



2. Godrej Interio offers modular steel kitchens that are geared for cooking Indian cuisine.

3. Steel kitchens by Godrej Interio come in several designs and with a variety of accessories.

4. Pure, clean lines characterise GRAFF's ME 25 kitchen series. With two spout styles and designer handles, ME 25 finds a perfect harmony between aesthetics and function.

effects. But on the flip side, Kapoor warns, over-dependency on software designs could also prove to be less practical, possibly resulting in disasters during execution. "More design options may hamper the process, as showing a variety means that the customer may decide on any colour, shade, hardware and accessory," he points out.

There is also the question of developing the right kind of design softwares, which will require regular upgrades with more reliable tools. Software and apps don't come cheap. "There are still no dedicated softwares for kitchen design available in the market, and developing one at your own cost will prove to be expensive. [But] yes, it will stand; as we are moving towards technology advancement, these apps will give better performance with improved accuracy," Kapoor believes.

Given that they can save on manpower, time and energy involved in a project, Mehta sees clear-cut benefits for these solutions in the long run. "The virtual platform creates a transparent approach that makes the consumer more aware and involved in the design process without losing his share of interest," he explains. However, he also notes a certain down side to it. "It requires skill development. Not everyone is up for this change, since they have been practising using old techniques. It does not offer the 'touch and feel' which the consumers prefer before choosing any product. It is also a one-time investment — cost of the technology and studio set-up [need to be considered]."

Advancements will need to acknowledge that kitchen de-

NEW IN THE MARKET

HSIL: Suited to the Indian market, HSIL's newly-launched models of auto-clean chimneys are paving the way for smarter kitchens. Zavia 90 Auto Clean Chimney, with a titanium hood and double metal blower, was voted Product of the Year by a survey conducted by Nielsen. Theo 90 Auto-Clean Chimney, on the other hand, contains a unique motion-control mechanism which allows one to switch on the chimney with the wave of the hand.

Hafele: For a discreet solution, Hafele's new range of ceiling hoods by Falmer flush into any standard suspended ceiling and are hardly noticeable. These hoods perform the same functions as cooker hoods, but with reduced noise. Its innovative designs show a bold new approach to extraction design with typical Italian flair.

The Darwin Sliding System, also by Hafele, is a one-front sliding system that works efficiently to expose or hide mono-block kitchens. All one has to do is open the fronts and then slide them into the cavities created on either side of the kitchen. Once the kitchen is not in use, the fronts can be pulled out from the cavities and slid back into the closing position — thereby hiding it.

Pfusch: The company has brought the German kitchen brand Eggersmann's Work's concept to the Indian market. The Work's kitchen emphasises on the functionality of the kitchen in addition to the aesthetics. The collection is crafted in black striped glass with modules in real wood veneer. It also has units in laminate with nano finish and soft touch effect.

hansgrohe: hansgrohe's kitchen mixers now feature the Select technology in combination with pull-out spouts. Metris Select and Talis Select increase the operating range around the sink, making work in the kitchen considerably easier. The Select button is located at the top of the pull-out spout, and the swivel spout has a 150-degree range and can be turned in any direction.

GRAFF: The ME 25 kitchen series, with two spout styles and designer handles, finds a perfect harmony between aesthetics and function. Coordinating kitchen and bar faucet options give this minimalist series an added bonus.



1. Arize's Tailwater, designed by London-based product design studio Damon Merrick, evokes the image of a bird. The lever and spout are united in a single form, with the 'tail' acting as a mixer lever.

2. A new benchmark in showering luxury, Showertronic (SB) is an intelligent water mixer system from Ariza, which automatically maintains the water temperature and flow rate during showering.

3. Tamblerain by Ariza takes you back to a simpler time of bucket baths: the high-mounted 'bucket' fills automatically and empties itself satisfactorily over the user.

