

Homes & interiors

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All in the shower

Emanuela Tavolini discusses the latest technological advancements in bathrooms that are making it a refreshing experience

Technology is entering the home space more and more everyday for several reasons — to make homes more functional, to reduce energy consumption, or simply, to make homes more pleasant. The bathroom, maybe more than any other space in the house, has witnessed the development of several technologies. Over the last century, the attention given to the bathroom inside the house has constantly grown. This room is no longer considered just a 'washroom', it has become an area in which wellness and relaxation are pursued.

In this respect, technology has played an important part, allowing faucets and shower systems to offer, together with the traditional water functions, many other luxuries. Nowadays, shower systems offer different kind of water jets like waterfall and mist functions, as well as LED chromatherapy.

Colours to de-stress

The idea of chromatherapy has been known for centuries. The ancient Greeks believed that light and colours were paramount for human health and could be used to treat several disorders. Chromatherapy is based on the idea that colours release vibrational energies or frequencies on the human body and can correct energy imbalances. It is believed that certain conditions like depression, anxiety, stress, cramps, migraines, high blood pressure etc can be improved using chromatherapy.

Each colour on the visible light spectrum has a different frequency or energy. For example, red has a long wavelength and low frequency, and brings warmth and



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motivation. It is a passionate colour meant to draw out your instincts and self-awareness. It energises the organs and senses and can be used to promote health for people who have cold or exhaustion. Violet has a short wavelength and higher frequency. Violet means serenity and it can improve creative thinking. This colour lends itself to renewal and can aid in addition, delusions and detoxification.

Blue helps improve communication and speech and brings about peace and wisdom. Blue is a cooling colour and could relieve inflammations, itching, fever and headaches. Green is for relaxing and helps with stress and anxiety. It can be used for most conditions in need of healing, including kidney diseases, hormonal imbalances, high blood pressure and more. Yellow represents warmth and optimism. It may strengthen the nerves and improve intellect and critical thinking. It can also aid in digestion and stomach conditions. Orange liberates the body and mind, relieving constraints. It is a warm colour that supports social interaction, enthusiasm.

It is thought that our organs and glands also have their own specific frequencies

that correlate with the different colours. If a part of your body is sick or has an energy imbalance, the colour with the corresponding frequency is thought to restore the correct energy and improve health.

This holistic belief has grown in popularity and can now be found at many leading spas and hotels. Some even incorporate music and aromatherapy into their sessions. Smart solutions for the bathroom are also derived from the way furniture and washbasins are designed. Floating basins and cabinet make it easy to keep the room floor clean; freestanding bathtubs allow to position the item in any place of the room, to make the environment as relaxing as possible.

Some luxury...

There are also vanities with hidden water supply and discharge hoses to meet the demand of flexibility inside the bathroom. Smart storage is another interesting aspect of comfortable bathrooms nowadays. Modular systems are able to satisfy any sort of arrangement required by the final customer and have been developed to suit different kinds of spaces, allowing

the user to change the mix of furniture elements even after years.

The offerings of the most complex shower systems include speakers to listen to music and a touch screen to watch videos and control different functions. Touchscreens are another innovation inside 21st century bathrooms. By adopting a technology already familiar to smartphones and tablet users, the shower touchpads allow control of several multimedia functions with a simple hand touch. The final user can benefit from a technology which is user-friendly and satisfying in terms of aesthetics. Watching videos, listening to music and enjoying the different shades of colour lighting are all functions that can be controlled through a touch screen, recreating the spa experience in the shower.

The essence of design is the ability to create objects that make everyday life easier and more enjoyable. In this respect, technology is one of the main sources designers can exploit to create objects that can fulfill this goal.

(The author is director of sales, GRAFF Europe)

When you're a late buyer...

If you are an investor after the first phase of the property has been completed, Manju Yagnik offers some points that need to be taken into account

There are a lot of apprehensions a potential home buyer goes through before investing in a property. In fact, buying and owning a property is a lot more complicated than investing in equities and bonds. But, like any other investment, it's better to be well-versed in the area before investing.

However, in order to take full advantage of any opportunity, home buyers need to equip themselves with information that will guide them on how to make the best possible investment decision. It is important to evaluate the credibility of a project as well as a developer, to ensure that the money invested remains secure.

Encapsulated below are what could be potential risks and advantages for buying properties which are in the later phases (second, third) of the project.

General advice

- One of the key factors while investing in later phases of a project is that you get to see the overall view of the house. You can be sure about the pace of the construction that is going on. Due to unavoidable circumstances, project delays have happened in the past. Hence, projects closer to completion are the ones that make a safe choice.

- Home buyers must verify all the amenities, clearances, and the necessary approvals. During the first phase of the project, customers might miss on background checks, but when the construction is midway or complete, it can be considered that all the approvals have been acquired.

- Initially, every developer tries to sell 20% to 25% of the inventory at a lower rate to raise funds for the construction cost. But this may not happen in all cases. If due to unjustified prices, inventory doesn't sell at first, it brings down the prices.

While investing

- Be sure that the approvals for the flat,

- all clearances, land title and other due diligence are in place.
- Bank loan for the flat should be available. These issues usually surface only after the flat is booked, by paying the amount upfront.
- Check thoroughly for any hidden charges.

Advantages

- Generally, investors jump into the first phase of the project, because it is the first phase that gets the maximum appreciation. The investors get that benefit of buying at a lower cost when a developer successfully sells 20% to 25% of the project inventory at a special price, during the initial phase.

- It's important to gather information about the project, and cross-check the findings with the developer's past projects and earlier deliverables. If the developer has sound credentials and track record, one can surely be an early bird and invest or buy property in the first phase.

- Sometimes, when phase one is ready and sold out, developers sell the later phases for a higher value. So, early buyers get the advantage of a lower rate.

Factors that affect buyer decisions

Generally, policy changes do not impact the home buyer highly, but it may affect the developer to a great extent. Developing a project is a long process; so, purchases or approvals, take time. Some developers take partial approvals in various steps during construction. Sudden policy changes then impact the developer, not the buyer.

Change in the tax implementation can impact the buyer directly. If the buyer is purchasing a property and service tax is introduced, then this will affect the buyer reflecting on the cost.

(The author is vice-chairperson, Nahar Group)