

WINTER 2021

# WAIL VALLEY



ART & DINING   MOUNTAIN HOMES   JEWELRY & FASHION   VINTAGE SKI BARS

*Designed by Kasia Karska*

*Photo by Brent Bingham for  
Kasia Karska Design*



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What's trending in bathrooms

By **Kathy Filgo**

**D**id you know that, according to multiple research sources, the average time we spend in our bathrooms every day is only about 30 minutes? And, to the surprise of some, this time applies to both men and women.

If you are one of those people who are baffled at how anyone can possibly exit the bathroom in the morning without taking at least an hour to organize one's self, you're not alone; about 25 percent of us spend that amount of time preparing for our day.



Photo by Kimberly Gavin for  
Jacobs + Interiors

Photo by Brent  
Bingham for  
Tracie Shumacher,  
Studio80



Keep in mind that bathrooms aren't only used for, well, what bathrooms were designed to be used for. Today folks are bathing, showering, shaving, putting on makeup, dressing and enjoying some private time to just be alone with their thoughts. Reading in the bathroom is rising and a survey eight years ago revealed 75% of respondents use cellphones in the bathroom.

The kitchen may be the heart of the home, but bathrooms have certainly broadened their functions to accommodate more than the outhouses of yore and have evolved into a place that requires thought, comfort and luxuries.

Yvonne Jacobs, Jacobs + Interiors, an interior designer for over 30 years, discusses some of the hottest trends and how, as society and technology change, bathrooms advance and change as well.

"In our area the contemporary look of the bright white tiles, white marble and very clean modern finishes are still a big percentage of the design homeowners are looking for. But there is also a large percentage of people looking for the dark, handsome, dramatic look that has prevailed in our mountain homes," says Jacobs.

"Some of the developments are a desire for floating vanities, as well as off-the-floor commodes. Even if people aren't cleaning their own bathrooms, it makes it easier to maintain pristine cleanliness.

"Stand-alone bathtubs are popular but it's more of a sculptural statement and not necessarily for use. Interest in built-in jetted tubs has waned but here, people still love their steam rooms and steam showers.

"In plumbing, our area is following the continuing universal appeal of nickel or chrome fixtures, but black, in particular matte black, is very on-trend. The real bold changes can be found in vanities and light fixtures.

"I would be remiss not to mention that as we are facing our global health challenges, the effect has been felt even in the trends of bathrooms. People are starting to think of things touchless, such as faucets and anti-bacterial countertops are gaining interest. Already these product styles are improving — but bathrooms are high-touch areas and the design world will rise to meet a new demand," continues Jacobs.

Companies have anti-microbial countertops that help eliminate microorganisms that cause illness and disease and are certainly being discussed



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more prevalently by both homeowners and the design community.

Select Surfaces Flooring and Design Center designer, Tali Fagenblat, gives her take on what's trending in bathrooms:

"The IDG (International Design Guild) discussed their upcoming trends for 2021 and I love them all:

*Nest:* looks at creating comfort and focusing on simple and natural design

*Zen:* is cool, calm, balanced, soothing earth tones with a mindful approach

*Culture:* uses meaningful objects that are authentic and looks at travel or worldly pieces

*Rebel:* pushes design limits,

mixes patterns, layers luxury and does not conform

"We are seeing clean lines and not too much fussy decorative design in the bathrooms; but we still love a good contrast. We are tiling vanity walls instead of a decorative stripe in the shower — my theory is that we stand in front of our vanity for longer than we

are in the shower so why not be able to look at your fun and exciting tile for longer? I like to call it bathroom 'jewelry.' It gives the room some interest," comments Fagenblat.

"Organic modern textures — for example concrete looks, wood looks and textural shapes — are hitting that mixture of





Photo by Brent Bingham for  
Patti Dixon Design

Nest and Zen design trends for us. Warmer gray tones are still popular, but we are seeing a return of warmer beige tones too. As well, large-format tile like a 24”x 48” has become a trend, because as we know, people are not so fond of grout lines. It can be used on both walls and floors but keep in mind it does require a flat surface for installation.”

Many of her clients also like the lineal drain look that allows large-format tiles to run right into the shower without a curb for a seamless look that can also make the bathroom feel larger.

According to designers, subway tiles are still on trend, but stacking them instead of brickset, or placing them vertically, allows for a more modern look.

