

Red Hot Kitchen

Remodel Blends Color With Sleek Design

A Timeless Classic

Elegant Home Offers Welcoming Atmosphere

bathroom TRENDS

A convenient getaway

Couple creates the ultimate retreat, all within the comforts of their own home

By Christina Corell ■ Photos by John Magor

ASK ANY MOTHER and she will quickly point out that raising a child is indeed a full-time job. If you take that one child and multiply it times three, you might be able to fathom the busy lives of Michelle and AJ Kassem. ♦ Three years ago, while they were awaiting the arrival of triplets Karma, Cayla and Miky, Michelle and AJ were also renovating their master bathroom. "We were doing the remodeling when I was on bed rest. It was a challenge," recalls Michelle with a laugh. "But it was good because it kept my mind off the whole pregnancy." ♦ The Kassems moved into their home in Great Falls 11 years ago. At the time the house was only 10 years old, but it was in need of updating. After remodeling the basement and a few other rooms, the couple decided it was time to tackle the master bathroom. "The bathroom had carpet and the space wasn't being utilized," says Michelle. "We would hit our elbows on the walls of the shower and the toilet was in a closet that was too big." ♦ Michelle and AJ met with several remodeling companies and decided that Sonny Nazemian, CEO of Michael Nash Custom Kitchens in Fairfax, was the perfect fit for them. "He made us feel like we were part of the family," Michelle adds.

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Opposite: The matching gold-framed mirrors above the vanities hide built-in medicine cabinets.



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A design takes shape

The trio sat down to create the new master bath. Aside from specifically requesting a large whirlpool tub and two-person shower, Michelle and AJ were open to suggestions. Nazemian says when he first saw the space he knew he and his team had their work cut out for them, but he welcomed the challenge. "It was just a builder's standard (bathroom)," he adds. "By moving things around and creating space, it doesn't even look like the same bathroom."

Their first decision was to remove the 3x5-foot water closet, which contained the bathroom's only window. In order to maintain some privacy, but take advantage of the natural light, Nazemian cornered the toilet area with glass block. By knocking down the walls he was also left with more square footage for the tub and shower.

The tub's location in the corner gives the illusion that the bathroom is larger than its actual size. A handheld nozzle and body temperature control add to the spa theme. Niches cut into the tub walls provide perfect spots for shampoo and soaps. The large double shower features the same niches as well as a luxurious showerhead and a handheld sprayer.

Built for comfort

The double vanity commands almost an entire wall of the Kassem's bathroom. The custom cherry cabinetry features a mahogany stain and granite countertops sprinkled with flecks of gold, ivory, black and brown. The elaborate mirrors above the undermount sinks double as built-in medicine cabinets and skylights in the cathedral ceiling drench the space in sunlight.

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Left: The comfort height double vanities are separated by a taller center cabinet to allow for extra storage and added privacy.

