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Bathed in glory

Louise Parkin offers some advice on how to choose the perfect bath...

You probably spend more time in the bathroom than you think, so making the most of this room will pay dividends not only for your own pleasure but for the overall smartness of your home. A well appointed bathroom definitely provides a good talking point and is an area of the house that will really stick in people's minds if you do it well.

The bath is the largest, and therefore the dominant, aspect of a bathroom suite and there are so many shapes, sizes and styles these days that almost any look is achievable.

Whether it's elegantly classic or angular cutting edge, freestanding baths are very much a trend, with skirt options (where the base sits on the floor) or those with feet (such

as claw feet on traditional styles) providing a mix of styles. These demand attention, standing out as a feature in their own right.

The prominence of built-in baths on the other hand can be played down, allowing other features such as shower cubicles and high style basins to enjoy some of the limelight. A bath's usefulness can be further enhanced by incorporating storage into the panel.

The size of the bathroom will dictate to some degree your choice of bath. Larger bathrooms will easily accommodate corner baths, as will some awkwardly shaped rooms. My bathroom, although quite small, is t-shaped, making a corner bath an obvious →



1 The Greenwich slipper bath has elegant claw feet or a skirt that sits flush to the floor, available in white, ivory or blue. Price is around £1,266. www.bcsanitan.co.uk

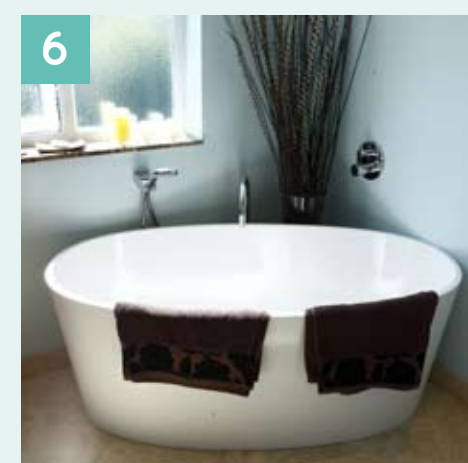
2 The Morphosis Gamma whirlpool bath features soft-coloured lights, soothing music and four rotating microjets. Price £7,800. www.jacuzzi.co.uk



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5 The Victoria and Albert Amalfi bathtub is made from Quarrycast, a mixture of rare volcanic limestone and resin. It retails from £2,499.99. www.ngidesign.co.uk



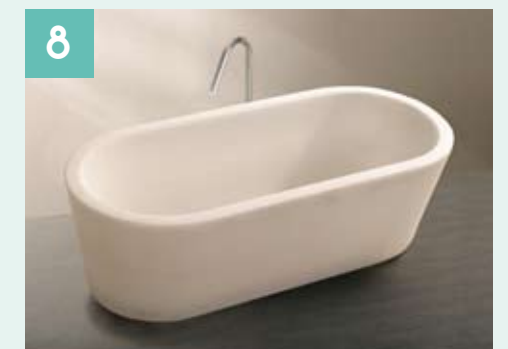
6 Victoria and Albert's los bath was installed here by kitchen and bathroom designers Kitchen Needs. Priced around £2,000. www.kitchenneeds.co.uk



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3 The Alfa Form inset bath is manufactured from a patented solid surface material called 'Scene', and comes in various sizes. Prices start at £4,600. www.aquaplussolutions.com

4 The Paradise bath has a striking textured leaf pattern, and is made from Cian, a renewable, decorative surface material. Price £4,290. www.bcdesigns.co.uk



7 Narrowing at one end, the Paiova is designed for two people in a small space. Mounted on a raised platform, it comes in left or right-handed versions. www.colourwashbathrooms.co.uk

8 Available in angel white or white carrara marble, crema marfil, or black granite, the Iona bath retails at £10,068. www.ukhomeideas.co.uk

9 Tin and copper baths use traditional double slipper styles of days gone by. Prices from £3,525 for tin and £4,112.50 for copper. www.indigenousttd.com

10 The beautifully natural looking Day bathtub is crafted from highly durable Okume plywood, available in two lengths, 190cm and 170cm. It retails at £8,100. www.arredo.co.uk





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11 Carved from a single block of Alabastrino limestone, the Ellipse bath can be made to measure and is available in a variety of stones. www.limestonegallery.com

12 My Art Emotion freestanding bath boasts an innovative chromotherapy lighting option and a frame of either glass or black composite. Price from £5,791. www.urbaninterior.co.uk

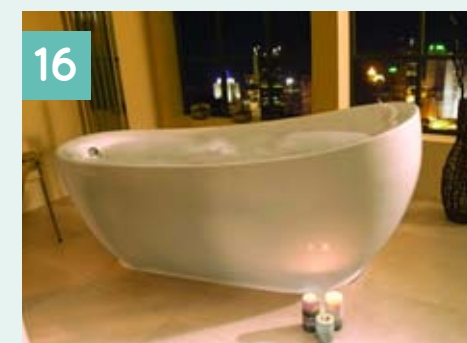
13 The Zebra bath from the Just Animals Collection. The faux skin is made from micronised leather and clad onto the bath. It costs £16,575. www.cphart.co.uk

14 The shape of the Cooke and Lewis freestanding Portia acrylic bath is inspired by the shape of smooth round pebbles. The price is £1,500. www.diy.com



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15 From the Zuchetti.Kos design team, the Faraway collection includes this simple white bath made from Cristalplant, an advanced environmentally friendly and recyclable composite material. The bath retails from £5,842. 01444 473355



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16 The curvaceous shape of the Pano freestanding double ended bath means it can support the head. Price from £995. www.frontlinebathtubs.co.uk



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17 The Madeira free-standing double ended bath is made of cast iron, with a skirted base and no taphole, priced at £3,895.

www.heritagebathtubs.com

18 The high quality Lb3 acrylic bath with oak veneer surround includes an oak veneer step and a chrome grab rail. It costs £2,697.

www.laufen.co.uk

19 Part of the Elysium collection, a crystalli 16mm glass freestanding bathtub is available with white, black, silver or new chrome profiles. From £7,260. www.websitewebsite.co.uk



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20 Keep your bathroom clutter-free with the Vernwy storage bath. It has adjustable shelves, available in a choice of wood finishes or high gloss white. www.jaxbathtubs.com

21 The Geo bath is based on the Japanese bathing tradition ofuro, a long soak to relax tired muscles. This is made of teak and costs £15,000 from Taylors Etc. www.taylorsetc.co.uk



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22 Rifra's K.One range was launched at Salon del Mobile and features angular edges but an angled back rest makes the tub more comfortable. www.rifra.it



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23 The Eliptico classic roll top cast iron bath is covered with enamel, with ornately decorated claw feet. Price on application. www.uk.roca.com

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choice and creating a pretty luxurious room into the bargain. A larger room means a larger bath – possibly big enough to accommodate two people – and for ultra opulence, two baths allow you and your significant other to bathe comfortably together. The benefit of two single baths is that if only one person wants to run a bath, only half the water is needed, whereas filling a large bath uses the same amount of water regardless of whether one or two people intend to use it.

In terms of materials, acrylic is the most common, being the cheapest, pretty lightweight and good for heat retention. But this is not the only material. Progressive manufacturers with a design-led criteria use glass, tin, steel, cast iron, copper, even stone and wood, to produce some stunning baths which can immediately inject glamour into the bathroom. The material will of course

have an influence on the cost, with styled designs commanding a higher price tag than standard versions, although high street retailers are pushing the style boundaries, now offering a wider choice of styles and materials than ever before.

Take a look at some of our favourite models, both modern and traditional, for some great ideas for all kinds of bathrooms.