Rahul Kher, country manager, Indian sub-continent, Keuco, says, "Bathrooms at the top end are moving into two broad directions globally: design and planning, and overall well-being of the space. The idea is to think about design holistically: about people who will use the space, about products one is going to design the space with; and about the experience of the space."

Bathroom spaces have to account for mobility and flexibility, which also means that future-thinking design has to address overall wellness in a different manner. Brands have to evaluate how the bathroom space reacts to humans via sensory adaptations like lighting and material usage; to movement within the bathroom space; and to products which can help users with activities undertaken within the bath space. Kher adds, "Keuco has products which are not only futuristic, but also address the concerns of wellness and well-being in the bath space."

Sustainable products are the need of the hour, and bathrooms are one of the most important spaces that need to incorporate green products in order to save energy and water. KE Ranganathan, MD, Roca Bathroom Products, says, "Both, Roca and Parryware include these features in their products and offer an extensive range across categories that help the customer to create spaces that are personal and a reflection of their style as well as the way they understand life."



Adding a new dimension to bath spaces and taking minimalism a step ahead is Hansgrohe. Gaurav Malhotra, MD, Hansgrohe India states that, in recent years, minimalism has been a buzzword in the industry. "Practical thinking while developing bathroom solutions has always been a realistic approach. To cater to the bathroom of the future, we have moved a step ahead and adapted to the 'school of reduction'. Reduction in bathroom fitting designs helps users to have more space in their bathrooms, adds convenience and eradicates the hassle of understanding controls for first-time users, children and elders in the family," explains Malhotra.

Feeling good is the next extension of bath spaces, which is directly connected to achieving relaxation. The growing attention towards improving bathroom fixtures and the focus to create a home spa is definitely one of the growing trends all over the world. Emanuela Tavolini, director of sales Europe, GRAFF, informs, "GRAFF offers, within its wide wellness programme, several shower systems that provide LED chromotherapy along with different kinds of water jets and body sprays. With the Aqua-sense multi-function shower head, three different water functions can be integrated with a touch-screen and a set of speakers, so that you can watch films and listen to music."

According to Rajesh Mehra, director, Jaquar Group, the most trending introductions in bath fixtures are designer faucets, experiential showers, high-tech bathroom accessories, wellness products, steam and spa solutions, water-saving products, etc. "The designer faucet range with Tiaara and Tailwater from Jaquar is quite innovative," he explains. "The Tiaara faucet brings a sense of mystique in bath fittings. The concentric rings originate from the play of echoing ripples of water, and the inner ring swings to give access to running water that seamlessly stops without spilling a drop when swung back. Tailwater is a striking and iconic piece inspired by nature and the elegant fluid lines of contemporary architecture."



5. GRAFF's ceiling-mounted showerhead with mist creates a wonderful bathing experience.

6. A contemporary offering from GRAFF, Solar faucets consist of a geometrical composition of cubes, rectangles and right angles.

7. Water, light and sound orchestrated in harmonic balance, allow for a deeper sense of wellness through GRAFF's Aqua-Sense showers.

ENHANCING BATHROOM DESIGN

Today, the bathroom says more about an individual's views on design and approach to planning than any other room in the house. Regarding design, Kher advises, "It is very important to choose fixtures which offer permanence of quality, design, functionality and ergonomics." Be it fittings (both faucets and showers), furniture, wash basins, WCs and accessories, each element plays a role in the user's life every day – which means that it not only needs to fit well within the overall scheme, but also deliver a great experience to the user. How well one enjoys using the bath space depends on his/her choice of products, as they make the bathroom. The right thing to do is, go for products which add personality and character to the bath space and choose a brand which stands for great quality, ageless design, exquisite functionality and uncompromising ergonomics.

Tavolini feels that bath fixtures have their own personality and style, and adds that design faucets are developed to satisfy market trends and tastes. GRAFF has cutting-edge faucets and shower collections that offer solutions in both contemporary bathrooms and timeless bathrooms.

