



Homeowners want luxury bathroom fixtures with smooth lines and the spa experience to boot. This has been the message delivered to manufacturers and distributors for several years now and because of the sustained demand, it is now possible to make a bathroom seem unique without breaking the bank.

Jason Kuss, operations manager for Robinson Lighting and Bath in Vancouver, says, "It's not uncommon to see designer names in the bathroom, along with spa systems that approximate what is found in recreational resorts." Many so-called designer sinks often sell for under \$300, while whirlpool-style tub spa systems cost under \$1,000. "Even cutting-edge trends are affordable,"

notes Kuss, alluding to a line of Quebec-made spa tubs sold by Robinson Lighting that employ air instead of water jets. "This line starts at only \$1,500, with the high-end items topping off at about \$5,000."

Kuss adds that homeowners want their fixtures to have clean, minimalist lines (described by some manufacturers as *urban* and *contemporary*), and they also favour chrome and brushed nickel over more highly touted and exotic finishes like oil-rubbed bronze.

MAAX, one of North America's top manufacturers of bathroom products, cabinetry and spas, received first and third prizes for its *Urban* series bathroom suite at the 2004 SIDIM, the Montréal International Interior Design

Show. *Urban* is marketed as cutting-edge and minimalist and the luxury shower *Urban 7242 SA* won the top honours while the *Urban 7242 F*, a top-end bathtub designed in the same minimalist vein, took home third. This tub's deep, freestanding profile boasts all the hallmarks of the *Urban* line, such as pre-plumbed faucets and a cascading waterfall that is part of a new filling method.

MAAX recently announced the launch of the *Aerosens*® line of acrylic bathtubs, a series of five classically styled models: the *Picadilly 32 x 60*, *Cambridge 36 x 72*, *Coral 60 x 60*, *Freeport 36 x 72*, and *Imperial 60 x 60*. Each tub is equipped with the all-new *Aerosens* air massage system, which comes in E-Z Clean acrylic and installs

without extensive plumbing. The system approximates the experience of a therapeutic massage, with thousands of bubbles expelled through perimeter air jets to create multiple cross-currents.

Delta Faucet Canada is in the midst of an aggressive marketing campaign for its new Brizo premium faucet. "We see Brizo as a fashion faucet brand in the faucet industry," says Delta brand manager Anita Griffin. The most highly touted Brizo line is the *Floriano* collection for the kitchen, but bathroom decor can be affordably transformed with the Brizo *Vista* collection, which was inspired by the retrograde square design theme of the 1920s and 1930s.

FASHIONABLE FIXTURES

Plumbing hardware goes haute couture

by Robin Brunet



Vista lavatory faucets match traditional as well as contemporary decor and are sold in a wide lavatory and a three- or four-hole Roman tub faucet configuration with the choice of curve or channel spout. The finishes are polished chrome, Brilliance Brass, Brilliance Brushed Nickel and new Brilliance Brushed Bronze. The *Vista Custom Shower System* delivers 1.6 gallons per minute through six outlets and three individual or three shared outlet positions are available thanks to a built-in diverter. There are no moving parts within the body sprays and compared to high-flow three-

Left: Bradley Corporation's solid-surface *Frequency Lavatory System* features an unconventional wave design.

quarter-inch custom shower systems, the *Vista* medium-flow thermostat helps users conserve water without sacrificing the therapeutic qualities of the spa experience.

Moen continues to make powder rooms a focus of attention with its new *ShowHouse* collection that is comprised of three new powder-room suites and matching accessories. The most unorthodox of these suites is *Bamboo* because the faucet base, spout and handles resemble bamboo strips. The design is intended to mimic an open waterway, with water spilling out of the faucets onto a base of pebbles.

The *Casa Powder Room* collection evokes old-world Mediterranean styling with S-shaped handles, a high arc faucet and a rich wrought-iron finish. By contrast, the *Sophisticate* suite's clean, smooth lines are for homeowners seeking a modern look.

Moen's recently released *Waterhill* faucets for the bath have a unique rotational spout with a centering détente and rotational stops, allowing for easier cleaning in and around the sink (the unit is similar to the Moen *Roman Tub* faucet's rotating spout and locking collar). For versatility's sake, the single-hole, single-mount *Waterhill* comes with a three-hole deck plate and optional extras include a vessel extension kit.

While mainstream manufacturers strive to make luxury products more affordable, creators of high-end bathroom fixtures continue to raise the bar in artistic standards. The items offered by Toronto-based Contemporary Bath Design (CBD Glass Studios) may not

Moen's *ShowHouse* collection — *Bamboo*.

come cheap, but they are imperative in augmenting upscale homes and commercial outlets.

