

CONCRETE BATHROOM PRODUCTS



SINKS, VANITIES, SURROUNDS

Provided by:
The Concrete Network





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“What concrete does is dimensional. It does things other materials can’t do ... If treated sensitively, it is gorgeous.”

– Dan Roman, Dan Roman Studio

“People are becoming more and more aware of decorative concrete. In the beginning it was very different. People just couldn’t wrap their heads around this idea of concrete indoors.”

– Wanda Ellerbeck, Grotto Designs

REMODELING YOUR BATHROOM

A GOOD CLEAN INVESTMENT

Americans are remodeling like never before, spending \$119 billion in the first quarter of 2003, according to the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University.

Remodeling provides multiple benefits. It increases the value of your home, it stimulates the economy, and, most importantly, provides you and your family with years of enjoyment and comfort.

One of the rooms that we most frequently remodel is the bathroom. In fact, after the kitchen, the bathroom remodel project is the most popular when looking at dollars spent. In a recent given year, homeowners undertook about 5 million bathroom projects.

Many are transforming their bathrooms, the master bathroom in particular, into private sanctuaries a private retreat in which to relax at the end of the day. Achieving that often entails soothing whirlpool tubs, multi-jetted showers, and sinks and vanities made in various forms, textures, and colors to complement the tranquil atmosphere of the bathroom.

Most of the money that you spend for your remodeling project will be recovered when the time comes to sell.

Remodeling Magazine, in its 2002 Cost vs. Value Survey, says the price of turning a worn out bathroom into a new space that is, a mid-range bathroom is \$9,720. That would recoup \$8,506, or 88 percent. Exact percentages vary by region.

The "room of your dreams" a bathroom with all the trimmings runs about \$22,639. But the good news is that the average American will recoup 91 percent.

“Families that spend more on home improvements also realize the greatest rates of price appreciation.”

– From the study, Measuring the Benefits of Home Remodeling, The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University



CONCRETE IN THE BATHROOM

VERSATILITY AND DISTINCTION

Concrete is quickly emerging as an exciting new option in upscale bathroom remodels. Concrete sinks, concrete vanities, and concrete tub and shower surrounds are gracing bathrooms in homes across the country.

Many are choosing concrete for a variety of reasons, including:



- **Versatility.** Concrete can be molded into sinks, tubs, and vanities that have soft, graceful curves and warm, soothing color tones. For a look that's bold and contemporary, fabricators can cast concrete into interesting geometric shapes and color it an array of bright, vivid hues. Sinks can be freestanding or cast integrally with a vanity or countertop. Showers and tubs can be lined with custom concrete tiles and furnished with cozy concrete benches. What's more, concrete is an ideal material for bathroom remodeling because it can be cast to accommodate existing plumbing configurations and space restrictions.
- **A Distinct Look.** Concrete's creative possibilities are endless. Each concrete artisan approaches his or her craft personally, achieving a distinct look by building their own forms, developing special casting techniques, and using proprietary materials and coloring methods.
- **A Natural Look.** Many homeowners opt for concrete because the look is more natural. For some people, concrete has more tactile appeal than granite, marble, or ceramic tile.
- **Superior Craftsmanship.** Most concrete artisans are passionate about their work and take great pains to achieve superior results.



“Concrete is one of the oldest, strongest and most durable materials that humans have ever made. Because it is mixed and poured, its variations and design potentials are almost infinite ... Applications are limited only by the imagination.”

– Wanda Ellerbeck, Grotto Designs, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

BRING COLOR TO YOUR BATHROOM

WITH CONCRETE, CHOOSE YOUR OWN HUE

One of the benefits of choosing concrete in the bathroom is the range of colors available.