Faucet finishes, shower designs, technology and innovation, all play a vital role in giving the bathroom a new face;

each finish changes the overall look of the bathroom. Even a wash basin acts as another opportunity to introduce a new designer element in your bathroom," says Malhotra, adding that a bathroom fitting in a light shade, featuring glass elements, precise lines and flat surfaces, adds to a modernistic/contemporary bathroom. Gold or darker finishes, star-shaped handles and curved surfaces render a classical look to the bathroom. "It's all based on the client's knowledge and taste. For instance, hansgrohe's Metropol Classic faucets are best for an elegant and classical bathroom; however, RaindanceE showers and Metropol faucets are a perfect combination for contemporary bathrooms. Design language and technology in a bathroom fitting facilitates better utilisation of shower and basin areas as well. AXOR One is an all-in-one shower control element which eliminates the need for separate shower controls, and thus makes the shower area uncluttered," says Malhotra.

All five senses should be pampered in contemporary bathrooms. So besides being functional, bathrooms are now spaces for indulging oneself. Ranganathan feels that bathrooms have gone beyond functionality, and so have the fixtures that are installed in these spaces. "Bathroom fixtures not only complement sanitaryware, but also craft



8. Hansgrohe's Stormpipe solution consists of an overhead shower plus a hand shower with mixer. Seen here is the Raindance E Showerpipe.

9. The Metropol collection from Hansgrohe attracts due to its precise, geometrical design.

10. Basin mixers from Hansgrohe's Metropol series come in three variants. Seen here is the flat lever handle version.

the look and feel of the space. Electronic faucets, digital fittings, automated sensor-equipped fittings are the latest trend in the market and on the wishlist of high-end customers. Such products offer technology-based luxury solutions that transform the bathroom into a living space, pleasuring all the five senses with matchless sophistication."

With the wide variety of bath fixtures available these days, one can instantly enhance the look of the bathroom by adding a striking accessory. Bath fixtures have moved beyond the merely-utilitarian realm and entered into the stylistic space. Mehra explains, "Certain high-tech bath fixtures enhance the overall design of a bathroom. Jaquar's self-cleaning showers like Rainjoy and Showertronic iv6, for instance, solve the problem of unsatisfying water spray and unhealthy germs on the shower head."

MUST-HAVES FOR GLAMOUR

Bathroom fittings that are futuristic in design, technology and ergonomics contribute to contemporary bathrooms, and increasingly, people are preferring to invest in a unit that



NEW ON THE BLOCK

Hansgrohe: Hansgrohe, with its brands AXOR and hansgrohe, has launched many products based on reduction, such as AXOR Uno basin mixers, AXOR One and hansgrohe RainSelect. The motto is to pare down water control elements and deliver a smooth and pleasurable shower experience.

Roca Bathroom Products: Latest launches by Roca include Escuadra Pure faucets, a range with crystal handles that combines fashion and luxury. A sequence of angles, straight lines and planes in a singular style proposal, it is recommended for those who love design inspired by urban life. Atlas is another faucet range with flow limiters that combines elegance with sustainability.

GRAFF: GRAFF has expanded the range of finish offerings with the addition of an 18K Brushed Gold. The new finish accentuates the gracious, curvilinear lines and ornate details that come together with GRAFF's extensive range of refined fixtures. The 18K Brushed Gold acts as a complement to eight of GRAFF's star collections, including the modern ME 25 collection for the bathroom. Other collections available in the new finish are: Finezza Uno and Due, ME, Sada, Sento, Targa and Topaz.

Keuco: rian, canon 400, canon 11, merline_spa, TAMU and iLook_Move by Keuco have redefined the role of material and finishes in the bathroom. The company offers the largest range of finishes in fittings, with options in chrome, stainless steel and aluminium in its Plan range and different special finishes like black chrome brushed, bronze brushed, nickel brushed for Edition 400, Edition 11, IXMO fittings and accessories. Further, the new Plan furniture will have five new finishes in glass form of silk matt lacquer: white glass, cashmere glass, anthracite glass, truffle glass and inox matt.

