



Create your own oasis of relaxation with our inspiring spa bathroom design ideas and the latest feel-good products

Words: **Amelia Thorpe**

Above: Soak up the feel-good factor with your partner in a double-width bath, like this BetteSpa model. It is made of high-grade steel enamel, measures 170cm-long x 120cm-wide x 45cm-deep, and has room for two to bathe side by side. Priced around £2646.

Opposite page, top: This Small Size Premium Spa concept by Sieger Design for Dornbracht contains everything you need for relaxation in approximately 6sq m. It includes dry and wet zones with both stand-up and lie-down showers, steam bath and integrated lighting. Price on application.

Bottom: A sunken bath or an inset design creates an immediate sense of indulgence, reminiscent of a Roman bathhouse. The Corsair Grande inset bath From BagnoDesign, from £1440, is also available with a whirlpool system.

Pure indulgence



Above: This bespoke Helo steam room combines showers, steam and Sommerhuber ceramic radiant heat for blissful relaxation, offering differing blends of heat and humidity similar to a traditional Roman bath. Priced to order at West One Bathrooms.

Right: Reminiscent of a boutique hotel spa design, this Cocoon basin by Glass Design, shown here in Brushed Platinum and White, £1578, will add a touch of luxury to any bathroom.

In a hectic world, more of us are turning to spas to enjoy an opportunity to truly unwind and de-stress. And the good news is that now we don't have to visit a luxury hotel or health retreat to enjoy some spa time, as manufacturers are introducing a host of products that allow us to recreate our favourite relaxing spa rituals at home, turning the bathroom into more than a place to simply wash and brush up.

Start with a shower

"With our busy lives, we often don't have time to go to the spa, so it is wonderful to create a personal relaxation retreat where we can enjoy some me-time at home," says Dornbracht spa consultant, Fatima Diagana of Diagana Spa Design. Much will depend on the space you have available and your daily routine and preferences, but Fatima recommends a large shower as the starting point of your bathroom design. "Water is not just for cleansing and hygiene but also for our pleasure and wellbeing," she says. "Showers can create all kinds of water experiences, and can be chosen to suit our needs." She also recommends a washbasin with spacious countertop for bottles and cosmetics, a bench as a space to relax, and, if you like to bathe, a tub with a view of the outdoors if possible.

There are some simple ways to update your bathroom and introduce a spa-like mood. You



might want to replace the showerhead with a design that offers a selection of massage spray patterns, add some body jets, or buy a comfortable recliner so that you have somewhere to relax while you apply a face pack or body treatment. As part of a bathroom refurbishment, you might want to consider underfloor heating for all-year-round warmth, while an adjustable lighting scheme will allow you to set different moods, with low-level settings important to achieve the most relaxing ambience. Some luxury showers and baths have chromotherapy features, where softly changing coloured lighting is used to soothing or energising effect, while others have built-in aromatherapy and sound systems.

Bathing beauties

Replacing a 'standard' bath with a whirlpool model may require more of an investment, but today's models offer a lot more than those of the past, as Lorna Wainwright of Alchemy Design Award for Teuco UK explains. "In the 1990s, many whirlpool baths were simply bubble baths, but modern versions can offer true hydrotherapy, with pressurised air and water combined to offer

a more sophisticated deep-tissue massage." Many of today's models are also quiet, with minimal pump noise, and offer in-built sanitising programs to ensure that the system remains ultra-hygienic.

Generous-sized walk-in showers and those with twin heads offer space to relax with your partner, while a large, double-ended tub can accommodate two in comfort. These will require careful space planning, and may require tanking (waterproofing) of the floor and walls in the case of a walk-in shower or extra joist support in the case of a heavy bath. A whirlpool bath won't place any more demand than a standard bath on your water system, but bear in mind a shower with multiple outlets will require a high-pressure system or pump to ensure a powerful spray, rather than a dribble, when several outlets are in use at once.

Steam powered

For the ultimate spa-like experience, you might want to include a steam room or sauna as part of a bathroom redesign. There are options for steam rooms, often referred to as Turkish baths or hammams, which offer the therapeutic effects of high humidity and dry-heat saunas. "The trend in steam rooms is towards minimalist design, with hidden technologies," explains Lorna Wainwright. "The correct specification is important – not only do you need an effective steam generator, of the correct kilowattage to suit the size of your space, but you also need a fan to regulate the temperature and ensure even steam dispersal throughout."

