



Room for the day spa

Expanding the sense of space and adding a feeling of luxury was essential to this remodel



Making a small room feel and look larger and more luxurious is a common problem for designers undertaking remodeling assignments. While master baths in new homes are often designed to be expansive, space for such comfort can be scarce in an older house.

The owners of this 1940s house briefed designer Carolyn Thomas from Jennifer Gilmer Kitchen & Bath on their desire to do away with the existing bathtub and install a steam shower similar to those you might see at a health club. The bathroom

and powder room needed to be in keeping with the traditional style of the rest of the house, but with modern features.

In the master bath, Thomas removed the bathtub and enlarged the area by pushing back the shower wall, using some closet space from an adjacent bedroom. This way the bench – a staple in steam showers – could be accommodated.

“Nobody has time to take a bath these days, so more people are looking for showers with special features,” says Thomas.

Glass shower doors expand the space,

as they remove the visual boundary of the old metal doors, drawing the eye to the back wall of the shower. Liquid green glass tiles in gloss and matte decorate this wall, creating a patterned feature.

A mirror the length of the vanity doubles the appearance of space, and a linear five-globe light fixture adds to this illusion. A medicine cabinet is concealed behind the mirror, while marble-topped cabinetry below provides plenty of storage room.

The powder room lacked cabinetry, so Thomas chose a Wood-Mode vanity in

cherry to blend with the other furniture in the home. To modernize this room and also create more space, taps are mounted in the wall. An engraved glass basin adds another subtle, modern element.

Lever-handled faucets in the powder room and bath are in keeping with the classic look of the rest of the home. Thomas chose a traditional-style granite for the countertop and flooring in both rooms.

“By using only a minimal amount of colors and materials, the spaces appear bigger still,” she says.



Facing page: A glass-tiled shower enclosure is the main feature of this remodeled, traditionally styled bathroom, designed by Carolyn Thomas of Jennifer Gilmer Kitchen & Bath.

Above: A mirror runs the length of the vanity and gives the illusion of space. Lever-handled, brushed nickel faucets were chosen for their traditional shape and style.

Left: The original shower enclosure consisted of a diagonal tub with metal doors. A steam shower was installed in its place, with glass doors that allow the eye to be drawn to the feature wall behind.



Above: By keeping colors to a minimum, and matching granite countertops with flooring, the designer has visually expanded this powder room. The taps protrude straight from the mirror, allowing more room on the vanity top, and adding a modern element.

Right: With no cabinetry, and tiling which appeared dated, this powder room was in need of a remodel. Thomas chose the vanity to match the furniture in the rest of the home. A delicate glass handbasin replaces the old porcelain sink.



Designer: Carolyn Thomas, ASID, NKBA, Jennifer Gilmer Kitchen & Bath Ltd (Chevy Chase, MD)
Builder: Lappas Contractors
Shower: Steam shower by Steamist
Vanity: Ming Green marble by Norwood Marble & Granite; Esmeralda granite slab by Bratti
Cabinetry: Nordic White Brookhaven, and Edinburgh stain on cherry, by Wood-Mode
Faucets: Lever handle in satin nickel Ashbury by Cifial; wall-mounted soft pewter Loire by Sigma
Wall tiles: Glossy Field tile and La Scala glass tile by Architectural Ceramics

Photography by Jamie Cobeldick