CBD staff boast about the capabilities of their 2,070-square-metre manufacturing plant and the fact that its glass-melting practices are often influenced by clients' aesthetic desires, but nothing can prepare a newcomer for the sheer originality of the products that emerge from this facility: the best-selling *Waterfall* sink that resembles a sheet of frozen water shooting out of the wall and arching toward the floor, or the *Royal Leaf* vanity with intricate gold patterns and marble top that would be at home in Versailles. No less breath-taking are CBD's shower doors: glass-relief sculptures that mimic aspects of nature (as the names *Cobblestone*, *Sandstorm* and *Hail* imply). Even the company's comparatively simple translucent wash bowls are extraordinary; they look like *Titanic* artifacts that have assumed the pitted appearance of deep-sea aging. The man responsible for sustaining such high standards of creativity is CBD founder Vladimir Fridman, who was educated as a scientist and engineer at the University of Moscow and later mastered the art of glass sculpting and casting in that city. Each of his creations is pulled from a handcrafted original mould and, not surprisingly, Fridman's works have found their way into luxury yachts and the lobbies of five-star hotels.

As unique as CBD products may be, staff ship to clients all over the world. "We do regular business with



clients in Moscow and we even make our own crates in order to ensure safe and expedient shipping," says a company source who wishes to remain anonymous.

On the commercial front, Bradley Corporation of Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, strives to address environmental concerns, with the industry's first light-powered hand-washing fixture being a prime example. The patent-pending *ndite*™ technology converts restroom lighting to energy, which activates the flow of water to



First Impressions Last.

When you put forth the effort - it shows.

Coordinating the needs of fundamental basics along with satisfying aesthetic - the *Frequency*™ ensemble does it with style and grace. With its unique wave design, the fixture simplifies the task of meeting ADA height requirements by offering two heights in one unit. To view the entire *Frequency* product line with all its companion elements, visit bradleycorp.com or call 1-800-BRADLEY.

Bradley
Commercial Washroom Innovation

PLUMBING FIXTURES

WASHROOM ACCESSORIES

LENOX™ LOCKERS

MILLS™ PARTITIONS



Product
Spotlight

The 2004 SIDIM prize-winning *Urban 7242 SA* by MAAAX.

its *Express® SS* and *MG* series lavatory systems.

The *ndite* system is powered by photovoltaic cells integrated into the top of the *Express Lavatory System*. The cells capture natural light or normal room-level lighting (restrooms with normal lighting will provide a sufficient amount of luminosity) and store the energy for later use in a battery-free system, thus eliminating the need for electrical hookups. "By 'unplugging' our *Express* handwashing stations, we've created a fixture that is not only energy efficient and environmentally sound, but also maintenance free," says Nate Kogler, Bradley Corp. product manager. The real benefit of *ndite* is in maintenance costs. Diagnosing and replacing conventional lavatory batteries can cost upwards of \$400, or up to \$1,600 per fixture annually, but *ndite* eliminates these costs and helps reduce the 2.5 billion pounds of batteries that are sent to landfills each year. The *ndite* system is self-sustaining and provides a steady stream of power to the sensors and valves controlling activation. Even in areas where the lights may be off for up to five days, it will maintain its charge.

In another nod to energy efficiency, Bradley Corp. has added an optional electric tankless water heater to its *Express® Lavatory System* models in the *MG* and *SS* series. These augmented units are connected only to cold water and do not need hot-water piping. The heater is concealed within the pedestal of either the *MG* or *SS* series and heats the water as it is being used, with a factory pre-set of 105-degrees Fahrenheit.

A flow switch activates the heater with 99 per cent efficiency and a microprocessing temperature control maintains temperature accuracy within one degree.

Bradley spokespeople point out that the water-heater option is appropriate for new construction when only cold water is installed or in situations when a restroom or handwashing station is not near a hot-water source. The heater is easy to install and contains a replacement cartridge element for easy maintenance. If installed as part of a renovation, the hot-water source can simply be turned off and the heater can be connected to the cold-water supply. An added benefit of generating hot water in this fashion is less lime buildup, calcification and sedimentation, as well as the prevention of Legionella bacteria growth.

Bradley has also released a patented new *Frequency Lavatory System* that features an unconventional wave design combining a lower ADA-compliant sink with a higher sink, making it ideal for washrooms in upscale retail centers, restaurants, offices, hotel lobbies and fitness centres. The new fixture was designed with input from industry architects, building owners and interior designers to meet diverse specifications. It comes in six models that can be combined to create a wall of waves. A specially designed infrared-controlled faucet complements the lavatory and a complete line of coordinating accessories ensure that soap dispensers, mirrors, shelves, towel dispensers and waste receptacles have the same fluid look. ■

Aged Bronze

CALL TODAY
WESTERN CANADA
(800) 267-4774
EASTERN CANADA
(800) 387-7064

Taymor offers complete Door Finishing Hardware and Decorative Accessories to allow you to Finish It Right!

Over 55 Years of Service to the Builders' & Home Improvement Industry.

WIDE ASSORTMENT OF FINISHES AVAILABLE
AGED BRONZE
SATIN CHROME
ANTIQUE BRASS
POLISHED BRASS
POLISHED CHROME
SATIN NICKEL
ANTIQUE NICKEL

FINISH IT Right!

Taymor

www.taymor.com

The Canadian Associated Air Balance Council.



The Canadian Associated Air Balance Council is the Canadian Chapter of the AABC, the world's leading association of qualified independent test and balance professionals. CAABC members are committed to upholding the highest standards of competence, objectivity and integrity.

For more information and member list, visit our web site at www.caabc.org