

designNJ

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REFRESHING BATHROOMS



AN OCEANSIDE JEWEL

CHANGING SPACES IN PRINCETON

OUTDOOR LIVING IN HO-HO-KUS & HARDING

WRITTEN BY MEG FOX | PHOTOS BY MARCO RICCA
DESIGN BY YELENA GERTS, ALLIED ASID



DEAL DELIGHT

NATURAL ELEMENTS PAIR WITH EARTHY HUES AND AHA! MOMENTS
IN A VACATION HOME NEAR THE BEACH

When renovating their summer residence in Deal, the owners wanted true “wow-factor moments when moving through each space in the 9,000-square-foot home,” says Yelena Gerts, owner and principal designer of House of Style & Design in Holmdel. The renovation encompasses a variety of textures, materials, innovative solutions and more.

The primary bathroom, equally functional and aesthetically pleasing, employs muted earth tones, sleek lines and subtle details for a tranquil, spa-worthy feel. “It’s the perfect example of contemporary timeless design,” says Gerts, an allied member of the American Society of Interior Designers. White oak cabinets feature a combination of ribbed and flat-

panel drawer fronts, integrated handles and invisible pulls that “stay true to the sleek design of the space.”

Custom mirrors with white oak frames enlarge the room and bring the eye up to the skylight above. Linear sconces installed on the mirrors feature cylindrical glass that “relates to the texture in the millwork, creating one cohesive visual,” Gerts says. Polished nickel finishes correlate to the plumbing and decorative metal details that accent the wall behind the bathtub, she adds. Countertops are topped in “snowy white marble.”

Incorporating one central skylight — as opposed to the two that previously existed — reinforced the roofline, flooding the space with ample natural light, Gerts says. It also called attention to the room’s

stunning backdrop: a floor-to-ceiling slab of green multicolored porcelain accented by large-format onyx tile. Coupled with the effects of the light streaming in from the skylight, “it creates a truly memorable moment, providing that breath of relaxation immediately upon entering the room,” Gerts says.

The freestanding soaking tub sits on top of wood-like tile that “balances all the white oak used for the custom millwork on the opposite wall,” the designer says. To the left of the tub is a steam shower dressed in a linear mosaic natural stone tile; to its right is a water closet. Both angled glass-enclosed entrances mimic each other for a sense of symmetry and cohesion, “drawing the eye to the picturesque bathtub vignette.”

SOURCES interior design, House of Style & Design in Holmdel; cabinetry, GS Wood-Working; soaking tub, Icon Decorative Hardware & Plumbing Supply in Lakewood; shower mosaic tile, Artistic Tile; all other tile, Lazar Marble & Granite.

Custom white oak vanities feature ribbed wood and flat-panel drawer fronts, integrated handles and invisible pulls that “stay true to the sleek design of the space,” designer Yelena Gerts says. The steam shower — reflected in the mirror at right on the facing page — is clad in a linear mosaic natural stone.

A full slab of green porcelain — visible through the glass-front entry — adds color and “dreamily reflects light throughout the space,” Gerts says. Symmetrical angled glass doors lead to the steam shower at left and the water closet at right.



WRITTEN BY MARIROSE KRALL
PHOTOS BY MARCO RICCA
DESIGN BY JENNIFER MCGEE

A Spa-Like Sanctuary

A SERENE SADDLE RIVER BATHROOM INCLUDES A SAUNA, A STEAM SHOWER AND SUMPTUOUS STYLE



The sauna/shower space spans an entire wall. “When you walk into the room, you see one piece of glass across the sauna and steam shower. Aesthetically, it’s beautiful,” homeowner John Cunningham says. Designer Jennifer McGee says of the space, “It’s very now, of the moment, and reflects a modern lifestyle of quiet luxury.”

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With their children grown and flown, Katrina and John Cunningham decided to move out of the second-floor guest room they had previously occupied to be near the kids when they were young. They were ready to make use of the actual primary suite, located on the first floor. But the 1980s-era space needed to be updated. “We envisioned setting up a haven of serenity so that, in essence, we could be transported to a luxury spa without leaving our house,” John Cunningham says.

Designer Jennifer McGee had worked with the homeowners in the

past and knew exactly the type of aesthetic they sought. “They wanted it to be a sanctuary,” says McGee, principal of Ridgewood-based Jennifer McGee Design Inc. “The Cunninghams love to travel, so I began this project with the concept of staying at a gorgeous resort. I wanted them to have that same feeling in their home.”

The room’s lavish style begins with a classic stone: marble. The floor’s subtle striations lay a tranquil foundation while bold veining on the walls and in the shower adds movement. “That floor-to-ceiling marble is something you don’t see in every bathroom,” McGee points out.

Tambour trim on the custom vanity and bathtub surround brings texture, adding interest to the white fixtures.

The bathtub is positioned in front of a window to take advantage of the view. “It looks out onto our English garden and pond in the backyard. It’s pretty serene,” Katrina Cunningham notes. The shower space features many amenities found at high-end hospitality venues, including light therapy, aromatherapy and steam settings.

