

## Seen & Noted: Need a shower? Step right in

By Laura Bianchi  
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Using a doorless shower sounds worse than sharing a communal dormitory bathroom. But these open-air stalls are increasingly popular, leaving space unfettered by the usual glass door or curtain.

"There is no glass to clean, and it is a simpler, stronger architectural look," says designer John Wiltgen of Chicago-based John Roberts Wiltgen Design Inc. To curtail splashing, they often have rainfall shower heads, which point straight down.

There's no big tub to step over, either, a consideration for some older clients.

Shirley Barrash, a retiree, added the feature to her Lakeview condo, transforming a smaller bathroom into one super-sized open shower stall. "I wanted something a cut above that would give me a lot of convenience and comfort and give my apartment new value," she says. Now, "my friends want to come over and take showers."

Preston Lavin, 28, a pastry chef, added the nonconformist feature to his vintage Lakeview condo. "I thought it was avant-garde, a fun play on design," he says. "It's nice for a small space; it feels more open."

Privacy can be an issue, says Chaz Walters, an agent with Sudler-Sotheby's at 919 N. Michigan Ave. "If you're in a master bathroom, and one person wants to use the shower while one wants to use the bathtub, you really don't have (any privacy). It's more for looks than functionality."

Doorless showers — "edgy and zen-like" — will be standard in the 47 condo units at the Huron, to open in 2010 at 4 E. Huron St., says Tricia Fox, sales manager and agent for Keller Williams Gold Coast.

If you want a door? That would cost extra, says Ms. Fox.