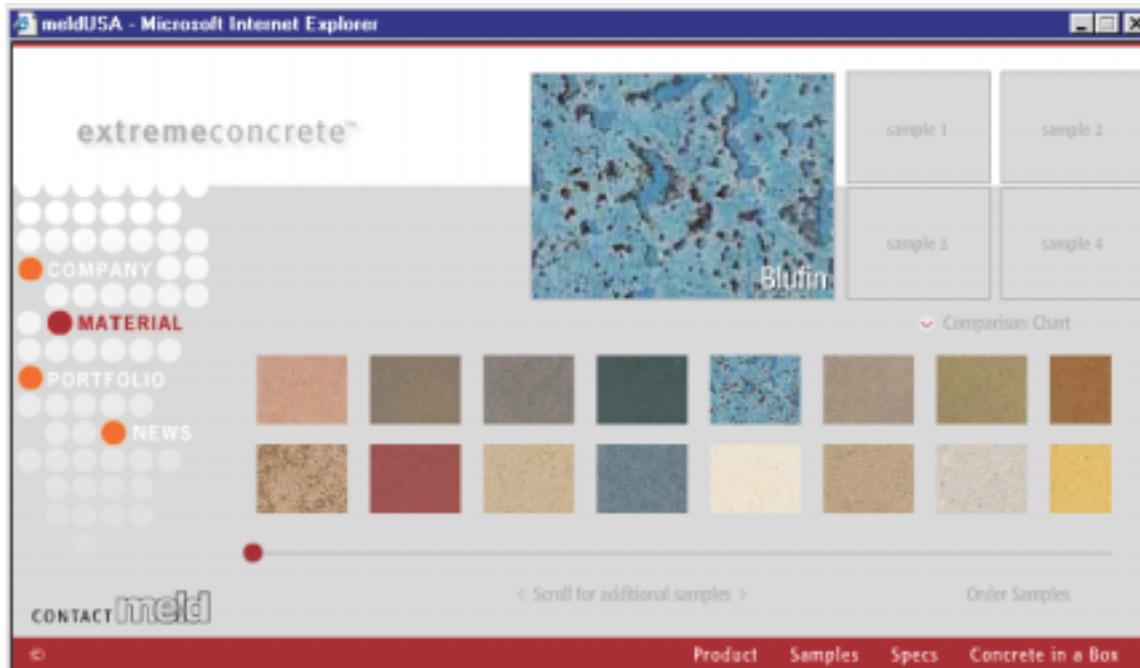
Each concrete contractor offers his or her own unique standard and premium colors. And many will create custom colors to help you match or complement other materials in the bathroom.

Samples will always be different because each contractor has their own secret recipe and different types and amounts of cement and aggregates. In fact, cement will vary in different parts of the country. There are different brands of pigments, stains, and aggregate colors, so concrete sinks, vanities, and surrounds will always be one-of-a-kind.

The standard colors below are offered by meldUSA.

“There's a prevalent misconception about concrete ... People say, 'Wow, I didn't know concrete could look like that. I thought it would look like sidewalk.’”

– Gerry Santora, Soupcan Inc., Chicago, Illinois



CONCRETE SINKS: STYLE AND FUNCTION

Many homeowners and designers are finding that concrete sinks are a perfect fit for achieving a distinctive-looking bathroom. Because concrete can be poured to shape any form, concrete fits the bill for any type of sink imaginable above-the-counter vessel sinks, pedestal sinks, bowl sinks. Even wave sinks, trough sinks, and traditional-style counter sinks.

Whether it's square, rectangular, oval, or round, integral, concrete can be shaped to blend into any bathroom décor and style.

More and more architectural concrete companies are offering their own sink lines. One example is Minnesota-based Hollow Rock Designs, which recently introduced The Pompeii Collection, which features a three-legged sink with marble white legs and a rust-stained bowl; a rectangular, buff-colored with rust acid-stained bowl; a large, rectangular terra cotta bowl; an oval terra cotta bowl with an inner ridge; and two styles of white cement vessels.

Grotto Designs in Albert, Canada, offers many standard models, ranging from vessel basins of many shapes to pedestals or cast integral basins. Concrete sinks, vanities and pedestals, marked by the elegance of deep colors and strong, clean lines, add drama, style and grace to any bathroom or powder room.

“Sink design remains an untapped universe of potential.”

– Wanda Ellerbeck, Grotto Designs

PEDESTAL SINKS

One of the most popular sink styles, especially in the powder room, is the pedestal sink.

A pedestal sink can easily be the centerpiece of the bathroom and can have an eclectic look that elicit “wows” from anyone who sees it. Pedestal sinks can also be designed to have a more traditional, period look. Concrete is the one material that allows you to turn your vision, however original or unique, into a reality.



“People want to have something they can show off, not something that mimics what their friends or neighbors have.”

– Terry Stogner, Concrete Interiors, Alamo, Calif.