Jaquar: The Jaquar Group has recently launched its designer faucet range with Tiaara and Tailwater. Tiaara faucet brings a sense of mystique in both fittings. Tiaara resembles an extravagant piece of jewellery with echoing ovals of abstracting functionality into a simple act of elevating conventional usage into an exquisite experience. The concentric rings originate from the play of echoing ripples of water, and the inner ring swings to give access to running water that seamlessly stops without spilling a drop when swung back. While Tailwater is a striking and iconic piece of bathroom fitting which is inspired by nature and the elegant fluid lines of contemporary architecture, TumbleRain and Showertronic iv6 enhance the bathing experience through technology, where a highly-durable, waterproof touchpad allows you to choose your shower mode, control the temperature, and manage the flow of water. Jaquar's Steam Cabin allows you to enjoy the benefits of humidifying water vapour from a high-quality steam generator.



13. Koca's Inspira, a collection of vitreous china and furniture, comes in three design lines: Round, Soft and Square.

14. Available in a range of bold colours, In-Wash Khroma, a Race offering, features a cushioned backrest and lid, and a deodorizer system that pulls air from the bowl.

EcoSmart technology which uses minimum water and delivers maximum showering pleasure, GRAFF products are equipped with aerators that reduce the flow rate of its faucets. "For example, the aerator available for the Solar washbasin faucet can reduce the flow rate from 11 to 7 litres per minute," says Tavolmi.

At Koca Bathroom Products, the endeavour is to always effectively conserve water usage, energy and simultaneously enrich the well-being of an individual. "This approach can be seen in our products such as smart toilets, flush-free urinals, W+W, cold start faucets and electronic faucets," says Ranganathan. Jaquar, too, has a formidable range of products – such as air showers, pressmatic faucets, sensor faucets, dual flush, sensor urinals, etc – that save water. For instance, air showers have a built-in air mixer that mixes air and water in a manner that makes shower drops lighter but voluminous. This revolutionary technology helps Jaquar Air

LIGHTING FOR BATHROOMS

Lighting plays a very important role in creating mood and ambience. Over the last few years, there has been a rapid advancement in lighting technology and control systems. All these have brought in drastic changes in lighting design that are used by a large variety of people all over the world. One of the most important factors to be considered is that the spaces being illuminated have to be visually interesting and meaningful; others have to be highly thematic and dramatic. It is generally important to create sparkle to enhance the effects of the lighting spaces. Thus, customised lighting is the solution for all these reasons.

When it comes to bathroom lighting, it is imperative that the lighting should create a mood and should enhance the ambience of the space. For example, there is a requirement for task lighting in areas where everything should be bright and clear – around a mirror, for example, where tasks such as shaving and putting on make-up need high illumination. Also, accent features such as art or tiles can be highlighted for enhanced aesthetics. Lights can be programmed on different circuits to change colour at the flick of a switch. This can be automatic or time controlled. All these are some of the innovative ways of lighting up a bathroom.

Note: Information courtesy VP Mahendru, CMD, Eon Electric

Showers save up to 30% of water without compromising on the showering experience. Pressmatic faucets are taps with technology that allows only a fixed quantity (750 ml) of water to flow with every press of the knob. This mechanism not only prevents water wastage during each use, but also provides ease of operation.

The once utilitarian bathroom fitting has come a long way. With a perfect dovetailing of design and technology, it stands testimony to the metamorphosis of a bathroom from a space for ablution to a private haven for unwinding. ■



FITTING RESPONSES

INDUSTRY EXPERTS DISCUSS THE LATEST INNOVATIONS AND SOLUTIONS IN THE BATH FIXTURES SEGMENT



1. Targa from GRAFF features smooth and slightly convex handles.

2. Gaurav Malhotra, MD, Hansgrohe India.

3. Emanuela Tavolini, director of sales - Europe, GRAFF

Are new and innovative bath fixtures only used in the luxury residential segment? Are there enough choices in terms of budget for small bathrooms and renovations of old ones?

