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Kitchen & Bath design news



Directory & Buyers' GUIDE ISSUE

A Year-Round Guide To Products & Suppliers

1 | Liberty Hardware Manufacturing Corp.'s Basil bath accessory collection features a traditional design with ribbed detail. The line's pivoting towel ring, towel bars, toilet paper holder and robe hook are finished in satin nickel.

Circle No. 164 on Product Card



2 | The Vision Collection from Cool Lines USA is a complete series of solid stainless steel accessories for the bath. The line is available in both polished and satin finishes.

Circle No. 165 on Product Card



3 | The Sutton Bath Collection from Atlas Homewares includes matching towel bars and rings, tissue paper holder, hooks and shelves. The hardware features a beveled edge, and is available in polished nickel, brushed nickel and Venetian bronze.

Circle No. 166 on Product Card



4 | The Swanstone Shower Bench Seat Top from The Swan Corp. is 48" wide and is compression molded for durability. It has shed edges on

both sides, so installers can use the bench seat on either the right or left side of the shower.

Circle No. 167 on Product Card



5 | Amba Towel Warmers Collections – Jeeves and Elory – are crafted from stainless steel and are available in a range of finishes. All models are electric and URL or ETL certified.

Circle No. 168 on Product Card

Elegant Accents

Accessories and hardware in the bathroom are essential to pulling a room together, but the newest trend is toward elements that blend seamlessly into the overall design.

By Elizabeth Richards

A bathroom isn't complete without the accessories – the towel ring by the sink, grab bar in the shower, decorative mirror, toilet paper holder and more. Each has its own specific function, but together they share an important task – to pull the bath together and make the overall look more cohesive and polished.

The wide array of products available offers designers plenty of options, both in style and finish, but the real trick is tying them together in a coordinated, balanced fashion, say manufacturers recently surveyed by *Kitchen & Bath Design News*.

As the overall design of the bath becomes simpler, so follows the design of accessories and hardware. "Whether it's traditional or contemporary styling, many homeowners are gravitating toward clean, simple lines in their décor," says Michael Wurth, design director for Danze, in Woodridge, IL. "Newer products tend to be simpler in design, lean and slightly smaller in scale."

Andrew Shannon, marketing specialist for Milwaukee, WI-based Graff, agrees. He sees a trend toward cleaner lines and simple designs, with sleek and more artistic elements to maximize space, with minimal interruptions.

Adrienne Morea, president and creative director for Atlas Homewares in Los Angeles, CA, says, "I don't think homeowners want the hardware to 'take over' anymore. The concept of it as 'jewelry' is sounding passé to me.... It's earned its own 'life' as great hardware with style!"

COORDINATED STYLE

Hardware and accessories are the icing on the cake – the finishing touches that pull a whole look together. As such, these products must be coordinated throughout the bath. "As accessories, they follow the style of the overall design, be it contemporary – clean lines [with] polished chrome finishes, or traditional – ornate carvings [and] antique brass finishes," says Raymond Lombardo of Afina Corp. in Paterson, N.J.

"I think a lot of homeowners are building a look based on one great piece they find first: for example, a fabulous bathtub or vanity. The hardware and accessories need



6 | The Arrondi collection of bath hardware from Amerock is inspired by modern, minimalist design and features 100 percent stainless steel items. The collection includes 9", 18" and 24" towel bars, towel ring, tissue roll holder and robe hook.

Circle No. 169 on Product Card



7 | The Sirius Collection of bath accessories from Danze is designed to complement the company's Sirius faucet line, which features a ribbon-like spout shape. The series consists of a range of accessory products, finished in chrome or brushed nickel.

Circle No. 170 on Product Card



8 | The Designer Collection of towel warmer products from Thermique Technologies features heated glass instead of metal bars. The collection provides the option of choosing a white, black or cream frame and accenting it with polished chrome along the top and below the glass.

Circle No. 171 on Product Card



9 | The 9100 Series of bath accessories from Graff features a clean, contemporary style. The line includes a tumbler and holder combo, robe hook, paper holder with cover and towel ring, in a choice of polished chrome or brushed nickel.

Circle No. 172 on Product Card

to complement the great piece, but not steal the show. That's why transitional works so well," Morea says.

