

A good soak

Elegantly designed wood tubs invite a plunge — on price as well

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Taking a cue from the Japanese, who for centuries have heralded the healing powers of a good soak in a wooden tub, Italian design firm Rapsel this year launched an all-wood bathtub with the eye-popping price of \$28,000.

The Ofuro tub is “more than just a bathing vessel,” said Bennett Friedman, principal at kitchen and bath retailer AF New York, which carries Rapsel’s Ofuro. “It’s for wellness, not hygiene. You get the sense of relaxation but in a device, in a sphere that is beautiful.”

Made of Siberian larch harvested from trees that are 300 to 400 years old, the Ofuro tub is different from many other wooden bathtubs because it doesn’t rely on resins, glues and sealants to keep water from damaging the wood. Siberian larch is naturally water- and decay-resistant, and the tub wears in rather than wears out, Friedman said.

Designed by celebrated Italian architect and product designer Matteo Thun, the Ofuro won this year’s Wallpaper* Design Award for best bath.

Wooden bathtubs, a seemingly contradictory concept given that wood generally warps, rots and cracks with excessive water contact, are coveted for their warm elegance.

Here are some others on the market.



The \$28,000 Ofuro tub from Italian design firm Rapsel is made from Siberian larch, a naturally water- and decay-resistant wood.

Boat inspired

Made to order in Bath in Wood’s workshop in Swans Island, Maine, this bathtub is “inspired by the tactile luxury of an antique armchair and the sweeping sheer of a classic wooden boat.” Made of solid mahogany boards, the tub is deep-sealed in a 14-coat process using ultra low-viscosity epoxy and marine polyurethane gel.

bath-in-wood.com

Cost: \$8,200 for a single, \$9,600 for a double



High shine

Formerly a boat-building workshop, Poland-based Unique Wood Design creates custom bathtubs in varying sizes and shapes and with different woods, using a mix of resins and varnish taken from yacht fuselage impregnation technology to ensure durability and water resistance. This is the oval Cassiopeia in padouk wood. **uniquewood.eu**

Cost: \$13,520



Spa day

Former Swiss yacht-building company Alegna has a line of wooden bathtubs called Laguna, including the Laguna Spa. Made of different wood veneers laminated together with a resin, the Laguna Spa has a wide brim so that overflow water can gurgles into decorative pebbles scattered on the brim. **alegna.ch**

Cost: \$22,500