Gaurav Malhotra: Product and technological innovations are designed to benefit the entire customer community. Though the luxury bathroom segment benefits, on priority, from new and innovative products, budget bathrooms, too, enjoy some of the value-additions. In fact, there are myriad options for small bathrooms that suit a variety of tastes, space availability, daily usage patterns and budgets. Even in tier-II and tier-III cities, customers are responsive to good bathroom designs and are ready to spend something extra towards smart and innovative bath fittings. Renovation of old bathrooms has always been a headache for users as it comes down to breaking tiles, which leads to additional costs. To ease this concern, we recommend Hansgrohe's iBox-universal, a basic set installed only once during plumbing in the wall. When users want to go in for renovation, all they need to do is replace the older range with a new one without damaging tiles in the bathroom.

Emanuela Tavolini: Innovative bathroom fixtures are also available for small bathrooms. GRAFF's product portfolio includes two new wall-mounted and reasonably-priced 'external' bath and shower elements, which can be mounted without any complex work on the wall.

KE Ranganathan: Today, the average spend is Rs.30,000 for a mid-segment bathroom. The same can run into lakhs for top-end consumers. With our strong product portfolio and different brands for the market, we are able offer a wide

PANEL OF EXPERTS

Gaurav Malhotra, managing director, Hansgrohe India

Emanuela Tavolini, director of sales - Europe, GRAFF

KE Ranganathan, managing director, Keuco Bathroom Products

Rahul Kher, country manager, Indian sub-continent, Keuco

Rajesh Mehra, director & promoter, Jaquar Group

variety of products across multiple price ranges – economical, premium or uber-luxurious segments.

In most Indian homes, especially urban apartments, bathrooms are small, typically 6'x3'. Designing such compact spaces is always challenging. Within that footprint, we need to use our faucets, basins, vanities, showers, WCs and furniture to not only make the bathroom functional – but also elegant.

Rahul Kher: Well, we have to understand that innovative bathroom products are designed for all kinds of spaces and spatial requirements. So, yes, there are enough choices available across product categories and price points to cater to different bathroom concepts as far as the customers are looking to choose a brand which delivers a certain experience. Keuco has always been at the forefront of offering products based on the different requirements. We have invested in a product offering that spans a wide spectrum of size and concepts, so that it does complete justice to the area and kind of bathroom.



4. KE Ranganathan, MD, Roca Bathroom Products.

5. Rishul Kher, country manager, Indian sub-continent, Keuco.

6. Rajesh Mehra, director & promoter, Jaquar Group.

7. The Tiara faucet from Jaquar Group's luxury brand Artize surpasses all expectations one could have from a basin mixer. The solid brass body ensures durability, while the ceramic cartridge creates a smooth, regulated water flow.

Further, the design, planning process and objective for each type is different – which also impacts the choices available within that segment.

Rajesh Mehra: Jaquar Group caters to various segments of the bath industry with different brands for residential and commercial sectors. Artize, which caters to the luxury segment, pays tribute to the fine traditions of exquisite craftsmanship and precision. Esso is targeted to the value segment, and has been supporting affordable and sustainable housing in India for over five decades. This value-for-money brand, which comprises water-heaters, faucets, sanitary ware and more, has always stood for functional bath fittings that deliver great performance at low cost.

Has your company introduced any new materials/finishes that are popular internationally?

Malhotra: Hansgrohe products are available in 15 finishes. Rose gold, polished gold and few other gold finishes are popular with some clients. However, the chrome finish still rules most market segments, as it is easy to maintain.

Tavolini: GRAFF offers an astonishing range of 11 finishes, all developed following the most advanced technical procedures. The Steelnox, for example, a satin nickel finish, is 100% fingerprint-resistant, with a nice texture and an extremely contemporary look. Also, the black and White matt finishes are quite popular among GRAFF customers. These two finishes are obtained through a powder-coating process that makes the products resistant to scratches, chipping, abrasions, corrosion, fading, and other wear issues.

