

Published September 20th, 2017

## Feng Shui

By Michele Duffy



A marble vanity in this bathroom underscores the earth element. Photo Michele Duffy  
"draining" chi in the bath.

Summer bathrooms have earned a poor reputation in feng shui circles - they leak positive energy and accumulate lower vibrations - but there are practical ways to mindfully balance the draining chi or energy most often associated with our bathrooms and mitigate much of these challenges through a bit of elbow grease and modern design.

The ancient Chinese never built bathrooms inside their homes because they were impossible to keep clean, and with all of the draining energy associated with the physical drains in a bathroom, including the toilet, sink, shower and bath, bathroom placement inside a home was considered "bad" feng shui. But by utilizing the many modern designs of the 21st century, including state-of-the-art plumbing, lighting, ventilation, fragrance and colors, we can create a spa-like atmosphere that can shift how we spend time in our bathrooms, allowing for our most intimate personal care moments to be supported and nourished in luxurious surroundings.

While bathrooms may still represent draining energy, the energetic challenges of any bathroom can be easily overcome. Bathrooms are closely associated with the water element, so incorporating the wood element in this space is a great way to enhance the water element. Live plants and flowers symbolize the wood element and continual, upward growth, countering much of the

It is also important to note where the bathrooms are located in your home per the Feng Shui Bagua (see diagram on page D12). Are your bathrooms in the far left "wealth" area, ruled by the wood element? Or in the far right "relationships" area, ruled by the earth element?

Weakened, draining energy in any area can be problematic, but if the bathroom is located in the wealth area, it can be destabilizing, or conversely, can create rocky relationships. A bathroom placed in the center of the home is one of the most challenging locations since this is the "health" area, so if health is compromised or weakened, it affects all the other eight areas of the Feng Shui Bagua.

But even if the bathroom is located in the center or "health" area, it does not have to mean a sentence of ill or declining health for residents. For example, one of my clients in Lafayette with compromised health had a guest bathroom in the center of her home. We remodeled to freshen the bath space, painted the walls a bright tomato red (fire creates earth), installed a crystal chandelier (earth), marble vanity (earth), a vibrant orchid (live upward growth, wood element), a Doterra essential oil diffuser, and the bathroom is kept spotlessly clean.

It is now a bright, cheery, uplifting and stylish bathroom space. My client also embraced yoga and mindfulness practices with ease and grace, and her health continues to improve each day.

Remember, each home is unique and the family that lives there is, too, so while general tips abound, there is no substitute for receiving specific and personalized feng shui advice for the difficult chi of bathroom area placement within your home.

Here are a few tips for creating spa-like, intimate, nourishing and supportive bathroom feng shui:

- 1) Keep your bathroom beautiful, spotlessly clean and clutter free.
- 2) Hold the intention that your bath is a sacred place to purify mind, body and spirit.
- 3) Choose a color that will activate the element that rules the area of the Bagua or watery blues or woody agave greens.
- 4) Keep the toilet seat down, the bathroom door closed, and drains closed when not in use.
- 5) Bathrooms need ventilation, open windows or get a small fan.

- 6) Place live plants to purify air and bring in vital continual upward growth energy (a silk plant will do).
- 7) Upgrade your bathroom lighting and also include candles and sconces and low lights for lingering in the bathtub.
- 8) Invest in lavender essential oils, bath salts, Epsom salts and get grounded with a rejuvenating soak in the tub.
- 9) Dress up your bathroom windows with easy care and privacy wielding plantation shutters or blinds.
- 10) Place images that represent purification and relaxation like the ocean, rivers, flowers, nature and trees.

For more complicated issues like seeing a bathroom upon entry to the home, or above the entryway, or bathrooms off master bedrooms, it is important to apply all of the above tips or consider consulting with a professional feng shui expert for more specific ideas on how to address the challenges that all bathrooms present.

Taking a look at your bathrooms and making even a few of these small enhancements can help transform in big ways, and remember to slow down and enjoy your bath like a five-star resort.



Adding a crystal chandelier to a bathroom space enhances the earth element, which can bring balance to a location associated with the water element.

<b>WEALTH &amp; PROSPERITY</b> XUN Wood Southeast Purple	<b>FAME &amp; REPUTATION</b> Li Fire South Red Summer	<b>RELATIONSHIPS</b> Kun Earth Southwest Pink
<b>FAMILY</b> ZHEN Wood East Green Spring	<b>HEALTH</b> TAI JI Earth Center Orange, Yellow Brown	<b>JOY &amp; COMPLETION</b> DUI Metal West White Autumn
<b>KNOWLEDGE &amp; SELF-CULTIVATION</b> GEN Earth Northeast Blue	<b>CAREER &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b> KAN Water North Black & Dark Blue Winter	<b>HELPFUL PEOPLE &amp; TRAVEL</b> QIAN Metal Northeast Grey

The Bagua Map: Front Door

## Mandala Feng Shui



SPACE AS MEDICINE



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