

bathing beauties

With lifestyles becoming increasingly frantic, we see the bathroom as a place to relax and unwind after a hard day. A bath gives you the option of having a range of different features, including whirlpool systems and underwater lighting, to aid rejuvenation and a sense of wellbeing. Explains Fiona Bowyer, Marketing Manager at Kohler, "Technologies have advanced dramatically over the past few years, allowing you to design a haven that is on a par with a professional spa. The latest products embrace the principles of aromatherapy, chromatherapy and hydrotherapy to create a sensory experience."

The common belief is that baths promote an end-of-day glow that can enhance a good night's sleep. Whilst this may not be true for everyone, a tub is a must for families with young children and would certainly be expected if you were to consider putting your house on the market. Says Cheryl Gurner, Director at Bathrooms International, "Baths are essential if you have the space. Bathing should be a long, pleasurable experience savoured for the night or weekends when you have time to relax."

These days there's an array of styles to choose from – contemporary, classic, freestanding, inset, round, single or double. A traditional roll-top will create a focal point and, with super-bright tones for a modern twist, will be brought right up to date to suit all types of homes. There's also a host of materials to choose from including acrylic, enamelled steel, cast iron, wood and glass.

Shared bathing is an increasing trend. An in-depth psychological study carried out by the Rheingold Institute in Cologne on behalf of Kaldewei found that it creates a feeling of intimacy and harmony that is vital in maintaining a healthy relationship. With this in mind, double-ended or side-by-side baths with a spacious interior, ergonomically shaped back-rests and sufficient depth are important features to look for.

above right The Plaza Duo double bath has a tapered end and extra-wide sloping interior, making it a comfortable bathing zone for two. Made from steel enamel, it measures 180cm by 120cm-80cm and costs from £1754, at Kaldewei. Tel: 0870 777 2223. www.kaldewei.com

right Completing this glamorous scheme with a hint of Art Deco, an overflowing Nara infinity tub in Ceralite® is surrounded by black granite and mirrors and teamed with a chrome Niagara waterfall spout, Elegance black onyx taps and a hand held shower. Expect to pay £10,197, at Bathrooms International. Tel: 020 7838 7788. www.bathroomsint.com

