

# Personal Luxury

Showers are stealing the show in the bathroom with the use of luxurious materials and finishes and fully customized options to create a truly personalized haven.

BY ELIZABETH RICHARDS



**Sonoma Forge** has expanded its Water-Bridge collection to include the Exposed Shower System in a new option – a glass wall mount. The industrial chic look features new accessories concealing the mounting hardware, providing a seamless appearance when installed directly to glass shower enclosures. Circle No. 155 on Product Card



**Newport Brass'** thermostatic shower mixer and flow control valves are constructed of solid brass and available in 27 finishes. The temperature-adjust handle has a safety stop and index showing the desired temperature. The multi-function showerhead features rubber nozzles and includes five spray modes. Circle No. 156 on Product Card



**Fantini's** Milano Slim, created by Franco Sargiani, is a wall-mounted, stainless steel shower panel featuring a rainfall showerhead. The panel includes a built-in body spray for added showering options. Milano Slim is available in stainless steel. Circle No. 157 on Product Card



**Graff's** Sade Contemporary Square Thermostatic Set w/Body Spray & Handshower provides a modern look for the shower. Featured is an 8" rain showerhead with 12" ceiling-mounted shower arm, flush-mounted swivel body sprays, handshower set with wall bracket and 1/4" thermostatic valve. Circle No. 158 on Product Card



U by **Moen** is a Wi-Fi/cloud-based digital shower that includes a digital valve enabling the user to connect up to four shower devices. The controller features a 5", non-touch LCD screen. The shower's smartphone app gives users the ability to create up to 12 personalized presets. Circle No. 159 on Product Card



**Victoria + Albert's** Florin 20 is a thermostatic wall-mounted shower with handheld attachment featuring a fan detail on the tap handles. An 8" round showerhead provides a rain shower effect. Available in three finishes, it is EPA WaterSense certified, IAPMO Green, CAL Green, LEED v4 and CED approved. Circle No. 160 on Product Card



The **Rotolo Bypass** Rolling door series features a narrow 1-1/8" fit gap and a less bulky header with up to 1/8" play in cut-to-length header for installation flexibility. The Rotolo from **Basco** is available in a Chrome finish, with fitting opening size ranging from 57" - 59" and a height of 76". Circle No. 161 on Product Card



With an adjustable shower riser and arm, the 5702 BA Exposed Thermostatic Shower from **Barber Wilsons** allows users to tailor the shower to suit their individual needs. Available with or without a tub spout and hand spray, this exposed shower is offered in a variety of finishes. Circle No. 162 on Product Card



The first collection from **THG Paris'** new in-house design division, Studio THG, Dean is a bath and shower faucet collection inspired by the Golden Age of Aviation. Knurled detailed fasteners secure each valve base in place. Finishes include chrome, gold, soft gold, nickel, rhodium silver and rose gold. Circle No. 163 on Product Card



**Aston's** Neoscope GS frameless neo-angle shower enclosure with integrated two-tier glass shelving is available in frosted glass. Offered in width and length sizes from 34" to 42", it stands 72" high and is made from 10mm ANSI-certified tempered glass and 304-grade stainless steel hardware. Circle No. 164 on Product Card



The **Fascino** shower system from **Gessi** sports a bevel detail and includes a wall-mounted showerhead in mirror steel with a 21-1/2" projection. A wall-mounted showerhead with a 17" projection and a companion hand shower set are offered in a variety of finishes. Circle No. 165 on Product Card



With a tapered design recalling the shapes of the Manhattan Bridge pediments, the Townsend bath collection from **American Standard** includes a 6" showerhead with easy-to-clean nozzles. WaterSense certified, the showerhead is available in polished chrome, polished nickel, legacy bronze and satin nickel. Circle No. 166 on Product Card

## HEALTHY HABITS

With a growing focus on health and wellness in our culture, it's no surprise to hear these elements are important in the bathroom as well.

According to Céline Marcotte, business development manager for Graff in Milwaukee, WI, "The bathroom has become a refuge for wellness and rejuvenation."

Benjamin Fix, senior director of thermostats and showers at GROHE, based in Germany, and also part of LIXIL, agrees. "The prime area for evolution in the bathroom is related to health and wellness," he says. "If you look at what consumers are doing today with technology and wearables, it's a natural evolution that, at some point, you will be able to collect some really important data from your smart bathroom products."

Ryan Ramaker, director of product development for Hansgrohe, based in Alpharetta, GA, says the shower itself has become a retreat. "Many people are now treating their showering time like they would treat their workout/gym time; with a set-aside time period each day for relaxing, deep massaging or a powerful clean before a long day at the office," he says. "Today's showers offer all of these experiences, typically in an overhead shower, a rain head shower or a hand shower."

Additional features that promote wellness and relaxation are also on the rise. The addition of steam is just one example. "Many homeowners are beginning to see steam showers as a necessity, not just a luxury,"

says Martha Orellana, v.p. of marketing and sales at Long Island City, NY-based Mr.Steam. "They are focusing on natural, non-pharmacological ways to improve their health and well-being, and are embracing steam as part of their wellness lifestyle." Building these wellness features into the bath is a trend they don't see slowing soon, she adds, noting that demand for a home wellness experience in the steam shower is being addressed "by adding aromatherapy, chroma lighting and music therapy – which are becoming 'must haves' for a healthy bathroom environment."

## INDIVIDUALIZED EXPERIENCE

Customization is essential in every area of the home; today's consumers have clear ideas of what their space must include, and how these elements should function. And with multiple users in each home, versatility is critical.

"Customization in the shower is the most significant ongoing design trend, and one we're paying a lot of attention to," says Marcotte. "This trend has taken off largely because more customizable products have come to market, allowing designers to create a bathroom that truly reflects the design scheme in mind."

"When thinking about showerheads, designers should consider personal styles of homeowners," says Michael Poloha, senior product manager for Moen in North Olmsted, OH. They also need to know what functions their clients need most, in order to choose the best options.

Moore says that consumers want easy updates that improve their existing shower, allowing them to create a custom dream shower with multiple water delivery ports, steam and music. Paying attention to each person who will be using the shower is also important. "Most of my clients come in as couples and express a need for different things within the shower, so the number of water delivery ports is not to maximize, but personalize the shower experience for each person," he says.

Other considerations, such as aging in place and multi-generational users in one household, also play a role in customization. "A move toward low- or no-threshold showers is on the rise, as that configuration is suitable for both young and older generations of users. Incorporating hand showers mounted on a slide bar is another popular option, as it is easily adaptable to users of all sizes, and works whether standing or sitting," says L'Henaff.

## CENTER OF ATTENTION

Showers are claiming more attention in the bath, manufacturers say, both taking up more space and claiming a space of their own, separate from the tub.

"Today's bathrooms have a 'shower-centric focus,'" according to Ramaker. While particularly true in the master bath, he says this is also becoming more common in secondary baths, especially if multiple users