



Daily Luxury

Two bathrooms transform into glamorous and well-planned spaces

THE BATHROOM CAN BE A ROOM PEOPLE JUST WANT TO GET IN AND OUT OF, but for some, it can be a sanctuary. For one full-time lawyer and mom, two unsightly baths in her home were far from retreats. She looked to designer Claudia Giselle Tejeda of Brooklyn, N.Y.-based Claudia Giselle Design to turn her master and her 11-year-old daughter's bathroom into the perfect getaways. "I approached the design like a jigsaw puzzle," said Tejeda. "Although we had many utilitarian requirements, we didn't compromise on the aesthetic—luxurious spa-like bathrooms with bold accents."

NEGOTIATING A SUNKEN TUB

This busy client had a long list of wants for the master, but there were a few non-negotiable items.

"The sunken soaking tub was an absolute requirement," said Tejeda. "However, dropping the 73-gallon tub into the existing floor was not an option."

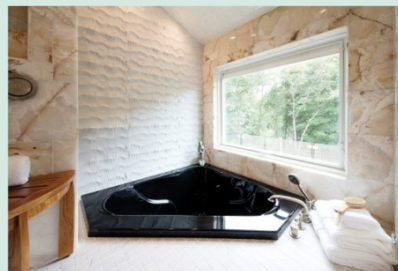
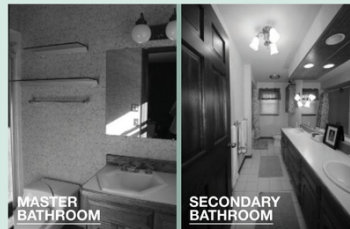
—**Planning Problem One:** Underneath the master is a basement, which had been finished as a home theater, and the only way to drop the tub into the existing floor would be to lower the basement ceiling and inhibit the home theater.

Before and After

LEFT "Our client wanted the vanity to look like a piece of furniture," said Tejeda, "so we had it faux painted to mimic a distressed piece echoing the colors of the bespoke accent tile."

TOP RIGHT The existing master bathroom was outdated and small, and the secondary bathroom was long and narrow. By taking space from the secondary bathroom, the rooms are better proportioned and well planned.

RIGHT Natural stone surrounds the shower and tub enclosure, and porcelain mosaic tiles in the ceiling and floor have stain- and water-resistant features.



BY ERINN LOUCKS

Since the client did not want the sunken tub on an obvious platform either, the team had to find a solution where it was dropped into a raised area that was not apparent to the eye. To do this, the floor in the shower/bath area of the room was raised two steps, concealing the fact that the tub is inset.

—**Planning Problem Two:** "The platform only solved half of our challenge," said the designer. "The next step was figuring out whether we had proper head clearance after raising the floor."

Luckily, the sloped attic above allowed the design team to raise the ceiling just enough to accommodate for the higher floors. The same mosaic tile on the higher shower/tub floor continues down the steps onto the main level for a seamless transition.

—**Planning Problem Three:** "We really wanted to use a custom black concrete tub," said Tejeda, "but the cost to fabricate it was estimated at \$20,000, plus an additional cost to make the house structurally sound."

The alternative was to fabricate a black powdercoated, stainless steel tub, which was about \$16,000, but this did not even include installation costs. The tub was the first item to be value-engineered in the design, so the team improvised: for a fraction of the cost, they chose a ready-made, drop-in tub.

BALCONY ISSUES

For the second requirement of the design, the glass balcony, the client wanted to take advantage of the surrounding four-acre lot and make it into a private sanctuary.

"The addition of the balcony off the bathroom was the most direct connection to the outdoors and was exclusive to her," said Tejeda, adding that her client wanted the balcony to enjoy her morning coffee on or get some fresh air after relaxing in the steam shower or soaking tub.

However, building the balcony posed some structural challenges. The existing joists were running opposite the direction needed to support a cantilevered balcony. Using posts to support it was out of the question because there is an in-ground pool deck underneath, and posts would be an obstruction. The compromise was a smaller cantilevered balcony supported by braces.

"Now our client has a place where she can close the door and relax and recharge," said Tejeda.

BRINGING IN GLAMOUR

With the structure and floor plan resolved, the team set out to create a bold and dramatic statement in the master bathroom. Among the natural stone walls on the upper level, the black inset tub ties together the black accent tiles in the floor and a black vanity on the lower level.

"The palette also circled back to our client's desire for us to incorporate black, gold and gray in the floor pattern design," said Tejeda, who used the 2D and 3D features of VectorWorks software to complete the project. "The result is a modern, chic and sensual bathroom."