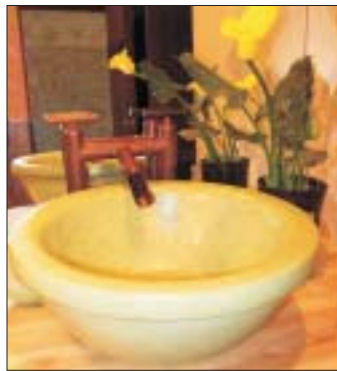
VESSEL SINKS

A vessel sink, a contemporary take on the farmhouse pitcher in a bowl, is one of the hottest looks, especially in upscale homes.

"I knew the sinks were really something I wanted to do. I knew vessel sinks would become popular."

– Karen Smith, Countercast Designs

Sonoma Cast Stone offers a line of vessel sinks that are inspired by old English washbasins. Available in eight colors, their vessel sinks are perfectly round and may be inset into a counter at any height positioned above, below or flush with the counter surface.



THE WAVE SINK

The wave sink features a concrete-formed wave between two or more faucets and is designed to lead all the water back to a pair of slot drains. The sink and counter essentially become one. By popular vote, Sonoma Cast Stone's WaveSink was awarded Best New Product at the National Kitchen and Bath Industry Show 2000. The wave can be cast with a front apron and wall-mounted for a floating effect, or mounted on a standard height cabinet. Faucet holes are drilled to your specifications. Adapts to standard rough-in plumbing.



THE RAMP COUNTER SINK

This unique sink's basin is shaped like a ramp water flows down the ramp and disappears down the drain, sloped to either the end or the back of the sink.

The geometric lines of the RampSink make it a natural selection for a modern building or home.



COUNTER SINKS

Sonoma Cast Stone offers the integral bowl, available as round, oval or rectangular in shape the surrounding counter surface is cast to your specific dimensions. CounterSinks can be made to fit on a conventional cabinet or "float" between walls. Faucet holes are pre-drilled per your specifications.



Two bowls may be grouped together in a master bath, while multiple groups are a popular choice for commercial washrooms

TROUGH SINKS

These one-piece countersinks are designed to accommodate two to four faucets and are custom cast in your choice of colors. Many can fit on a conventional cabinet, or designed to "float" when supported by brackets on three walls.



OTHER ARTISTIC DESIGNS



Many decorative concrete contractors offer their own individual artistic style of sink designs.

“People who favor concrete are typically tired of what they have. They want something they can play with and design. Concrete isn't this or that it can be so many things.”

– Patricia Bigelow, Hollow Rock Designs

CONCRETE VANITIES

A NATURAL CHOICE

Concrete is a natural choice for the bathroom vanity. Concrete is an ideal material for bathroom remodeling because it can be cast to accommodate existing plumbing configurations and space restrictions.

Soupcan Inc., based in Chicago, Ill., offers integral-bowl vanity sinks in three standard models (all 31 inches wide by 22 inches deep), each featuring a different bowl style. All models can be customized to meet user specifications and are available in 12 standard colors as well as custom hues.

"Concrete is the only material that allows you to customize just about every aspect of it, including color, shape, thickness, and texture."

– Jeff Girard, FormWorks, Raleigh, North Carolina

Many companies, like Hollow Rock Design, use high-performance, high-strength proprietary mixes for making all their concrete bathroom products. This yields products with high compressive strength, high abrasions resistance and low porosity.

Hollow Rock Designs uses a waterborne concrete sealing system that is environmentally safe and can be used in any residential or commercial application. They apply a wax designed for care of stone products to render the surface impermeable with a natural looking finish. This is not computerized color matching. Tonal variations and veining will occur and even within the same pour, there will be some differences depending on thickness, vertical versus horizontal surfaces etc. This mimicry of nature is considered part of concrete's attraction.



SURROUND YOURSELF IN CONCRETE

TUB AND SHOWER SURROUNDS

If you feel limited by tile, marble, or granite, concrete is a great choice for tub and shower surrounds. Because concrete can be poured to fill any form, any shape of surround can be created. So if you're dreaming about a round shower, surround, it can be done with concrete. Whether you're seeking angular lines or soft curves, concrete fits the bill. Whether you're aiming for a smooth, seamless look, or a blocked-tile look, you can get it with concrete.



And, again, color possibilities are endless. You can choose from a range of colors to complement your fixtures, faucets, walls, and rugs.

Mat Rogers of Flying Turtle Cast Concrete in Modesto, Calif., says one of the benefits of using concrete for bathroom pieces is the versatility and the potential for seamless surfaces. Rogers has created a giant cast corner piece that appears to be a huge block, but it's really a corner made to look like a block.



