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# Bathroom beauty

Proper selection of components and accessories in your bathroom would make it look elegant, says **Alkesh Gupta**

**P**eople today want bathroom to be bold, beautiful and especially comfortable. Time when bathrooms were shabby and in a dilapidated state are over, instead they are now a centre of attraction of any beautiful house.

The size of a bathroom is growing rapidly these days and these are gearing for relaxation as well as efficiency. Steam shower, sauna, grooming and dressing area and even exercise equipment are option in these modern era bathrooms. As with contemporary kitchen design there is a mixing of material and style in today's bathroom. An emphasis on artificial lighting and appreciation of natural light express in the use of windows, sky lights and glass blocks among others.

For an elegant bathroom:

1. Planning the available area
2. Selecting a style
3. Choosing its components

The main axes of bathroom styles are traditional and contemporary. Beyond that you may also consider themes like period, regional, country, romantic and European look. These days modern designers are playing with traditional look and modern fixture like stream shower and bath panel. You may use period look for master of the house and regional look for aged ones. European look can be followed for employees of the corporate world and bathroom for young girls can be designed with a romantic and fresh look.

A big style can be created by carefully choosing material for counter top, floor coverings, wall cladding and ceiling treatment. As far as counter tops are concerned granite is most common choice in India. A classy look can be generated by using cat's eye granite and galaxy will give a modern look. A new and modern look can be established by using synthetic counter top in any unusual shape. Glass mosaics can also be used for a splashy look.

Flooring choices are increasing. Besides the time tested marble flooring, a lot of tiles are available for flooring. Wood and carpet can be used specially in areas away from direct splash zones.

Most commonly used wall treatment is tiling. Borders are now changed from hori-

zontal to vertical. Patterns of white and off white tiles are for giving a vibrant as well as modern look. Painted walls are new mantra in bathrooms. Area with direct water splashes can be covered with tiles. Remaining area may be finished with texture or plain paint.

Your choice of sink, tub and shower does a lot to determine how your bathroom will be used, the way its traffic will flow and what its general ambience will be like. Sink designs have become widely varied in the last few years. You will see bath pedestal and wall hang sinks, in a rainbow of colours and finishes and in classic, and contemporary styles. Both deck mounted and floor mounted sinks are available in a number of new look. Faucets and fittings also come in many new shapes and finishes.

Tubs are another focal point — a symbol of luxury. Tubs or the shower units save space but if the room is available, most users prefer to have a separate shower. Market offerings also include lots of bath panels and cubical. A large, custom walk in shower with built in bench gives careful look. A sleek European module can be tried with multiple shower heads, computerised temperature controls and a built in audio system.

When planning a shower we must remember to think about ventilation, lighting and privacy. A good lighting plan provides shadow less, glare free illumination for the entire bath as well as bright and uniform light for specific task. Opening light fixture can also create dramatic visual effect. Daylight enters a bathroom through windows, skylights, doors or all three. When a bathroom faces a street, it may be best to use glass block, translucent glazing and decorative glass like stain or sandblasted. It can provide a decorative flair while maintaining a reserved exterior.

Beyond aesthetic consideration, you should weigh the physical characteristic of surface materials. Is your counter top choice water resistant, durable and easy to maintain? Is floor are hard enough to walk on? Are walls easy to clean? These are some questions which should be kept in mind before finally deciding the material. A personnel toilet might be a place to try delicate material that would be impractical in a family bath.