The black vanity continues this look with its half-moon shape and faux paint, which mimics a distressed piece of furniture with touches of black and gold. Hand-blown Murano glass sconces give the hand-hammered nickel sink and stone backsplash a warm, romantic appeal. The vanity also maximizes storage with pullout cabinets for all of the client's make-up and accessories.

"These high-end amenities turn daily rituals into a luxurious experience," said Tejeda.

While many of the vanity features were luxurious, the most significant finish in the master bathroom was the custom waterjet pattern in the floor inset. This tile pattern, designed by Claudia Giselle Design, was based on the client's desire to incorporate marble, onyx and limestone. The limestone in the shower was also a splurge; it is one of the latest products that uses new technology to create intricate carvings in natural stone.

A YOUNG LADY'S RETREAT

The client wanted the feel of her master bathroom to also extend to her daughter's bath. However, the previous design was a long and narrow room with a lot of wasted space. Square footage had been taken from this bathroom for the redesign of the master, and it was important for the new bath to not look or feel small in comparison.

"We incorporated various design techniques to give the illusion of more space," said Tejeda.

By wall mounting the vanity and toilet, the floor is exposed and adds to the sense of visual depth, and a full-length mirror behind the sink also gives the impression of more space.

"We managed to achieve so much in a small footprint, yet the bath doesn't feel small or crowded," said the designer. "Instead it feels grand and expansive."

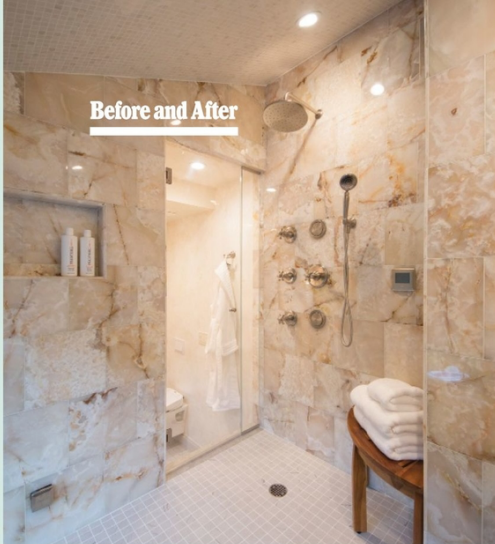
The inspiration for this room was organic floral patterns, which the client's daughter loved. Floral mosaic tiles make up the floor inset and the bathroom niche, while the remaining wall and floor tiles are simple and classic. Natural agate stones, as well as a gold leaf and glass-beaded wall treatment on the walls, continue the dramatic palette of the other bathroom.

"Our approach to the design of the secondary bathroom was elegant and sophisticated, as this young lady is both intelligent and confident," said Tejeda.

A faux-painted tan vanity connects all the finishes in the room, while the cool tones of the wall tiles and floor balance with the warm tones of the gold leaf wall treatment. The vanity countertop, a unique slab of Calacatta Cielo marble, is the main splurge in this space and pulls the color palette together.

"My favorite part of the project is hearing our client tell us how happy she is with the design," said Tejeda. "We took an existing space and turned it into an extraordinary, luxurious oasis for the mother and a glamorous jewel box for her daughter."

Before and After



LEFT Along with a mirror defogger hidden behind the vanity mirror, the master bath boasts wirelessly controlled ceiling speakers, radiant floor heating and a spa system with aroma, light and sound therapy.

BELOW Splurges in this secondary bathroom include a waterjet mosaic, comprised of three types of marble, as well as a Calacatta Cielo marble countertop.

BOTTOM The shower combines natural stone tile in cool gray with flowery inset mosaic tiles, which cater to the young client's tastes.

SOURCES

DESIGNER: Claudia Giselle Tejeda, Claudia Giselle Design; **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Claudia Giselle Design

MASTER BATHROOM

CEILING MOSAIC TILE: HighStyle; **PORCELAIN TILE:** Artistic Tile; **SCONCES:** CX Design; **SINK:** Thompson Traders; **STEAM SHOWER:** Steamist; **TOILET:** Toto; **TUB:** Jacuzzi; **VANITY:** Claudia Giselle Design

SECONDARY BATHROOM:

ACCENT MOSAIC & COUNTERTOP: Artistic Tile; **MEDICINE CABINET:** Roborn; **PLUMBING:** Kohler; **PORCELAIN TILE:** HighStyle; **TOILET:** Toto; **TUB:** Kohler; **SCONCES:** Corbett Lighting

