

CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE



Bathroom. Restroom. Lavatory. Water Closet. Loo. Latrine. John. Washroom. Toilet.

And my personal favorite: The Necessary.

All kinds of monikers have been used to describe this most essential place in our homes. They moved from outside to inside well over a century ago (more or less depending on the geography and financial status of the homeowners).



Every home has one. Or two. Or three. Or four. Or in the case of the Sultan of Brunei's palace, 257 bathrooms. So, with all this bathroom designing and building going on, one wonders, is there anything new? Glad you asked!

At the 2018 Kitchen and Bath Industry Show in Orlando, there were some innovations. The notion that we should not be touching our faucets or toilets was certainly in play with sensor fixtures shown throughout the event. Rain showers have been improved to be more rain-like with clever controls for lighting and music. Clearly, the major players in manufacturing shower fixtures want us to all to desire a home spa. I agree, but only if it comes with a masseuse. Or two. But definitely not 257. >>





There are as many options on toilets now as there are on cars. Heated seat, anyone? Flush volume selections can be very good for the environment, saving water with each use. But there is one innovation that since its appearance on the market a few years ago still stops me in my tracks: the toilet remote control. I can't help but wonder, where are you when you operate the remote control? Does one need this in case one forgets to flush whilst you are in the loo? Does it exist so that you can surprise your friends? What happens if you lose the remote? (Oh, c'mon, it happens.) Innovations from manufacturers aside, what is the biggest change in bathrooms as of late? Who hasn't heard it said about a big sister or a well-groomed wife, "She lives in the bathroom"? We are spending more and more time in what, if we are honest with ourselves, used to be the bathroom. It is now the place where we relax, groom, and even catch up on what the talking heads on CNN or Fox (pick your poison) are saying. I know a designer who added a 65" tv into the design of her new bathroom. Who said it's me? I didn't say that . >>





No longer the room that is hidden away and only seen when absolutely needed, the bathroom now gets the same attention and love that a kitchen does when designing the home. As in other important spaces in the house, art can be a key factor in the design equation. We can etch the glass on shower enclosures, toilet partitions, and mirrors. Commissioned mosaic murals become bath and shower walls. With today's digital printing technology, art can be reproduced on wallcovering. If the image will be printed on vinyl, see that it is microperforated to avoid the build up of mold or mildew. The holes, not visible to the naked eye, allow the wallcovering to "breathe" and this step is a must. Trust me.

I'd like to invent a few things for the bathroom of the future. How about mirrors that auto-photoshop with optional airbrushing? A shower wall with motorized exfoliating brushes? Dyson air blade for the whole body? Recirculating hot water in the bathtub with filtering and bottomless chilled champagne accessory? Ah well, a girl can dream.

“ It is where the throne is located in the castle. It's where we are renewed in mind and body. ”



“The Necessary” will continue to evolve as part of our everyday lives. It is where the throne is located in the castle. It's where we are renewed in mind and body. It is the only room that “bookends” our days. The bathrooms in our homes, no matter the quantity, or how we label them, should be at a high priority level when planning a new home or renovating an existing one. When you need it, no matter what you call it, it is the Center of the Universe. ■