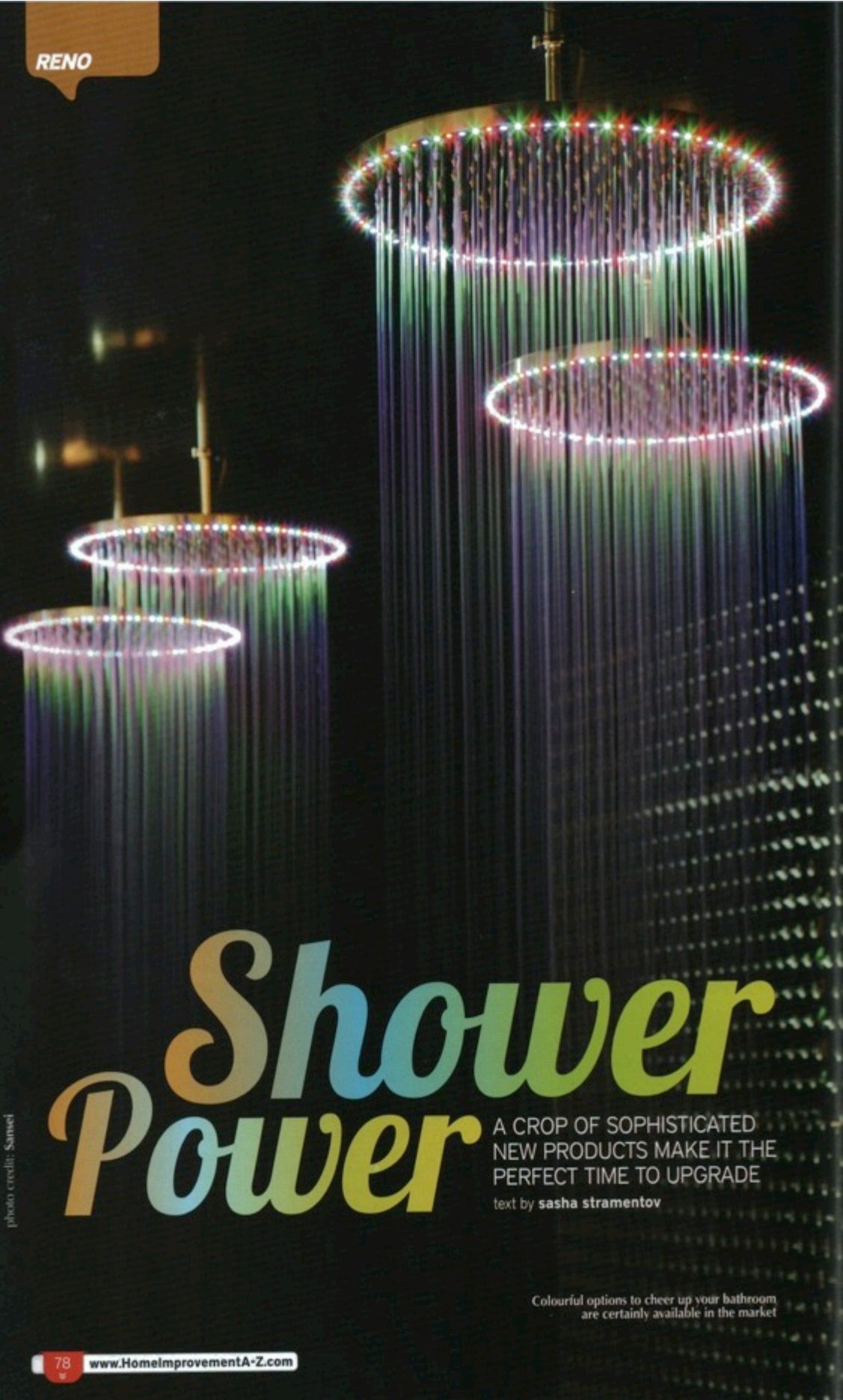


Headline: Shower Power
Publication: Home Improvement
Date: October 2012

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Shower Power

A CROP OF SOPHISTICATED NEW PRODUCTS MAKE IT THE PERFECT TIME TO UPGRADE

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Colourful options to cheer up your bathroom are certainly available in the market

photo credit: Samsel

photo credit: Hansgrohe



Minimalist shower towers are rated for their sleek good looks

Recent collaborative leaps in bathroom technology, engineering and design mean an end to enduring a tepid drizzle in a lime-scaled shower stall. Today's va va voom showers score high for both form and function, redefining washing as a sensory experience. The only tricky bit is working out what you want from all the choices on offer.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

No one needs splashed water all over the floor, so first choose how you're going to enclose your shower. Although the classic option is a framed shower, you could alternatively go for a frameless enclosure for a smoother and more modern finish. If you've got enough space a walk-in shower where you can dispense with a door altogether imbues a luxurious feel.