Generally, steam showers are available in cabin form, complete with steam, shower, body jets, lighting, aromatherapy and more, or they can be bought in component form, with a separately supplied steam generator, fan mechanism, separate controller and so on, for the construction of a bespoke steam room. A modular system, such as Effegibi Bodylove from CP Hart (see p62), allows the opportunity to include a sauna, as well as steam room, into your bathroom for the ultimate in home-spa enjoyment. [KBB](#)

Create a spacious spa-like feel with a seamless shower floor and wall-hung furniture. There might even be room to include a recliner, so you can relax in comfort, while a cubicle WC offers privacy. From Geberit comes the Setaplano shower surface, from £1440, with iCon 900 washbasin unit in white high gloss, £534, and basin, £190. (01926 516800 or www.geberitcollection.co.uk)



Spa elements

Key products to help turn your bathroom into a haven of wellbeing and relaxation.

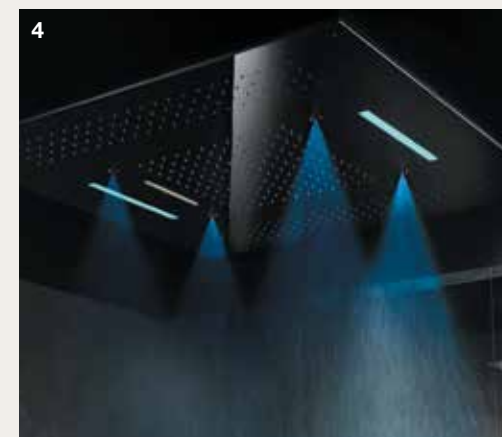
1 A steam shower cabin is a complete Turkish bath solution. The Zuchetti.Kos Kosmic Z1 steam shower cabin, from £15,360, has a steam generator, aromatic essence dispenser, showerhead and controls, back massage jets, seat and fibre optic coloured light diffusion system.

2 A whirlpool bath massages you with water, and the latest designs offer a host of hydrotherapy functions. The Teuco Seaside bath, from £6800, features a silent pump, Hydrosonic extra-deep massage, water blade outlet, and translucent Duralight panels for a gentle interplay of light. Available via Alchemy Design Award.

3 Body jets can add to a blissful shower. Shown here from Crosswater, three Dial body jets with rotating spray pattern, supplied with Dial fixed showerhead, shower arm, and push-button thermostatic valve two-outlet control, are priced £1099.

4 A showerhead with multiple spray patterns and chromotherapy can create a soothing or energising experience, as you wish. This MGS SO623 ceiling-mounted showerhead has rain, waterfall and sprayer patterns, nine different chromotherapy colours, and pre-set energising and relaxing programs. Priced from £7820 at Grange Design.

5 A complete home spa system offers an all-in-one option. The Effegibi Bodylove modular system allows for a sauna, Turkish bath, shower and relaxation area all in one fully customisable unit. It is priced from £24,000, including site visit and installation from CP Hart.



Left: The Aqata ES300 shower enclosure, £1350, can be perfectly tailored for steam, because it is fully framed and can be supplied with special felt seals to prevent steam from escaping.

Opposite page, bottom left: Gentle lighting can add to the relaxing experience of a long soak, and this Darling New bath comes with a choice of whirlpool systems, 18 wood décor and real wood veneer finishes, and integrated LED white lighting around the bath rim. Priced from £3630 at Duravit.

Bottom right: The Tenbury whirlpool bath, from £668, is a competitively priced choice. It offers two types of jet massage and underwater lighting, which alternates between seven soothing hues, from Pure Bathroom Collection.



Case study



Designer: Almas Shamsee, Maisha Design.

The client: A couple with four children.

Location: Central London.

The brief: To replace a dated ensuite with a luxurious spa-like retreat.

Cost: About £35,000.

“My clients wanted to create a spa zone as part of their master bedroom suite, with some beautiful back-lit onyx as the wow-factor feature, inspired by a similar panel they had seen in a bar,” says Almas. “It took a while to find two slabs of pure white onyx – one for the wall panel, another for the vanity unit countertop – but the wait was worth it, as they look stunning together.

“The ensuite is clad in Carrara marble and the bespoke vanity unit is made from black gloss lacquer, inlaid with nickel. The materials accentuate the luxurious mood of the room, but it is the lighting that really creates the spa-like feel. We used a Lutron lighting system with five different adjustable circuits: when just the onyx and wall niches are lit, the mood is relaxing and soft, while higher levels of light are available for shaving or applying cosmetics. Moorish lanterns in the wall niches are framed in the same black lacquer as the vanity unit, with integrated lighting concealed in the frames.

“In the steam shower, there are seats either side of the double doors, with under-seat and underfloor heating throughout to make sure the room is warm and inviting. The steam generator is hidden behind the wall, and the outlet is above the onyx wall panel, close to the showerhead. It all makes for a very luxurious retreat.”



Photography: Richard Gooding

SourceBook

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