

FOCUS

Power to the powder

As a little room with a big mission, the powder room is the busiest room in the house when guests drop by. Go bold or go home, writes Kirsten Craze

It may be the smallest space in the house, but the powder room is one place you can let your design desires run loose.

Once just a place for guests to spend a penny, today's powder rooms are becoming spaces where you can stretch your creative muscles with bold wallpaper, daring tile choices and chic hardware options.

Bill Hawie, NSW state sales manager for Eden Brae Homes, says powder rooms have gone from being an afterthought to a crucial part of the floorplan.

"A powder room can really increase the value of a home for resale purposes, particularly if you enhance it to include a shower, or create ease of access for a downstairs bedroom," says Bill. "It can also whet the appetite of guests, giving them a taste of the quality of the whole house."

As a room designed mainly for guests, Daniela Santilli of Reece Bathrooms says a powder room is

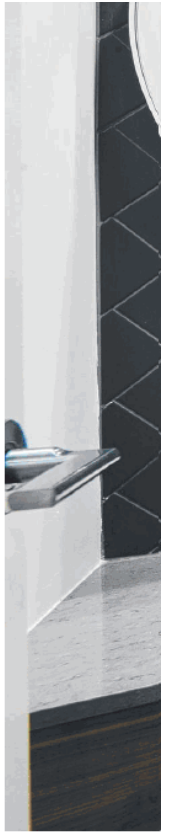
an opportunity for a homeowner to put their "best foot forward".

"We're seeing many people use the room to take design risks and show off the home's style," Daniela says. "We're also seeing more products being specifically designed to be installed in those smaller spaces."

Christie Wood, strategic designer with Beaumont Tiles, says a great powder room is sometimes a balancing act between flair and function.

"Many people consider the powder room as a space they can have fun with," Christie says. "But while it is definitely an opportunity to do something different, it still needs to relate its core foundations back to the rest of the house."

"Just be careful how you balance all the elements together in a powder room, so your eye doesn't dart everywhere and get overwhelmed in a small room that often doesn't have any windows."



floorplan flexibility

Bill from Eden Brae Homes says powder rooms are a "must have" for two-storey homes. "Recently there have been a lot of add-ons to the powder room," he says. "They can be transformed into another ensuite downstairs by working the plans subtly and incorporating a shower. With a couple of access doors, a powder room can have multiple uses, which is ideal for multi-generational living. "By planning your powder room to have two-way access, you could have the WC, the vanity as a separate area, and then possibly a shower that's separate again. They are there for your guests, but they're also convenient for the whole family."

More: edenbraehomes.com.au
Picture: minosadesign.com.au



talking tiles

Christie from Beaumont Tiles says it is a good idea to look for elements that create a dynamic and balanced impact in the space, rather than having multiple competing features. "Otherwise it will clash and defeat the purpose of going bigger and bolder," she says. "For the walls you could go for a texture, pattern or a colour as a focal statement." Christie says a classic subway tile is a good place to start. "They can be laid in all sorts of patterns like herringbone, basket weave, brick bond, straight stacked or vertically stacked. Use contrasting grout to bring out that pattern," she says.

Picture: beaumont-tiles.com.au



bright ideas

Natural light is rare in most powder rooms, so being savvy with lighting choices is an essential ingredient. "Light the space with reference to the size, the colour, the feeling that you are trying to evoke," says Danielle Mastro, lighting designer and director of Lights, Lights, Lights. "Drama requires light that creates texture and dimension, function requires light that creates intensity and diffuses shadows." Highlight feature tiles or stone surfaces and you can't go wrong, she says.

More: lightslightslights.com.au Picture: minosadesign.com



SMALL WONDER
 "This pocket of space is all about creating an experience not only for you, but for guests, too. So don't be boring," says Chloe Evans, textile designer for Materialised. "Get away from cold and clinical and have fun experimenting with colour and pattern through statement wallpaper."



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"Elevate your powder room to a guest-worthy space by accessorising with small touches," says Daniela from Reece. "In a powder room, there are decisions you can make in the design process to increase the illusion of space. For example, wall-hung vanity units provide storage and toilet pans with concealed cisterns give the illusion of extra floor space. Because powder rooms are high-traffic areas, Daniela says it makes sense to choose high-quality products that will last the test of time.
 More: reece.com.au
 Picture: Interior design by decus.com.au; fittings by candana.com.au



Wallpaper from Materialised makes for a showstopper powder room.