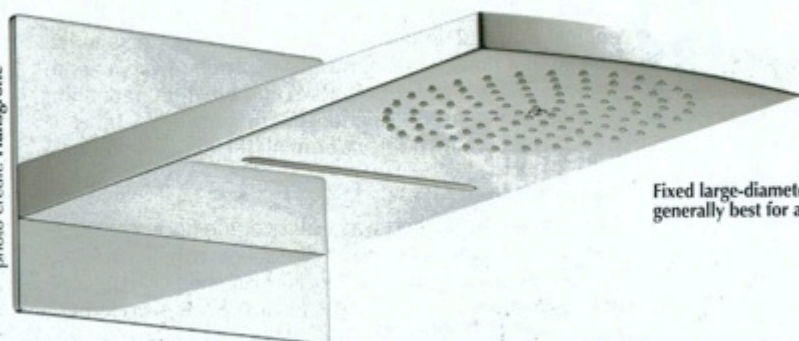
Next choose what you're going to put underfoot. Options include wet floor panels through which your bath water is drained, and shower trays which are available in all sorts of shapes to fit a variety of bathrooms. The key thing with shower trays is that they must be anti-slip. There are also options on what they're made from: Textured acrylic is popular and reasonably priced while stone resin makes a more modern statement. A chic but expensive option is volcanic slate; where it falls down on price it will return on longevity.

photo credit: Interior Affairs



In rain showers, air is sprayed with the water resulting in a soft, gentle experience for the skin

photo credit: Hansgrohe



Fixed large-diameter single spray head showers are generally best for a rain-style shower

Once you're in the shower choose your shower set. There are two types: Exposed, which is the cheaper option, and concealed, where only the mixer is on show. Concealed mixers are all about a smooth and sleek appearance for top design status. Do away with unsightly screws that rust in place of a 'screwless' mixer for a display of shine and texture.

Now you need a showerhead. It's important to get the right showerhead for the pressure you desire. Choose between a head shower and a handheld shower, or go for both, in which case you'll need to opt for a tower system.

HEAD SHOWERS

This is where recent technological developments come into play. Advanced engines ensure an equal flow of water distribution through each single nozzle in the showerhead. Choose between mounting it to the wall and fitting it flush to the ceiling, then look at the specifics of showerheads which vary from the traditional rose to square and rectangular shapes for a modern look.

Look out for 'rain showers', the current buzzword in showers where air is sprayed with the water resulting in a soft, gentle experience for the skin. Fixed large-diameter single spray head showers are generally best for a rain-style shower. Some rain showers have jets with a more focused spray, designed to help relax tense muscles. Several brands available in Singapore offer an 'eco' option to help you save water.

HAND SHOWERS

The new ones on the market are fun and funky and work more efficiently than their older cousins. They often offer more than one spray option that's

easy to switch from. If you opt for one made out of easy-to-clean silicone it won't slip out of your hand; many come with anti-limescale nibs.

SHOWER TOWERS

If you can't decide between a head or handheld shower mix and match your experience with a shower tower. It incorporates both fixed head and handheld showers for a total body experience. Look out for extra design features such as body jets or steam valves.

Super flat and slim, minimalist shower towers are rated for their sleek good looks. The only things to remember are that you can only use one option at any time and that shower towers need fairly high pressure to perform well.

SHOWER SHOW STOPPER

With the practicalities explored, here's the last word in cutting-edge design guaranteed to cheer up the drabest bathroom. Some ultra-thin showerheads have been ringed with a series of LED elements around the rim, powered by an electronic control, to reproduce the full spectrum of chromotherapeutic colours. It's mind and body rejuvenation of the disco order! *hi*



photo credit: Interior Affairs

Most hand-held showers today offer more than one spray option - this one from Grohe offers four



photo credit: Bathworld

Concealed showers are slightly more expensive, but give a smooth and sleek appearance