

Kitchen & Bath | Tiling | by Scott Gibson

Neat Niche. Detailing a shower niche to resist leaks takes time, which makes Bonsal's preformed *Niches* an attractive option when you need to keep a tile job moving. The products come in four styles and can be installed in 16-inch on-center wall framing in a matter of minutes; sizes range from 6 inches square to 21 inches by 12 inches. Their extruded polystyrene foam construction resists rotting, leaking, and degrading, says the maker. The niches also have some insulating value, so condensation shouldn't collect inside the wall when wall-cavity insulation is removed for installation. Costs range from about \$40 to \$65 each.

Bonsal, 800/738-1621, www.bonsal.com.



What a Relief. Looking for something dramatically different? Bryan Kerrigan's *High-Relief Ceramic Architectural Tiles* really stand out. Made from fired stoneware clay with a matte or high-gloss finish, they come in a variety of patterns — *Wood Grain* (far left) and *Large Weave* (left) are shown — and numerous colors. Prices run from \$25 to \$45 per tile.

Bryan Kerrigan, 312/671-7770, www.kerriganart.com.



Go Wild. Clients bored with the same old stone-lookalike tile might want to consider Walker Zanger's new porcelain-tile collection, *Matouche*. The 24-inch-square tiles come in four textures — the one shown, *Croco*, mimics crocodile hide — and three colors: black, brown, and ivory. They cost \$11.75 per square foot.

Walker Zanger, 818/252-4000, www.walkerzanger.com.



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Boxed Loo. Plumbing contractors accustomed to making two or three trips back to the truck for forgotten parts might save some time with the *Titan One-Piece Toilet In-a-Box*. While customers may applaud the one-piece design's lack of hard-to-clean nooks and crannies, the plumber will probably appreciate how the toilet, wax ring, mounting bolts, and slow-close seat all come in the same box. Available in white, biscuit, and natural/bone, the fixture costs from \$560 to \$790.

Eljer, 800/423-5537, www.eljer.com.



Almost Bidet. Here in the U.S., bidets have yet to really catch on, but Toto has introduced what may be the next best thing — a toilet that acts like one. The *Washlet S400* incorporates a wand that extends from below the seat and dispenses warm, aerated water and then a stream of warm air. Other features include a lid that automatically opens when the user approaches and closes when he or she leaves. A wireless keypad controls toilet functions. The fixture comes in white and beige and costs between \$1,890 and \$2,175.

Toto, 888/295-8134, www.totousa.com.



Fish Tank. A toilet tank that doubles as an aquarium? Clients with a playful side will be hooked. This double-walled replacement for a conventional toilet tank — dubbed the *Fish 'n Flush* — contains an inner water reservoir for flushing and a 2.2-gallon acrylic aquarium for fish. It can be plumbed for fresh- or saltwater and comes with a filter system and pump. If your clients don't like fish, the tank can be turned into a home for lizards or snakes. It fits most two-piece toilets and lists for \$400.

Aqua One Technologies, 714/898-7016, www.fishnflush.com.