathroom products includes a rain shower panel with inbuilt FM Radio and touch screen technology. Faucets with the durashine feature to give long lasting shine and its special cartridges ensure smooth movement of single lever faucets. The faucets also have eco-friendly features and contain water saving aerators," explained Sharma.

KE Ranganathan, MD, Roca Bathrooms added, that cold start faucets is an innovation designed for sustainability, with water and energy saving capability and zero CO2 emissions. "It allows guests to use cold water for daily bathroom rituals with a lever in the centre. In addition to saving water, companies can save energy by using it, as it prevents the boiler from firing up when not needed."

Bathrooms are certainly changing and guests are appreciating the small touches that designers and hoteliers are adding for their comfort - a win-win situation for both! ■



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PHOTOGRAPH: ROCA