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CELEBRATING THE ARTS | OCTOBER 2016



INTERIOR/EXTERIOR DESIGN

Asian Sensibilities

CREATING THE MASTER SPA OF THEIR DREAMS | BY TROY BLEWETT



After living in their 4,500 sq. ft., six-bedroom center hall Colonial for nearly 20 years, the homeowners decided to make some changes. Notably, they wanted to renovate their 145 sq. ft. bathroom into an open, free-flowing master spa with Asian-inspired accents.

“We wanted a better space plan, but also an interior design that would express our Asian sensibilities,” the owner says. “The existing space was cramped with a narrow shower; we were tired of its vanilla décor. We also knew we could gain floorspace by eliminating an

unused whirlpool tub,” the owner says, “but then what?”

To transform their dated space into the master spa of their dreams, the homeowners knew they would need a professional. They turned to Michael Nash Design Build and Homes in Fairfax.

PROJECT CHALLENGES

“The biggest challenge was to meet the homeowners’ desire for a spa-like experience with more storage space within the room’s existing footprint,” says Sonny Nazemian, president and CEO of Michael Nash.

Page 43: Michael Nash built the custom vanity out of mahogany with a marble countertop; it has plenty of space for the homeowners’ personal effects.

Above: Securely placed behind two floor-to-ceiling glass walls, the 8.5 ft. x 4 ft. open shower sits on multicolor tile flooring.

Opposite: The entrance to the suite is through a pair of solid mahogany doors, mounted on a mahogany frame above a marble sill.





The Michael Nash team basically gutted the original bathroom and started over. They removed the rarely used tub, capturing its floor space for a new shower. They also removed two small vanities that sat on opposite sides of the tub that provided little counter space or dressing area. Finally, they relocated extensive plumbing and flue chases for the new design to work.

The homeowners also wanted their walk-in shower to hold the water in without having a curb. To achieve this effect, the team raised the bathroom floor so the shower base is about an inch lower. As a result, the floor bevels toward the drain, and there's no need for a built-in lip.

A BATHROOM TRANSFORMED

The new design features a walk-in shower and several strategically placed built-ins. A custom-designed vanity and a window seat add functionality and comfort. The interior design balances textured surfaces, glass-tiled walls and a subtle interplay of colors and tones.

Securely placed behind two floor-to-ceiling glass walls, the 8.5 ft. x 4 ft. open shower sits on multicolor tile flooring that connects it visually to the ceiling and to the

brown and tan wall tiling in a soft grass-weave pattern.

Not only are there recessed cubbies for personal items, but the "rain" shower has a digital regulator that allows each bather to program his or her preferred temperature and water pressure. There are also several hand-held body spray options.

"Water is very important to Asian culture," the homeowner explains. "We were looking for an interior design that would present the effect of water cascading. The blue-green glass tile around the shower window seat accomplishes this. Everything is pleasingly accentuated, yet well-ordered, tranquil and relaxing," he says.

Michael Nash designed a custom vanity out of mahogany with a marble countertop. It has plenty of space for the homeowners' personal effects. Additionally, a custom medicine cabinet with a frosted glass door serves as a divider between his and her sinks.

A discrete water closet is the only part of the space hidden behind walls. Additional storage is provided via a custom cabinet installed above the toilet.

Finally, the entrance to the suite is through a pair of solid mahogany doors, mounted on a mahogany frame above a marble sill.

Above, left: Tile flooring connects visually to the ceiling and to the brown and tan wall tiling in a soft grass-weave pattern.

Above, right: The design raised the bathroom floor so the shower base is about an inch lower. As a result, the floor bevels toward the drain, and there's no need for a built-in lip.

Opposite: The bathroom's new interior design balances textured surfaces, glass-tiled walls and a subtle interplay of colors and tones.



SELECTING THEIR REMODELER

Selecting the right contractor is the key to any successful renovation. While the homeowners often thought of remodeling, it wasn't until a family member hired Michael Nash to execute a distinctly Asian-influenced interior for her home that they—surprised at how powerfully the makeover affected them—began to push forward with their own renovation.

It was during this phase that Tran and Lin began wandering into the Michael Nash showroom on Lee Highway in Fairfax, exploring its vast warren of rooms filled with fully assembled bathrooms, complete with accessories, tile, countertop and woodwork options.

Having already spoken to a number of bathroom designers, the homeowners were impressed with the on-site staff, many of whom hold industry certifications in kitchen and bath design (CKBR).

"We had certain ideas when the research began, but needed professional guidance," the homeowner says. "The showroom soon became the place where we could compare and contrast colors, textures and styles at our own pace. Since the facility offers every finishwork option, we could take our time uncovering the ideas with which we wanted to live."

"There are more decisions to make when doing a bathroom than in renovating any other part of the house," Nazemian says. "Homeowners really need to do their homework. Knowing the details and options they want is a big advantage and a key to a successful project."

AWARD-WINNING RESULTS

Like all great remodeling projects, the results of this bathroom renovation speak for themselves. The makeover was named a Bronze award-winner in the residential bathrooms category (\$30,000-\$60,000) by *Professional Remodeler* magazine and previously had captured a Contractor of the Year (CoTY) Grand Award from the Metro DC Chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI).

Nazemian credits his design and production teams for the awards. "We have a very diverse talent pool, so the call to outperform the perceived limits of budget inspires us," he says. "In the end, it's our collaboration with our client—coupled with experience and creativity—that yields a stand-out result. To me, the prizes simply confirm that our values are in the right place." é

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—Sonny Nazemian

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