

FOCUS ON WELLNESS

A renowned designer's dedication to wellness and sustainability begins in her own New York home.

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Even vignettes can contribute to wellness, such as this grouping of fragrant peonies with natural crystals that designer Laurence Carr says help cleanse energy.

Design should be human centered, says Laurence Carr, who put her philosophy into practice when designing the luxurious kitchen and bath in her Upstate New York home. Laurence blended ancient techniques such as feng shui and I Ching with modern technology to create spaces that are calm, contemporary, and devoid of fuss. "I design for the five senses," she says. "A beautiful room pleases the eye. But that same room with dimmable lights, soothing music, and smart technology revitalizes body and soul."



LEFT: The steam shower enclosure includes a decorative storage niche and shower bench. **RIGHT:** This soothing sanctuary indulges the senses with its sculptural deep-soak tub, electric fireplace, and heated towel bars and floors. **BELOW:** The color white reappears in the mirror frame, vanity, and large-format marble tile, evoking a sense of being clean, bright, and fresh. Motorized shades, spa-like flexible lighting solutions, RGB LED fixtures, and water-efficient faucets further enhance the space.



“
WELL-INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY ... MAKES LIFE BOTH HAPPIER AND EASIER.
 ”

—LAURENCE CARR, DESIGNER

meet the designer

PHOTO: Kelly Marshall



Laurence Carr is CEO of her award-winning eponymous New York City-based design studio, Laurence Carr, Inc., which specializes in wellness and regenerative interior and lifestyle design for high-end residential and hospitality environments. She is also the executive producer and host of an EarthXTV original series, *Chez Laurence*, an ambassador for the Sustainable Furnishings Council, and an outspoken advocate for advancing circularity in design.



Q **WHAT WERE YOUR PRIMARY GOALS DESIGNING THIS KITCHEN AND BATH?**

I focused on selecting healthy materials that support sustainability, circularity, and wellness. In the kitchen, I envisioned a space that's welcoming and bright with natural elements, designed for optimized flow and with smart-tech elements that enhance convenience and energy efficiency. In the bath, I wanted a serene sanctuary where one can enjoy self-care, which is crucial to wellness.

Q **WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE FOR BRINGING A SENSE OF WELL-BEING INTO THE KITCHEN AND BATH?**

Mindfully selected elements like healthy materials, smart tech, biophilia [connecting to nature], color psychology, natural light, use of crystals, aromatherapy, cryotherapy, and enhancements like heated floors all make contributions to one's sense of well-being and happiness, no matter what room you're designing.

Q **WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS FOR THE KITCHEN AND BATH?**

Wood certified by the FSC [Forest Stewardship Council] will always be one of my favorite textures for cabinetry, furniture, and even countertops. Right now, I'm also very inspired by materials coming from research in biotechnology, such as MOGU tile, a highly regenerative option made from mushroom proteins that sacrifices no style at all. I also love Durat, a unique solid-surface material that is 100-percent recyclable. For textiles, I rely on companies like Lenzing Tencel and Libeco Belgian Linen that create luxurious fabrics while championing circular practices.

THIS PHOTO: Reclaimed white oak floors and pine wood cabinetry speak to sustainability, while a minimalist style calms all who enter, Carr says.



Q WHAT ARE SOME IMPORTANT BUT OFTEN OVERLOOKED ELEMENTS OF A WELL-DESIGNED KITCHEN OR BATH?

People often forget to include elements that enhance hygiene and safety, such as easy-to-clean countertops, hands-free faucets, and smart toilets. It's also important to have plenty of fresh food storage and multiple spaces to create different stations within the same room, from large countertop surfaces on which to chop fresh food to a corner desk.

Q WHAT ARE YOUR MUST-HAVES IN ANY ROOM DESIGN?

Flowers, plants, and art are essential. For me, it's also crucial to have a creative mix of textures and tones—blending metals, woods, stone, wools, linens, cottons, and silks to add more tactile and visual interest that creates a welcoming feeling of warmth.



TIPS FOR A WELLNESS-CENTERED KITCHEN AND BATH

Designer Laurence Carr shares how to promote wellness with sensory experiences.

• **Tap into nature's healing power.** Bring the outdoors in through large windows, natural materials, nature-inspired patterns, and plants that help refine the air.

• **Keep the flow.** Consider how people might be circulating to smartly place main stations in a way that enhances convenience and avoids traffic jams. "The way energy does or doesn't move through a room has more effect on your well-being than you realize," Carr says.

• **Get smart with technology.** Well-integrated technology is more aesthetically oriented than before and makes life both happier and easier. Smart lighting, for instance, saves energy and allows for total customization—warmth, brightness, color, and even scheduling.

• **Understand color psychology.** Colors play a large role in your emotional response. It's worth the time to do a little research to select the right shade for the mood you wish to evoke.



TOP RIGHT: Carr outfitted the kitchen with water-efficient, hands-free faucets. Generous cabinet storage ensures that unused items are neatly tucked away, reducing visual clutter. ABOVE: When people are excited to use appliances like this Wolf range with built-in smart technology, it creates a sense of luxury that boosts well-being, Carr says.

Resources begin on page 100.