Noah Taft, senior v.p./Marketing and Sales for Simi Valley, CA-based California Faucets, says the faucet sets the tone of the space. "People don't pick out a towel bar, a toilet paper holder or a mirror and then pick the main fittings; it's the other way around," he says. "The accessories and the hardware afford you the opportunity to make everything match."

Lou Rohl, COO/managing partner for Rohl Luxury Faucets and Fixtures in Irvine, CA, says consumers are looking for a complete suite approach, and accessories are a major part of accomplishing that. The Perrin & Rowe Collection, for example, offers bath racks, soap trays, double tumbler holders, shaving mirrors, towel rings and more to complement the line's faucets. "It's our goal to make it a seamless process for consumers to get a polished look for their bath," says Rohl.

Jaclo Industries, based in Cranford, NJ, takes a similar approach. CEO Larry Brodey says "People go with our decorative hardware because when they are looking for new fixtures to match existing ones, we offer the finish that will make all of their accessories match seamlessly."

Along with the importance of a seamless style comes a need for flawless functionality. "[The] function of these pieces is critical," says Wurth. He uses mirrors as an example, stating that providing storage within mirrors is a huge advantage. "Homeowners can't get enough storage," he says.

An often overlooked yet must-have accessory is the towel ring near the basin, Taft adds. Placement of the ring is essential to good design and functionality. "People want that near the sink," he says. "A good design is going

to have something accessible so you're not washing your hands and walking across the bathroom to dry them."

DESIGN SHIFT

When it comes to the design trends in accessories, regional differences certainly come into play. While many manufacturers still see a strong trend toward traditional styling, they also agree contemporary is taking hold, even in non-metropolitan areas.

"Traditional still dominates, but I believe contemporary is gaining," agrees Taft. He sees a filtering of contemporary designs into more suburban areas, and sees another interesting trend, of contemporary lines in natural finishes used more often than in traditional designs. "You might see a really minimalist towel bar, but you'll see it in oil-rubbed bronze or copper," he says.

He believes this may be due to the fact that people in other parts of the country are more comfortable with rustic and natural finishes, but want to branch from traditional into contemporary. "This is a way for them to have their cake and eat it, too," he says. "Oil-rubbed bronze and weathered copper make you feel a little more at home, but like you are also daring enough to dip into contemporary," he adds.

"In more metropolitan areas, the trend is toward contemporary, architectural styling. However, with a surge of renovating older homes, estate homes, lake homes, etc., many homeowners prefer more traditional styling," Wurth says.

Brodey agrees. "As always, the contemporary products are doing best in the metropolitan areas and major cities, while the traditional products are still doing extremely well in other parts of the nation," he notes. However, he



10 | The Waldorf Swivel Mirror from Empire Industries features three deep storage trays and a 360-degree swivel. Part of the Waldorf bath accessories collection, the mirror is made from stainless steel and features a polished finish.

Circle No. 173 on Product Card

11 | The transitional line of bath accessories from Gerber Plumbing Fixtures complements the firm's Allerton, Brianna, Abigail and Pomeroy faucet series. Available in chrome, brushed nickel and oil-rubbed bronze finishes, the line includes a towel bar, paper holder, towel ring and robe hook.

Circle No. 174 on Product Card



12 | The Hearst Castle Collection of bath accessories and decorative hardware from Soko offer a modern take on the designs in the Hearst Castle in California. Featuring a key motif, the line includes knobs, pulls, hooks, towel bars and toilet paper holders.

Circle No. 175 on Product Card



13 | The Teak Shower Tray and Teak Shower Seats from MTI Whirlpools are crafted of Burmese teak, which features a natural oil that retards water and keeps the wood from warping and cracking. The seat mounts to a wall and folds into a raised position against the wall when not in use.

Circle No. 176 on Product Card



14 | California Faucets offers a line of contemporary bath accessories to complement its Tiburon faucet and surrounding décor. The line features a minimalist design, and includes towel bars and rings, paper holders, soap dishes, toothbrush holders and robe hooks.

Circle No. 177 on Product Card



15 | The Shower Seat from Bristol and Bath is constructed of durable acrylic and can support up to 300 lbs. The fold-up seat is available in two styles, with a third style upcoming.

Circle No. 178 on Product Card