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turn your bathroom into a spa

From calming scents to foot-massaging bath mats, we've got everything you need to transform the smallest room in your home into a soothing retreat.

BY WENDY SCHMID PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERICKA McCONNELL

POTTERY BARN's oversize Apothecary Jars (from \$39; potterybarn.com) are perfect for storing collected stones, sea sponges, or bamboo to give your space an earthy, Zen vibe.

Wrapping yourself in a toasty towel after a bath feels extra decadent, and the WARMRAILS Heatra Traditional towel warmer (\$95; bathroomluxuries.com) gets even thick terry cloth cozy in minutes.

Nubby cotton mats don't hold a candle to VIVATERRA's pressure point-activating stone mat (\$59; viva-terra.com), which is made from smooth river rocks like those used in hot-stone therapies.

The sleek design of LINARI's Estate Fragrance Diffuser, from the Chrome Shadow Series (\$96; lafcony.com) is as unique as the aromatic blend of lemon, bergamot, thyme, jasmine, and rose.

Reinvent those spa loofah treatments at home with THE BODY SHOP's Back Scrub & Massage Brush (\$16; thebodyshop.com).

A comfy stool is a necessity for bathroom chill time. Use this nickel-and-terry style from POTTERY BARN (\$249; potterybarn.com) for an impromptu pedicure.

The Luxe robe by PLUSH NECESSITIES (\$95; plush-necessities.com) is the spa gold standard: There's velvety microfiber on the outside and plush terry inside.

You're already busy juggling your jam-packed schedule, but with the holidays just around the corner, you're bound to feel even more frazzled. If the added stress of shopping and socializing has you dreaming of an escape to a spa, take heart: A few simple additions to your bathroom can give you that wonderfully relaxed feeling right at home. "A spa bathroom is a sanctuary, a place where you can get away and catch your breath—even when you can't *really* get away," says Los Angeles interior designer Michael Berman. In fact, home luxury plumbing and spa fixtures have become a \$340 million industry, which Berman attributes to the country's rising stress levels. "Bathrooms are now dwelling areas, as finished as living rooms," he says. But it doesn't always take renovating to create your dream haven. Try a few of the ideas here and you can put your spa budget toward something—or someone—else this year.

1 Turkish towels Most high-end spas favor heavy cotton towels because they're extra plush and more absorbent. Each item in Turkish Towels' Spa collection (\$32 for a 34" x 66" bath sheet; turkishtowels.com) is made with 700 grams of cotton per square meter.

2 a bubbling bathtub mat You love the feeling of soaking in a hot tub or whirlpool, but

you don't have the funds—or the space—to put one in your house. Toss the Conair Thermal Spa Bath Mat (\$120; conair.com) into your tub and save some cash. Its tiny bubbles ease tight muscles from your neck to your feet, and the remote control means you barely have to lift a finger to dial in a soothing soak.

3 a heated floor A toasty hardwood surface is a luxury—especially on chilly mornings—and if you're in the market to redo some old flooring, why not indulge? Contractors will lay down a fiberglass sheet woven with copper heating wire beneath your flooring surface of choice, such as stone, tile, or bamboo. Get a system with a timer so your toes get the warming treatment when you wake up. Expect to pay about \$400 to \$700 for a radiant system and control panel, plus another \$400 for installation (surface flooring is extra; warmlyyours.com).

Turkish Towels' dense cotton caresses your skin

STYLING: ANITA SALERNO/R.J. BENNETT, HAIR AND MAKEUP: STACY BENEKE/MARK EDWARDS INC. PROP STYLING: MITCH SHULTZ/FORD ARTISTS. STILL LIFE: MARK PLATT

4 comfy slippers

Getting off your feet is sure to be a challenge this season, but when you do, cuddle your tired soles with a cushioned pair of slip-ons. The Luxe slippers from **Plush Necessities** (\$25; plushnecessities.com) are made of silky-smooth, machine-washable microfiber.

These Luxe slippers beat plastic flip-flops any day



5 color therapy

"Colored light patterns trigger different responses in the body, which can affect your energy, stress level, and mood," says Lea Eigard, owner of Lea Eigard Advanced Skincare in Beverly Hills. At the new Viceroy Anguillas spa, green LED lights are being built into lounge walls to enhance guests' relaxation experience. Red, on the other hand, can energize you enough to skip coffee in the morning, says Eigard. **ThermaSol's** Serenity Light & Music System (from \$1,599; thermasol.com) comes with red, blue, and green LED lights and an FM radio for some music therapy to boot.

6 a dimmer switch

"Low-level lighting is one of the most important components of the spa experience because it immediately helps to calm people

down when they enter," says Liz Ratcliff, corporate director of spa development for the Kor Hotel Group, which oversees Viceroy Hotel spas worldwide. If your bathroom is on the bright side, changing the mood is an easy fix: Just have an electrician install a dimmer switch. Contractors and designers favor **Lutron's**, which are available in a variety of styles from push-button to sliding switches (\$12 to \$40; available at Home Depot).

7 flowers and greenery

"Flowers play up the organic element of a spa environment by immediately connecting you to nature," says Shelby Taylor of the Spa at Four Seasons Hotel, in Westlake Village, California, where blossoms on treatment beds are always a finishing touch (orchids are the flower of choice). At home, a simple approach is best, says florist Van Huynh, owner of the Conservatory in Hollywood. He suggests floating single white gardenia blossoms in shallow, square-cut

Gardenias should last three days in a bowl



glass vases (4" x 4") and setting them at each corner of the tub. Or take three stalks of large-scale bamboo (about 3 inches each in diameter), cut them at graduated heights (5, 7, and 9 inches) and stand them in a wide square vase. Top each off with a few stems of white dendrobium orchid (or another favorite flower) in water tubes.

disrupting the ecosystem). Two

more reasons to

feel good about upgrading your hangers: The copper bolts are recycled, and the base is Forest Stewardship Council-certified hardwood. (Also available in a single-stone version.)

8 a sink-side bowl

Hairpins and jewelry get a colorful, organic backdrop in **Uncommon Goods'** delicate bowls (\$50 each; uncommongoods.com). So much prettier than basic porcelain (or plastic), these are carved from semiprecious blue, red, green, or black Brazilian agate.

These agate bowls can double as soap dishes



9 towel and robe hooks

The smooth stones in **Gaiam's** Triple Stone Hanger (\$198; gaiamliving.com) were plucked from rivers and beaches in New England (the harvesters replaced them with rough stones to avoid

10 a steam head

Outfit your bathroom with steam capabilities and you may never leave! While a steam head is easiest to install during a full renovation, it is possible to add steam to an existing shower if you keep the following in mind: You'll need a plumber to lay piping and an electrician to add a power outlet for the generator. If your shower doesn't already have a steam door (a floor-to-ceiling door that seals shut) and a waterproof ceiling, you'll need to install those too. **Kohler's** thermostatic steam head makes the effort worthwhile: It disperses steam evenly and lets you add scents for aromatherapy. You can also time your

Earthy touches warm up your bathroom décor

