

A photograph of a bathroom sink set against a wall of multi-colored mosaic tiles. The sink is a light, iridescent color. A black faucet is mounted on the sink. Below the sink, a decorative fixture with many small, clear, teardrop-shaped crystals hangs down. A single light fixture with a white shade is visible in the upper right corner of the image.

By Elisa Krovbit

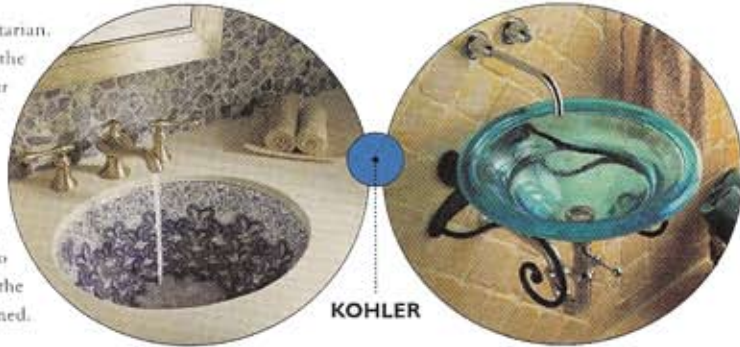
# Bathed in Beautiful Hues

**GOOD-BYE** NEUTRAL AND HELLO YELLOW! A SAFE, WHITE PALETTE HAS BECOME A SNORE. WHILE THE MUTED SOPHISTICATED OF NEUTRALS WILL NEVER BE OUT, THE DESIGN WORLD HAS GOTTEN IN TOUCH WITH ITS LESS SUBDUED SIDE FOR THE BATHROOM.

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## Power of Colour

Bathrooms have become much more than just utilitarian. They've taken on a new toll: the spa, the dressing room, the retreat — where you can watch TV while you soak your cares away in the whirlpool tub. The bathroom's become a very important part of the house and bathrooms are getting serious renovation budgets. Designers and bathroom companies are creating magnificent fixtures and finishes that are anything but traditional white. While colour trends can change quickly, it's not so easy to change major features or big-ticket items, especially in the bathroom, so following the trends needs to be well-planned.



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Yanic Simard has a lot of insight into the current and upcoming trends. He is an interior designer and principal of Toronto Interior Design Group (tidg.ca). He's one of Toronto's notably talented interior designers and has been a featured guest on CityTV. He is now in partnership with HomeSense, doing seminars, hosting events, and even writes a design-savvy monthly column.

"There are two approaches," says Yanic. If you want to use colour in your bathroom you can go in one of two ways, "really bold, or more earthy and spa-like."

"If you're going bold, there are different ways," he says. You can go neutral in the fixtures and "go bold with paint and accessories," which makes it easier and very affordable to change with the trends. Paint is, after all, an easy and impactful way to change a room. "It's the safest way to go."

If there's a look you really love, you can choose colourful fixtures. Bathtubs, toilets and basins come in a variety of colours now. Vanities and mirrors are another way to add colour and expression. Yanic suggests finding a great frame and having a mirror set into it, giving it a more furniture-like feel. "Vanities are hot. Boring vanities are not so popular," he says, noting that Kohler and Waterworks both have amazing collections. "Pick a piece of furniture," he suggests, and have it retrofitted to accommodate the plumbing. "Add some punch with a different toilet seat." You should treat the bathroom like a real room and consider completing your look with artwork and a rug.

"Mosaic tile on the floor or wall with different patterns, images and colours," he says, creates an amazing effect. "Blue glass tile is really hot right now. Blue with green undertones" he says, are perfect for the spa, it has an ocean-like quality." For 2007, "one of the hottest [colours] was rubina — from red, like raspberry. It is really dramatic," he says, recommending pairing it with something grand, like a ball-and-claw tub — the sides of which could also be painted to match, with the white interior and white bathroom details in stark contrast.



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WATERWORKS

"For the earthy spa" says Yanic, you'd want "slate, natural materials, earth tones." The idea of this direction is to create an experience, so using performance fixtures like Kohler's water jets and adding a glass shower enclosure would be the way to finish this look, he suggests.

## Power of Colour

One great place to bring in some interest in is the basins. "I love Patricia Urquiola for her art lines." From Milan, she was featured at the Interior Design Show. Like the glass countertop vessels that have enjoyed great popularity for their uniqueness, there are also undermount basins and stand-alone pedestal sinks that offer unique stylings, colours and textures that can add flair to a bathroom. Using these pieces as a focal point, which could really be considered functional pieces of art, he says, "is a way to use your bathroom to express yourself."

