



turn your master bath into a mini-spa

AT THE END OF A LONG DAY, SOME PEOPLE UNWIND ON THE COUCH in their living room. But more and more people are heading to another room in their home to relax—the master bathroom.

WRITTEN BY Katie Markey McLaughlin

For that reason, many homeowners are upgrading their bathrooms in ways that replicate the luxurious feel of a spa. What's more, the popularity of these upgrades means that they also add significant resale value to the home.

For baby boomers who are looking to upgrade for purposes of both personal enjoyment and financial investment, a master bathroom renovation could be the perfect fit. Consider one or more of these rising trends for turning an ordinary bathroom into a relaxing sanctuary.

Tub Transformations

For those who love a relaxing bubble bath, the addition of a large, deep soaking tub might be the ideal upgrade.

While massaging jets are an option, today many homeowners are choosing models without jets to make the soaking experience quieter and more serene, perfect for unwinding with a book or some soft music after a busy day.

Another trendy choice is an overflow tub, which sets the bar high for both luxury and aesthetic appeal. The water

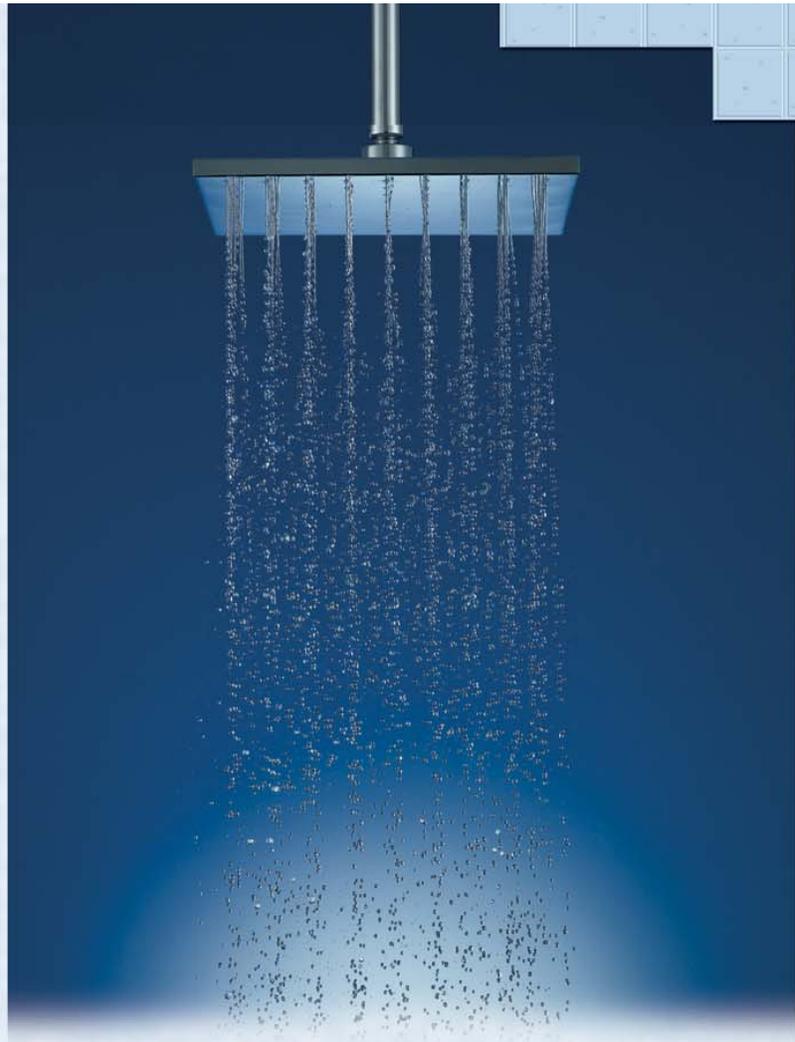
in an overflow tub is continuously flowing—being heated and filtered before returning to the tub—which makes for an extremely relaxing experience.

