

While dinner's gently cooking in the oven, whiling away some time in your own bathroom haven could be the answer. The cost of a makeover is anything you want it to be. Just like your kitchen, renovating your bathroom can mean spending thousands of dollars, especially if your taste runs to Alessi or Starck. The Archicentre Cost Guide puts the average cost of a new bathroom at anywhere from \$9,200 to \$24,000. But there are plenty of ways to update your bathroom without blowing the budget.

bathroom BLITZ

** IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH ROOM, ADD HIS-AND-HER SINKS.*

YOU CAN TRANSFORM A TIRED OR DATED BATHROOM WITH A QUICK FACELIFT OR A COMPLETE MAKEOVER, WRITES **AMANDA FALCONER.**

MORE AMBITIOUS

More ambitious

A complete makeover, including the structure and linings that the tiles and other fittings are sitting on, may be the best way to enhance your bathroom.

Often if there's any dampness or leaks in the bathroom, it will have been the waterproofing that has failed, in which case the substrate and supporting structure should be addressed.

The Just Bathroom Renovations company says that for an average bathroom of about two metres by two metres, it will cost \$20,000 for a full makeover and over \$25,000 if structural works are involved. Alternatively, you can co-ordinate all the trades yourself and save a little.

For example, when Gavin completely re-furbished his bathroom he did everything from making it bigger and creating a separate room for the toilet to adding in a window and relocating the plumbing. The makeover cost him around \$18,000.

A NEW SINK AND TAPS CAN TURN AN ORDINARY BATHROOM INTO A DESIGNER'S SHOWCASE.



QUICK

Quick fixes

REPLACE THE TOILET, SINK AND TAPWARE

A new toilet gives the impression of cleanliness and a new bathroom sink and taps also can turn an ordinary bathroom into a designer's showcase. If you have enough room, you could also add his-and-her sinks. These days, bathrooms feature sinks of almost any shape and any colour.

Bathroom Designer of the Year at the 2006 HIA New South Wales Awards Michael Manzi says there was a period about two years ago when things were square. "If you look at a lot of the ranges coming through," he says, "they're quite soft, more organic and have more curves within them."

In addition to replacing taps, new-look towel rails, soap-holders, toilet-paper holder and vanity knobs don't have to be

expensive and can make your bathroom look brand new.

REPLACE THE VANITY

The bathroom vanity is usually a central part of your bathroom design. It's also a functional product that can enhance - or frustrate - your efforts to get ready each morning. If your vanity is faded, stained or has broken hardware and warped drawers, it's time to look at newer options.

There is a variety of options for off-the-shelf vanity units. For example, Laminex Industries has developed the LIVING™ bathroom furniture range and Blue Australia offers a range of European-styled vanity furniture with tops that are produced using polymarble technology. Marble is crushed into powder, mixed with resin, then poured into a mould to produce a solid feel and durability. ■

Frameless glass shower screens, supplied and installed	\$1,800
Basin	\$1,000
Toilet	\$1,400
Pre-made vanity cupboard	\$900
Mirror	\$300
Tiles	\$1,020
Tiling (floor to ceiling)	\$4,100
Lights, heater and extractor fan	\$900
Stud walls, relocating window, linings	\$1,400
Concreting the floor	\$2,000
Waterproofing	\$650
Plumbing	\$2,200
Supply and hang two doors	\$360