



CHOCOLATE HOMES
RESIDENTIAL HOMEBUILDER
DRAPER, UTAH



Homebuilder Simplifies Workflow and Life With Help of Bestbath®

Thirty-five years of building and selling homes teaches you a few things.

For Kristen Mortensen, a longtime builder in the Salt Lake City metro area and now a partner in Chocolate Homes, those years taught her to always be on the lookout for a better way. She had to. Her career has been spent building homes along Utah's Wasatch Front — a housing market that has been both one of the nation's fastest growing and the most ravaged by the Great Recession.

With Chocolate Homes, Mortensen and her partner knew they wanted — even needed — to build a company that was much leaner than most builders, while still delivering the design and construction quality homebuyers demand.

One important ingredient was the ability to offer luxurious — even indulgent — bathrooms, but without the downsides Mortensen had often seen with traditional tile showers.

"I've been building for 35 years and I know tile showers can cause huge problems," she says. "For starters, they slow down the building process. Sometimes even just getting the inspections done has been problematic."

More concerning, she says, is the most obvious risk: leaking caused by improper installation, the house settling or incorrect maintenance by the homeowner.

"There's nothing worse than when those fail and you have to go in and rip it out, repair the damage down below, and replace everything," she says. "Nobody's happy."



KRISTEN MORTENSEN
Builder/Partner, Chocolate Homes

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What tile showers do well, however, is provide a stylish, customized look. And until recently, they were the only practical way for builders such as Chocolate Homes to offer that look to customers.

That's why Mortensen, who had worked with Bestbath 20 years ago as a field supervisor for a large production homebuilding company, was pleasantly surprised to be reintroduced to Bestbath.

"I had always really loved the product," she says. "But what got my attention were the insets where you can lay in tile and customize the look to match the rest of the bathroom."



What she noticed was Bestbath's Designer Series, the company's proprietary system for adding molded wall recesses that can be filled with glass or ceramic tiles on site. Because Designer Series recesses are completely sealed, water can't seep behind the shower and cause damage. Even better, builders and homeowners can get a one-of-a-kind look that mimics traditional tile and matches any decor.

"It's a way to pull it in with backsplashes and a vanity and come off with a higher end look," Mortensen says, explaining that for her most recent order she pulled off a similar look by having Bestbath custom paint tile accents for a similar effect.



Just as importantly, Bestbath showers fit nicely into her jobsite workflow.

"I order them early enough so they are onsite when the framers are there with their cranes," she says. "That way they can be easily dropped into the basement or moved to a second story for installation later."

This streamlined approach has allowed Mortensen and her partner to keep up with demand and continue to grow Chocolate Homes without adding staff — something Mortensen values after once managing a staff of dozens.

"I had forty employees at one time," she says. "Now my partner and I and his brother can manage the entire process. That makes things a lot easier."

Bestbath products are made in the USA and come with a 30-year limited warranty so you can relax knowing you're covered now and in the future.



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