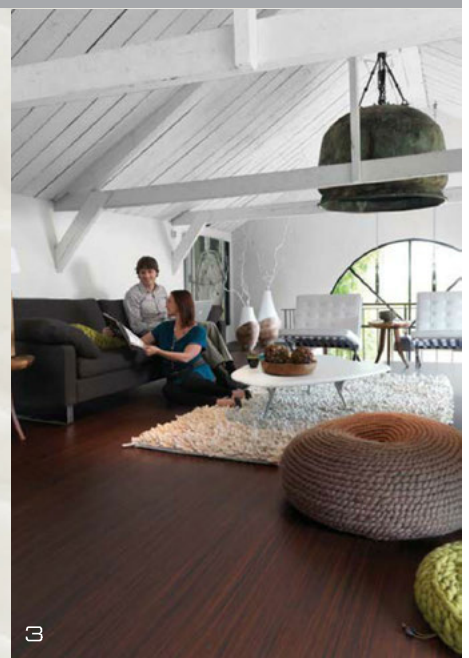




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Molly McCabe's Top Product Picks



For Molly McCabe, AIA, LEED AP, award-winning principal designer and co-owner of A Kitchen That Works in Bainbridge Island, WA, "Sustainability is a culture." Not only has her family embraced the culture "to the greatest degree possible," McCabe also founded the Kitsap chapter of the Northwest EcoBuilding Guild, lectures and writes frequently on green design and construction and is a USGBC Subject Matter Expert. Moreover, she's a self-described "info junkie," which is a boon for her clients in this world of widespread greenwashing. "I know a lot about product," McCabe said. "That's one of the things that differentiates me from my peers."

Does that mean all her projects are eco-friendly? Not necessarily. While McCabe believes it's her "civic duty" to inform her clients of sustainable options, they don't always sign on. However, to help make her case, she'll often present low-tech solutions—"low-hanging fruit"—such as weather sealing, insulation or whole-house exhaust systems, rather than, say, solar panels.

"My mantra is high durability, low maintenance," McCabe noted, which is why **TOTO's** Aquia dual-flush toilet (4) gets her nod. In addition to being water-saving, the toilet has an easy-to-clean skirted design that has endeared it to her clients. "They don't have to get down on their knees or crawl to the back of the toilet," she said. In addition, McCabe prefers dual-flush toilets over single-flush models as they tend to be quieter.

For its ability to hold up in moist environments, as well as its solid coverage, **Benjamin Moore's** Aura Bath & Spa Formula (5) is another McCabe favorite. Low in VOCs, the paint is a "good choice for people with chemical sensitivities," she said.

McCabe should know. An asthmatic, she is ever-conscious of the fact "our world is full of chemicals and there's a better way to live." Consequently, she has been a longtime fan of **Forbo's** Marmoleum (3), which does not off-gas and "can be installed with low- or no-VOC adhesives," she said. To boot, maintenance is a breeze, and the product is available in a wide selection of colors.

McCabe's newest favorite is the Imo thermostatic valve from **Dombracht** (2), which offers "temperature control and volume control in one nice neat package." She also likes that "it can be installed on a 1/2-in. pipe, making it a wonderful candidate for retrofits with terrific water conservation potential."

To keep the bathroom free of humidity and thus prevent mold growth, **NuTone's** Model 744 fan/light (1) is a frequent go-to for McCabe: "Love, love, love this product." By combining a ventilation fan with fluorescent lighting, the unit minimizes holes in the ceiling, while delivering dependable, quiet performance. Furthermore, "you can split the fan and light if you want to operate them independently," she said.

McCabe's list of favorites is much more extensive, which reflects her wealth of product knowledge and perhaps something else: passion. As she noted, "I love what I do." ■

—Alice Liao



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