While the ensuite and the full, large bathrooms may be a greater expense, and you may want to play safe with colour – especially in the fixtures – the powder room, Yanic says, is a great place to have some fun with colour. It's closed off from your home most of the time and it's a great spot to "impress your guests if you're not willing to do it on a big scale."

### Yanic's colour recommendations

For function – from putting on makeup and shaving, to taking a last look before you leave, there are some colours that work better on the bathroom walls, and others you'll want to stay away from:

**Pink:** A very flattering colour for people with fair skin tones. If you don't want to do the ultra-feminine bathroom you can go pink in accessories like the shower curtains and towels.

**Brown:** Brown is the new black. When you're looking for wood or a dark colour try brown.

**Green:** Avoid this one, it makes you look older.

**Blue/green/aqua tones:** Resonating the feel of the ocean, this 'aqua' colour is very popular and quite serene.

**Yellow:** It's a big no-no as, it distorts skin tones.

**Red:** Use it sparingly. If you do your makeup in a red bathroom it casts a colour and may give you the appearance of a fire hydrant.

**Cream, beige and taupe:** Fits into any design scheme and always looks good.

### Yanic's trend recommendations

**Style:** The retro look is really in – Hollywood glamour, with inspiration from the French '50s and furniture that emanates Louis XVI, the very clean look of Art Deco.

**For the spa:** The look is more minimalist and simple.

**Faucets:** Like little jewels – colour, polish and shine. Shiny copper is hot and gold is on its way back in.



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## Power of Colour

**More:** The bathroom isn't just 'tub, toilet and sink.' Bring in furniture, linen, lighting and even LCD TVs. You can spend more time in the bathroom if you create more interest.

### Yanic's advice on colour selection

Regardless of the trends, "colour is a reflection of your lifestyle. Choose a colour that speaks to your personality. At home, you want it

to be about who you are." When working with colour selection, Yanic likes to ask his clients: "How do you want to feel in your bathroom? Revved up or relaxed? Stately, normal, cozy or casual?"

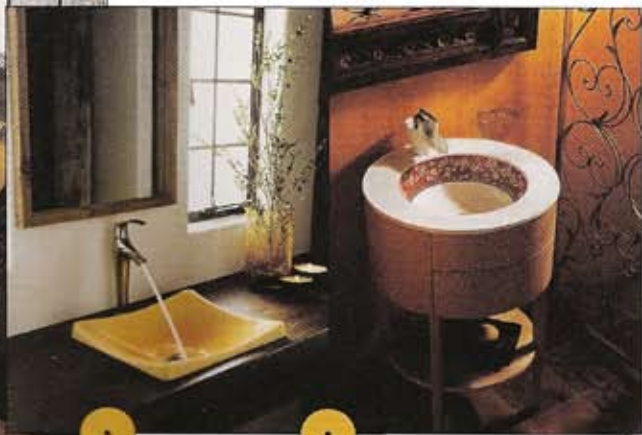
There are several tricks to choosing the right colours to live in. Choosing two colours that are neighbours on the colour wheel, called analogous colours, explains Yanic, will give you a serene palette. "Complimentary colours pop." Low-contrast colours create a casual feel.

For combining colours, Yanic finds the ideal balance is 60/30/10 – "you can't go wrong with that recipe." The main colour covers 60 per cent of the room, usually the wall colour. The next is 30 per cent, which could be the fixtures or flooring. Use the final 10 per cent for accessories.

"When shopping for a new bathroom, shop for big-commitment items first, and make sure you're really comfortable with them," says Yanic. And don't be afraid to go with what you like, you don't have to adhere to conventions. Have fun with the accessories, throw in an antique piece, use a strong element for a focal point, use beautiful décor items to accessorize, even pieces you wouldn't normally find in the bathroom. When selecting a colour, he always recommends choosing one that is duller and darker than you want – it always looks lighter and brighter on the walls.

One consideration, says Yanic, is resale. If you're living in your home for a short time, go with neutrals. A potential buyer may see changing your dramatic bathroom as a big expense on top of the purchase price, and may not want to live with your favourite colours. But, he says, if you're planning on staying for a long time, "you should have exactly what you want and enjoy living there." **HD**

### WATERWORKS



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