“You really have to see it to appreciate it. Concrete is universal and has general appeal. It has so many uses in the home. It's going to find its way in construction.”

– Mat Rogers, Flying Turtle Cast Concrete

One of Formwork's Jeff Girard's favorite projects is a Japanese soaking tub and square matching sinks. Girard enjoyed the subtle relationships involved the mundane tub and the smooth, clear surface of glass, the wood floors underneath the concrete, the deep square sinks with invisible mounting hardware.



THE POWDER ROOM

FRESHEN IT UP WITH CONCRETE

If you're still unsure of whether to take the concrete splash in the bathroom, many designers and architectural concrete contractors recommend trying it out in the powder room.

Because you're working with a small space and it's not a room that you spend a lot of time in, it's a good "test" room. And if you plan to sell your house in the near future, you may have fears about a radical remodel.

But the powder room is considered safe it won't be a deal-breaker like a kitchen or master bathroom. And it's probable that your fears will be unfounded and it will end up being a strong selling point and encourage you or future owners to introduce concrete to other rooms.

The powder room is also a great room for a major transformation one that will make your guests say "wow."

And once you enliven the powder room with a concrete vanity and sink, you'll have a room that stands out one that is memorable.

"Most people don't know the possibilities. Some people are just shocked. People have no idea. They've only seen concrete bunnies or birdbaths in the garden."

– Dan Roman, Dan Roman Studio



Architectural concrete specialists like Wanda Ellerbeck of Grotto Designs says that powder rooms are a popular choice for the initiation into decorative concrete. She says she's created concrete amenities for a lot of powder rooms. Often it begins as one item, like a sink or vanity.

"But before you know it, we tie it all together and it's concrete-based."



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If you're considering a concrete sink, concrete vanity, or concrete surround for your bathtub or shower, you may have additional questions. Here are some questions answered by various decorative concrete companies.



FROM BUDDY RHODES STUDIO:

Does the concrete ever crack?

Yes, hairline cracking may occur. These are not structural and are part of the character of concrete.

Does the concrete stain or is it waterproof?

The concrete is sealed making it water and stain resistant (spec sheets can be sent on request).

What if I want a color that is not in the sample package?

We can make custom colors attempting to match almost any color, there is a \$75.00 charge that is applied to your order.

Does the color ever vary?

Yes, every order is custom which lends to the products uniqueness.

What is the maximum size slab we can make?

Approximately 7' x 3', otherwise it has a tendency to crack or become too heavy to work with, seaming may be required.

FROM COUNTERCAST DESIGNS:

What about seams?

Seams are approximately 0.25" and filled with matching epoxy grout. Although visible, they do not detract from the aesthetic quality at all.

Will they crack?

No. With our proprietary mix, steel and glass-fibre reinforcement coupled with special curing techniques and additives, we guarantee our products against structural cracking under normal conditions. Hairline cracks (literally a hair's width and invisible from 3 feet away) are inherent in concrete and may occur. They are superficial and often make the concrete look even more like stone.

Do you build them in my house?

Absolutely not. All our work is PRECAST in our workshop with very few exceptions. Working off-site allows us to create our custom sinks, special integral features, edges and finishes; control important elements such as temperature, humidity and water which affect curing and strength; and to utilize any special equipment, machinery and materials without worrying about a customer's cabinets or interior. Our techniques, without exception, produce the highest quality and strongest concrete available today.

CARE:

Clean-up spills using a mild cleaner such as Simple Green, wiping daily. Wax weekly during the first month and then semi-annually. Avoid repeated or prolonged placement of objects over 300 degrees F. Buffing the surface regularly with a soft cloth will enhance the shine and increase the durability of the sealer. The use of bleach, harsh abrasives or caustic cleaners may be detrimental to the concrete. In drastic circumstances, concrete can always be re-colored, re-sealed, refinished or repaired.

FROM GROTTO DESIGNS:

Is it heavy?

Our standard mix using lightweight aggregates weighs approximately 12lb. - 13lb./sq. ft. for 1.5" thickness. This is well within load capacities for standard North American residential construction and modular kitchen cabinets. In general, no extra support or stiffening is required. Using fiber and polymer additives concrete slabs may be cast much lighter with greater span capabilities.



How thick is it?