If you prefer to relax in front of the tube, you could consider mounting a flat-screen television on the bathroom wall. Or you could splurge on the newly designed "TV Tub," in which a waterproof television is attached to the tub itself.

The best part is that today's luxury bathtubs come in all shapes and sizes, making them suitable for both large

Right: 10-inch contemporary square rainhead in polished chrome, by Kohler.

Previous page: sok® overflowing bath with effervescence and chromatherapy, by Kohler.



and small spaces. They're also available in a variety of gorgeous materials—including sandstone, marble, metal, wood, and glass—all of which make a design statement.

Shower Overhauls

One of the most popular master-bathroom upgrades is to make the shower bigger, often by tearing out the tub completely. A larger shower stall not only makes for a more spacious bathing experience, but also allows for accessories like a built-in seat or multiple showerheads.

For a smaller-scale change, swapping a traditional showerhead for

a more modern style is a simple way to give your shower a new look and feel. Just turning on the water will automatically light up an LED showerhead, and the color changes depending on the water temperature. No batteries required; the water pressure creates the energy to light the LED bulbs!

Dual showerheads are becoming increasingly common, as are rainfall showerheads, which feature a wide surface area to simulate the experience of being caught in a gentle, cascading rainstorm.

Some homeowners are even opting for shower wall panels, which usually

“You’re adding a little luxury to a space you use every day, while also making your home more appealing to future buyers.”



Leaf lavatory sink, by Kohler.



Lilies Lore lavatory sink in medium patina, by Kohler.

combine a rainfall showerhead with massaging body jets to make taking a shower a truly luxurious experience.

Sophisticated Sinks and Fixtures

Upgrading your sinks and fixtures can instantly wake up a tired master bathroom.

If your bathroom currently only has one sink and you have unused counter space, consider adding a second one, as dual sinks are very popular with homebuyers right now.

For large bathrooms, an undermount sink—which, as the name suggests, is physically mounted beneath the countertop, eliminating the traditional lip—gives a bathroom a minimalist look. For smaller bathrooms, you can achieve the same modern feel with a freestanding or pedestal sink.

Replacing standard-grade faucets and fixtures can quickly add a touch of luxury to your master bathroom. Higher-end materials like pewter, weathered copper, and bronze are all popular right now, and for added style and value, you can also match your towel bars and light fixtures.

Homeowners looking to go green could even install a sensor-activated faucet—similar to those found in many public restrooms—which conserves water (and saves money) by turning off automatically when you're doing things like brushing your teeth or shaving.

Porcelain Upgrades

When turning your master bathroom into a relaxing retreat, don't forget about your toilet. Yes, luxury toilets do exist!

Today you can find simple, modern

designs with high-tech features like motion-activated lids and touch-screen panels for a hands-free (and ultra hygienic) experience. Some models even have nightlights, heated seats, and built-in speakers for flooding your space with your favorite tunes.

Newer toilets are also generally more efficient—dual-flush models, for example, allow the user to choose between a light or heavy flush—which again saves the homeowner money by conserving water.

Setting the Mood

There are a myriad of other touches that can help you create a spa-like atmosphere in your master bathroom.

For example, adding windows or even skylights will brighten the space by bringing in more natural light. Or you could create an elegant feel by



Right: Cachet nightlight toilet seat, Cimarron toilet, by Kohler.

Left: Cimarron touchless toilet with Brevia toilet seat, by Kohler.



home))) master bath mini-spa

hanging a chandelier or other pendant lighting fixture in the bathroom (but remember that safety codes are involved when installing fancy lighting in a wet environment).

For chilly bathrooms, get the temperature—and the ambiance—just right through upscale details like heated towel bars or warming drawers, heated floors, or fog-free mirrors. Some homeowners are creating a comfy yet modern feel by installing a pass-through or double-sided fireplace in the master bathroom.

Tranquility and Value

The best part about a master bathroom upgrade for baby boomers is that it's a good investment you can also enjoy. You're adding a little luxury to a space you use every day, while also making your home more appealing to future buyers.)))

Photos courtesy of Kohler.



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