McGee suggested the sauna for her energetic, sporty clients. “Saunas have so many wellness benefits,” she says. “It goes beyond just creating a beautiful space.” The Cunninghams were enthusiastic about the addition. “John and I are pretty physically active,” Katrina says. “Using the sauna or steam room at the gym is something we do fairly frequently, so the fact that we could have this in our own home was a game changer.”

The project was a success, thanks to the collaborative efforts of all involved. “We had a really good team,” Katrina says. “Everybody enjoyed working together; it was a fun project.” Now the couple are thrilled with their new space to enjoy as empty nesters. John says, “It’s like the penthouse suite in a hotel.” Katrina adds, “Jennifer did a great job. She had a vision that she brought to life.” **DM**

SOURCES interior design, Jennifer McGee Design in Ridgewood; marble cladding on walls and countertops, Stone by Vincenzo in Lake Hopatcong; builder, Barnstable Partners in Ridgewood; cabinet maker, MDM Woodmaker in Hawthorne; floor, shower and wall tile, Artistic Tile in Paramus; bathtub, MTI; custom bathtub surround and vanity, designed by Jennifer McGee Design; bathtub and vanity faucets, THG Paris; chandelier and sconces, Visual Comfort & Co.; mirrors above vanity, Mirror Home; shower, Mr. Steam; shower head with integrated chromatography system, Dornbracht; custom LED and red-light therapy system in sauna, designed by Jennifer McGee Design, built by Barnstable Partners; rug, Art Resources; wallcovering around entrance to spa and shower, Weitzner Ltd.

Bath in Bloom

MAGNOLIAS AND MOONLIGHT INSPIRE AN UPDATE

WRITTEN BY REN MILLER
PHOTOS BY MARCO RICCA
DESIGN BY SHANNON CONNOR

Ancient lore tells us that magnolias symbolize ethereal purity. No wonder they feel particularly appropriate in the design of a bathroom — in this case, in the 1920s Princeton home of Barak and Alexandra Bar-Cohen.

The magnolia motif commands attention in a mural hand-painted on silverleaf by artist Silvère Boureau, born in France and now living in Pennsylvania. “He was so calm amidst the buzz of construction,” says designer Shannon Connor, who the Bar-Cohens chose to update their home. “He put on his radio — to a French music station — and took off his shoes. It was very meditative.”

Connor, principal of Princeton-based Shannon Connor Interiors, says the Bar-Cohens wanted everything in the room to be meaningful. For starters, Alexandra Bar-Cohen admits she is all about water. “If there’s a lake, I need to be in it. And I love to take baths — I feel it’s how we stay balanced. The bathroom is almost like a sacred space to me.”

When Connor and Bar-Cohen were considering bathtubs, the latter noticed a mural in one photo, and that sparked her imagination. Initially, she thought about a mural depicting the birch trees surrounding the home where she spent her childhood summers — and where the family still vacations — on Lake George in the Adirondacks. That didn’t translate well into a mural so she refocused on the blossoms of a magnolia tree outside her kids’ school. “They bloom and then the blossoms are quickly gone,” she says. “The mural captures that ethereal moment when they’re in bloom.”

More crucial to the mural is the moon. At Lake George, the moon casts a rippling reflection on the water. “My mother called that the fairy path,” she says. “The artist captured the essence of the fairy path by blurring the moon for a reflective quality. The mural helps me appreciate those memories.”

Connor kept the rest of the design clean lined but not sterile. “We have a luxe gold finish on the faucets and hardware, and the mural is on silverleaf.” The floor is glass mosaic tile with dark grout. “I wanted a pattern but not a direction, so circles worked well.” Golden birds perch on the vanity mirrors.

Connor recessed towel warmers and shelves so they don’t intrude into the space and added skylights framed in the same wood as the custom vanity: ash with a black cerused finish, brushed brass trim detail and a Carrera Macchia Vecchia marble top. Perpendicular to the vanity, built-in medicine cabinets hide behind doors tiled to match the walls for a streamlined effect.

Bar-Cohen says her home now has many elements that make her happy, “but the bathroom is definitely my favorite.”

SOURCES design, Shannon Connor Interiors in Princeton; magnolia mural, Silvère Boureau; bathtub, Native Trails; wall tile, Contempo/Creative Materials Corp.; floor tile, Artistic Tile; tub filler and sink faucets, Litze by Brizo; hydronic towel warmer in Regal Brass finish, Myson; vanity, designed by Shannon Connor and made by Mitchell’s Woodworking & Design in Westampton; mirrors, Made Goods; sconces, Visual Comfort & Co.; ceiling light fixture, Arteriors.



The homeowners asked the designer to create a peaceful, serene place to escape while bathing. Rather than a lot of bold colors like other rooms in the home, designer Shannon Connor created interest with mixed metallics and textures.

Connor wanted the mural to be an artsy representation of magnolias. “We had the flowers be out of scale and rather large,” she says. The mural is sealed to protect it against water damage and is an eye-catching backdrop for the stone composite bathtub. “It is deep and long — perfect for a good soak,” Connor says.



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