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Insider knowledge

What can we expect from the bathroom of the near future?

Six design visionaries share their insights

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Duplex bathroom by
Design Haus Liberty.

DARA HUANG is the inspiration behind cutting-edge interior design company *Design Haus Liberty*, which specialises in making sensuous modern spaces for private clients and developers across the globe.



What are you doing to make your bathrooms more inviting?

I was in New York recently and its bathrooms blow the UK's out of the water. Over there bathrooms are the size of our bedrooms with huge showers, heated stone seats and separate lavatories. Developers here have always had to financially justify the creation of larger bathrooms, but with a devalued pound and the need to find alternative building solutions, some of these things may come our way.

How do you begin a design? Firstly, I look at how to arrange the basics spatially. The trick is to fit the four or five essential bathroom pieces in a way that appears to be all about the experience rather than the technical aspect of where they need to be sited. Designing for a developer gives me scope

to be very creative with bathrooms, they are spaces where I can really express myself.

Which technologies are making an impact this year? Heated surfaces, steam shower functions, tech toilets from Asia, and new man-made composites and resins that are making bathtubs more eco-friendly, easier to clean and more shapely. We have also launched a new lighting company producing bathroom pendant lights. There aren't enough beautiful waterproof fittings out there, even though they make a huge difference to a bathroom.

Describe your dream bathroom. I have a long list of must-haves. I'd like a Hong-Kong style high-rise bathroom with a bathtub right by a full-length window. You're so high up no one can see you – it's wonderful lighting candles and gazing out at the city lights at night. I'd

also have a double shower with a heated stone seat – I love Corian but ideally would prefer a mix of real and man-made materials. I'd like a Toto lavatory for its great water cleansing technology, and a vanity area in good natural light where I could keep my jewellery and make-up. I'd also have a large ottoman, plus heated floors and a heated mirror.

How are wider trends affecting bathroom design? When it comes to fashion and design, the entire 20th century is available to plunder. The bathroom can be a world in itself, a feature room. You could have a complete Art Deco look if you wanted. It's down to personal taste. It's also nice to combine pieces – I like contemporary design mixed with traditional looks. If everything is too new it can look plastic, and when everything is too old it can feel dated. I like a good mix. dhl Liberty.com.