BATHROOM BOOST

TOP DESIGN TRENDS FOR ADDED VALUE

There's a lot more to bathroom design than choosing tile patterns and faucets. "Amenities like free-standing tubs and glass wall showers might increase value, but it's those beautiful, smaller details that enhance the overall experience," says Steamboat-based architect and interior designer, Sarah Tiedeken, Partner at Vertical Arts. "What ultimately boosts value, is the feeling someone gets when entering a space," Sarah explained. "Our design is driven by the space first—how you want it to perform and feel—and then to find those materials and other features that enhance it." That's why current trends in bathroom design are geared towards more of a spa-like experience with purposeful lighting, clean, modern lines, and intelligent design that conceals clutter.

The following are four reasons good bathroom design is about more than tubs and tiles:

SHINE YOUR LIGHT.

If there's one thing interior designers think about often (that the rest of us might not), it's good lighting. That's especially important in a bathroom, where lighting can enhance both the functionality and the beauty of the space. "Having layered levels of lighting allows the bathroom to change with your mood or the time of day," Tiedeken says. Good task lighting for applying makeup, for example, can be layered with secondary lighting like canned lights on a dimmer switch or tape lighting under a toe kick or floating vanity. "Layering lighting elements is super valuable and desirable relative to the spa retreat atmosphere that a lot of people are wanting," she says. "It's important to think beyond the 3-light fixture that goes above the mirror. When you enter a space, you want it to feel good, and lighting is a huge part of that."

LET THE OUTDOORS IN.

"Natural light and access to views, or even physical access to the outdoors, is huge in terms of ambiance, whether it's a door that opens onto an adjacent patio or a single window," Tiedeken says. "Bathrooms that have a connection to nature just feel better in terms of bringing in natural light and creating a space that feels more expansive." Many homes in Steamboat have amazing views that should be utilized, even in a bathroom. "Views drastically change how your bathroom feels, and it's something you use every single day," she says. If you can't punch a window into your existing bathroom, use LED lights to brighten up cabinets and walls. "Lighted mirrors or backlighting with sconces can create that spa-like, ambient light," Tiedeken says.

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING.

"Elements that are both functional and beautiful are key," Tiedeken says. Really thinking through storage so all your everyday-use items can be concealed is ideal, and the current trend is about integrating more drawers in place of those old, bottomless cabinets that aren't ideal for smaller items. Also, shower niches and vanity storage with docking drawers get rid of the clutter. Even medicine cabinets can be hidden in creative ways, with walls that look like mirrors. "Being creative about providing useful storage is a way to make your bathroom feel like a spa or a retreat." Tiedeken suggests creating a list of your items and then coming up with storage solutions, whether it's for hair styling tools, toiletries, or towels. "That's the best way to create a bathroom that's simple and pristine but also functional."

PERSONALITY PLUS.

"People want their bathrooms to feel fun and unique, so give your bathroom a cohesive personality," Tiedeken says. This can be achieved with fun accents from wallpaper or special tile for the shower. "You can layer in design without having to redo everything. Fill the room with things that make you happy. Find that special element and let it shine. You don't want your bathroom to feel like a castoff space, but one you look forward to going into because it's beautiful and makes you feel good." *//vertical-arts.com*

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