Tracie Schumacher, Studio80 Interior Architecture & Design designer, says that people are branching out from the traditional white subway tiles. “Rich new bold color palettes and glazing for tiles are coming into vogue,” she says. “Longer thinner profiles and elongated shape tiles, as well as the use of more ‘textural’ tiles, are being used, but they need to be easy to clean.

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“Today’s bathrooms need to be practical, low maintenance and easy to clean; but we can make them calm and spa-like or colorful and edgy.”

“People are mixing more eclectic styles, like vintage mirrors with modern industrial lights. They’re having fun with this space they use every day — it’s almost becoming a family zone, like the kitchen — everyone wants to use the tub!”

Schumacher observes that people are becoming more savvy with function and space-saving in bathrooms, using every nook and cranny.

“We’re using creative hardware and hooks, fun rugs and interesting accessories. It seems to be throwing it all together for a creative home-style mix; it’s a free-for-all anymore — go for it,” she says.

There has also been a change in bathroom hardware. “Black accents with warm wood and brass

tones are gaining favor. Oil-rubbed bronze faucets and pulls have been replaced by the sleek matte black finish. Faucet styles continue to be influenced by industrial design. We are seeing warmer tarnished brass looks and black to be favored by our designers. Luxe gold finish offers that knurled look that is hot, hot, hot! And with the onslaught of COVID-19, the anti-microbial features of bronze really lends a beautiful way to fight off germs and add value in your bathroom,” explains Liz Goff, owner of Alpine Builders Hardware.

Commercial bronze consists of 90% copper and has the inherent ability to kill a wide range of harmful microbes relatively quickly and with a high degree of efficiency.

“There is talk that satin nickel is trending out, but for those adverse to fingerprints, we have not seen that to be the case. Polished nickel was a popular finish over the past two years, but polished chrome

still seems to be a solid, classic choice,” continues Goff.

Goff also says that traditional towel rings are not currently in vogue. Instead, they are being replaced with short towel bars and whimsical hooks.

“The ease of the modern lift-up toilet paper holders outpace the spring rod. And Millennials appreciate their phone shelf/toilet paper holder in one,” she comments.

And if the run on toilet paper at the onset of the current health crisis didn’t reveal the importance we place on our TP, there are surveys that show a majority of people prefer their toilet paper be loaded hanging over and in front — and yes, there really are surveys that reflect this kind of thing. Decades ago, Dear Abby asked this question in her newspaper column about the proper way TP should hang, over or behind



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Photo by Charles Townsend  
Bessent for M.E. Design Studio

(no pun intended). She received the largest response to any question she ever asked.

Apparently, we take our TP very seriously.

“Classic design is always in fashion,” says Patti Dixon, Patti Dixon Design.

“Of course, the mountains demand more texture and color to provide the necessary warmth, something that satin brass finishes for the plumbing fixtures add in addition to a touch of sophistication.

“Today’s bathrooms need to be practical, low maintenance and easy to clean; but we can make them calm and spa-like or colorful and edgy.

Free-standing tubs are trending and I like them because they allow the space to feel large and open; and for real luxury, add a stylish commode/bidet combination with heated seat and night light,” Dixon advises.

“Tile is a great way to add interest and personal character and I’m seeing more requests for non-skid floor tiles.”

Of course, good lighting is essential, both the color and location, so everyone looks their best. For example, sconces need to be placed at eye level, not over the mirror, to prevent casting shadows on the face.

“Vanity cabinetry has been designed to remove clutter on the countertops by addressing interior options which provide pullout drawers, organized inserts and electrical outlets,” says Dixon. “

I like to meet the parameters of what the client is requesting but also add that ‘exceptional’ ingredient to make it a very special place for them.”

Emily Kearl, M.E. Design Studio, says that our mountain area is interested in rustic features in bathrooms, such as barnwood and metal, especially on the walls, but it involves combining those rustic elements with contemporary details.

“Lighting choices have become more important: mirrors that are backlit; and motion-sensor lighting, such as lighting that goes on as you approach the door in the nighttime, is being requested,” explains Kearl. “It’s important to think outside the box these days and there are many new products that give us the opportunity to do that.”

New products such as high-tech toilets with seat warmers, automatic lid openers, adjustable air dryers and built-in deodorizers are available. Add to that technology-smart showers, automatic sinks, built-in Bluetooth speaker systems, voice-