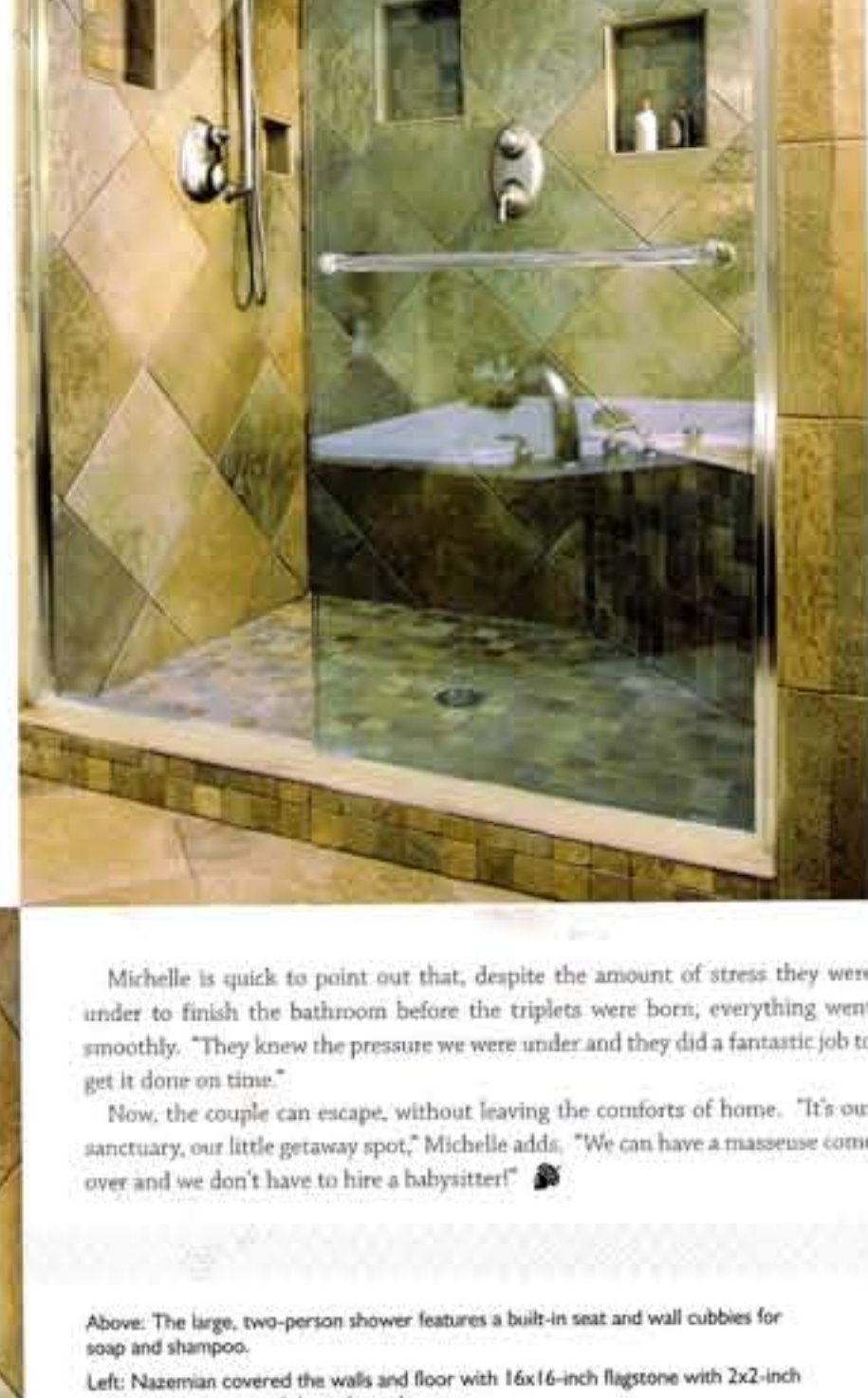
bathroom TRENDS

Michelle says she found a photo of a double vanity she liked while perusing magazines and approached Nazemian with a new idea. "It was very popular to have the middle section of the double vanity lower than the sink areas, but I wanted the opposite," Michelle says. "This gives my husband and I a little privacy when we're doing our own thing."

In addition to the taller center cabinet, which houses the couple's hamper, the vanities sit 34 1/2-inches tall, about two to four inches taller than standard vanities. "They are comfort height so you don't have to bend over and put pressure on your back," Nazemian says.

A warmly decorated space

Another dominating feature is the use of flagstone. Traditionally used for outdoor patios and walkways, Nazemian suggested using it in the Kassem's bathroom due to its natural beauty. In order to satisfy both Michelle and AJ, the floors and walls are lined with flagstone. "My husband is from Syria and over there it is very popular for the homes to have marble from top to bottom," Michelle says. "I'm from Texas so I like more earthy materials. So we compromised."



Michelle is quick to point out that, despite the amount of stress they were under to finish the bathroom before the triplets were born, everything went smoothly. "They knew the pressure we were under and they did a fantastic job to get it done on time."

Now, the couple can escape, without leaving the comforts of home. "It's our sanctuary, our little getaway spot," Michelle adds. "We can have a masseuse come over and we don't have to hire a babysitter!"

Above: The large, two-person shower features a built-in seat and wall cubbies for soap and shampoo.

Left: Nazemian covered the walls and floor with 16x16-inch flagstone with 2x2-inch accent pieces scattered throughout the space.

Opposite: The whirlpool tub was situated into a corner in order to take advantage of every square foot of space in the small bathroom.



RESOURCES

Designers:
Sonny Nazemian,
Michael Nash Custom Kitchens

Countertops:
Quartz

Flooring and walls:
Flagstone

Cabinetry:
Cherry with a mahogany stain

Faucets and hardware:
Polished nickel

