

REACHING OUT

## SPA PACKAGE

From the outhouse to central stage, the bathroom's humble beginnings in no way reflect the luxury quarters it has become today. With a limitless array of tile and fixtures to choose from, lending elegant touches to increasingly opulent options in bathtubs and sinks, the bathroom is quickly transforming itself into one of the home's best selling points, offering up beauty and relaxation in equal measure. One of the ways that the new generation of bathrooms is making its presence felt is by growing outward, moving away from the traditional water closets of yore and claiming its place as a room of its own. "A bathroom should be a revered place in the house," says Natalie McAllister, vice president of marketing and sales at Hydrology in Chicago. "People lead such busy lives that the time spent there is often their only opportunity to relax, so that space should be as much of a sanctuary as possible."

And as more and more homeowners seek out a spa-like experience at home, walls are coming down: small bedrooms and larger closets are being sacrificed in favor of creating bathrooms with bigger footprints to accommodate sleek, oversized tubs and new innovations in shower options. More space means more choices. Whether it's his-and-her vanities and toilets, freestanding tubs, radiant flooring, heated towel bars or walk-in showers equipped with flat-screen televisions, the expanded bathroom is providing opportunities for each individual's habits to be incorporated into the overall design. But while diversity is redefining the modern bath, it is still essential to remember its importance in the daily routine. "The bathroom is a highly functional area of the house," notes McAllister. "It should be designed to make your daily routine as efficient as it can be, and to turn ordinary, everyday rituals into extraordinary experiences. But the final product should always reflect an individual's specific needs and lifestyle."

## STYLE SELECTION

The simple, curved form of this stool, carved from a solid length of oak decorated in oak veneers, makes it a versatile accent piece. *Moroccan Stool*, \$745; [bakerstudio.com](http://bakerstudio.com)