Ranganathan: FINECERAMIC, a new, superior quality material used exclusively by Roca in Inspira basins makes the products 40% lighter and 30% harder as well as scratch-free, compared to the conventional products. SUPRALIT is an exclusive resin manufactured by Roca. The fine quality material makes the entire range of seat and covers more durable and noise-free. Cold Start Faucets is an innovation designed for sustainability, with water- and energy-saving capability and zero CO2 emissions. It allows you to use cold water for daily bathroom rituals with a lever in the centre. In addition to saving water, you will be saving energy, as it prevents the boiler from firing up when not needed.

Kher: Yes, Keuco has always been very serious about the material orientation, quality focus, product development and design philosophy of the brand, which also includes the kind of finishes used on fittings, accessories and bathroom furniture. Since we use different materials for different product categories, it's always easy for us to offer so many possibilities within any bath space for any consumer age and profile. With Plan, Edition 400, Edition 11, meTime_spa, IXMO and iLook_Move, we have redefined the role of material and finishes in the bathroom. Keuco offers the largest range of finishes in fittings in chrome, stainless steel and aluminium within its Plan range and different special finishes like black chrome brushed, bronze brushed and nickel brushed in Edition 400, Edition 11, IXMO fittings and accessories. Further, the new Plan furniture will have five new finishes: white gloss, cashmere gloss, anthracite gloss, truffle gloss and inox matt – in glass form of silk matt lacquer. We are the only bathroom brand in the world to work with ceramic, mineral cast, Varicor, brass, chrome, aluminium, tempered glass, looking glass, flexiglass, LED, ABS, original wood veneers, high-quality HDF, chip boards, hard wood, porcelain and stainless steel – to bring the highest standards of quality and material orientation to all our products.

Mehra: Artize Rainjoy by Jaquar Group is popular inter-



nationally. Artize Rainjoy overhead showers are the ultimate in water luxury. Combining the latest in material science and hydro-flow design, with the best aqua-pressure therapy imaginable, these larger-than-life multi-function showers envelop you with an array of soothing sensations inspired by nature. With the choice of showering modes like Rain, Intense, Waterfall and even Mist, the Rainjoy, the showering experience becomes a complete body bath that envelops the senses like a session at the spa. Also, Jaquar Group customises finishes in different colours and shapes in case of bulk orders.

Are there enough choices in bath fixtures for small bathrooms and small budgets?

Malhotra: The market is full of offerings that fulfil the needs of smaller bathrooms as compared to earlier times. Although the bathroom space is shrinking, customers want fittings that create a spacious look to make it clutter-free and more functional. Hansgrohe innovated the Select technology and came up with Select products with concealed fittings that work on push-button technology. So all it takes, is a push of a button to operate a faucet or shower, and change between different shower modes. This saves a lot of space in small bathrooms. Thanks to Select, there is no electricity concern in wet areas; it's safe for children and elders, and easy to understand.

Tavolini: GRAFF's two new Java and Incanto collections allow small bathrooms to find a solution that respects limited budgets without compromising any design or functionality requirement.

Ranganathan: In India, Roca Bathroom Products offers a vast collection of bathroom products under six brands, each of them catering to different segments of the market, with an entire array of solutions for modern-day bathrooms. We ensure best-in-class functionality and aesthetics in line with current trends in all our product ranges. There is definitely something for every consumer and for every budget.

Kher: Keuco has specific products for small bathrooms that do not compromise on any aspect connected to quality, design, functionality or ergonomics. Where small budgets are concerned, it's a relative question – as there is always a price performance issue when one goes for a cheaper product. Keuco's approach has always been long-term. We encourage our customers to invest in a product which can perform for the next 15 to 20 years and has a design language that is ageless.

Mehra: Yes, there's enough to choose for small bathrooms, which suits smaller budgets at the same time. As I mentioned earlier, Jaquar Group's Esso has enjoyed leadership status in the value segment. ■