1.5" thick is standard and as thin as 0.75" for slabs. Drop edges of up to 12" may be incorporated for a heavier look. Tiles and panels may be as thin as 0.5"

Does it look like a sidewalk?

Absolutely not! In general, our surfaces are as smooth as glass. If anything, it looks like stone with the added characteristic that it may be colored to create depth and richness. We like to say it looks like concrete!

Will it crack?

If it hasn't cracked by the time it leaves our shop then it's not going to. Concrete continues to harden for up to 50 years. Due to casting and reinforcement techniques used and proper curing, structural cracks are extremely rare. Superficial hairline surface cracks may, in time, occur but do not affect the strength or functionality of the concrete in any way and may even add to the organic appeal of the material.

How long does it last?

Potentially, forever. Under normal use your concrete countertop, sink or vanity will outlast the house that it is in. The only thing that can deteriorate concrete is prolonged exposure to salt water or freeze/thaw cycles.

What about sealers?

We use the best industrial sealers on the market today. The vast majority of our products are sealed with semi gloss, food safe, low VOC, water-borne urethane epoxies. They are very tough, compatible with concrete and highly resistant to scratching or staining. Under normal use this sealer may last up to ten years.

Are there seams?

Yes, there are seams. They are less than 1/8" wide and filled with matching grout. Seams do not detract from the overall appearance of the concrete, on the contrary, they add character and dimension.

How long does it take?

Concrete must cure at least 14 days before it is safe to transport. We prefer to double that. So, expect 4 - 6 weeks from the time we receive templates.

Is it cheaper than granite?

It can be, and most of our standard items are. However, making concrete is labor intensive. Each piece is individually made and requires many steps to a final product. Custom pieces and complex shapes may cost more than granite.



ABOUT THE CONCRETE NETWORK

The Concrete Network (www.concretenetwork.com) is the definitive concrete industry web portal with a directory for concrete construction services and concrete products. It draws **over a quarter million** visitors per month.

ConcreteNetwork.Com was born at the 1999 World of Concrete Trade Show in Las Vegas. Founder, Jim Peterson, a former Vice President of a major concrete contractor in Riverside, California, had an idea to create a definitive industry portal on the World Wide Web.

Concrete Network's directory lists concrete contractors and other industry suppliers and experts in **58 specialties in 164 metro areas**. The directory is organized by area and specialty, such as patios, pool decks, driveways, countertops, acid-stained floors, stamped concrete, and water features, among many others.

Site visitors can choose a metro area and view the concrete construction services and concrete products that are available in the area and obtain full contact information for the listed businesses.

ConcreteNetwork.Com's web site's extensive articles and directories constitute a repository of information and a resource about the industry's products and services, including concrete home construction, stamping and other decorative concrete products, resurfacing products, concrete stains, boom pumps, and literally hundreds of other products.

SITE HIGHLIGHTS & NEW FEATURES

THE IDEA CENTER

Slide shows featuring concrete countertops, interior floors, pool decks, patios, water features, furniture, and much more! A new slide show is added each week!

THE DESIGN CENTER

Designer Jeanine Laiza has a field day designing inviting indoor and outdoor rooms with innovative concrete products and surfaces.



WEEKLY CONTRACTOR FEATURES

Michele Dawson writes each week on one of the contractor members of The Concrete Network; these fabulous artisans build outrageous pool decks, interior floors, countertops, patios...anything with concrete.

PRODUCT FEATURES

Anne Balogh, former editor of Concrete Construction Magazine, writes on concrete industry products for The Concrete Network. Innovations such as stamped overlay wall systems, "concrete engraving", and numerous other products are covered. If it's useful and innovative, you'll find it on The Concrete Network.



DECORATIVE CONCRETE TECHNIQUES

Jeff Potvin writes on decorative concrete techniques for The Concrete Network. Potvin, a civil engineer and the owner of Architectural Concrete Consultants, has nearly 15 years of experience in the architectural concrete industry. His experience includes stamped concrete, overlays, form-liners, acid stains, counter tops and coatings.

INDUSTRY LEADERS

We cover industry leaders such as Buddy Rhodes, the father of concrete countertops; Bob Harris from L.M. Scofield, an innovator in decorative concrete techniques; Barbara Sargent, on Kemiko Concrete Stains, who is taking the concrete acid staining industry to a new level. How did they get to the top? We get the inside scoop.



The Concrete Network is dedicated to showing site visitors what is possible with concrete and how to find a contractor to get the job done.