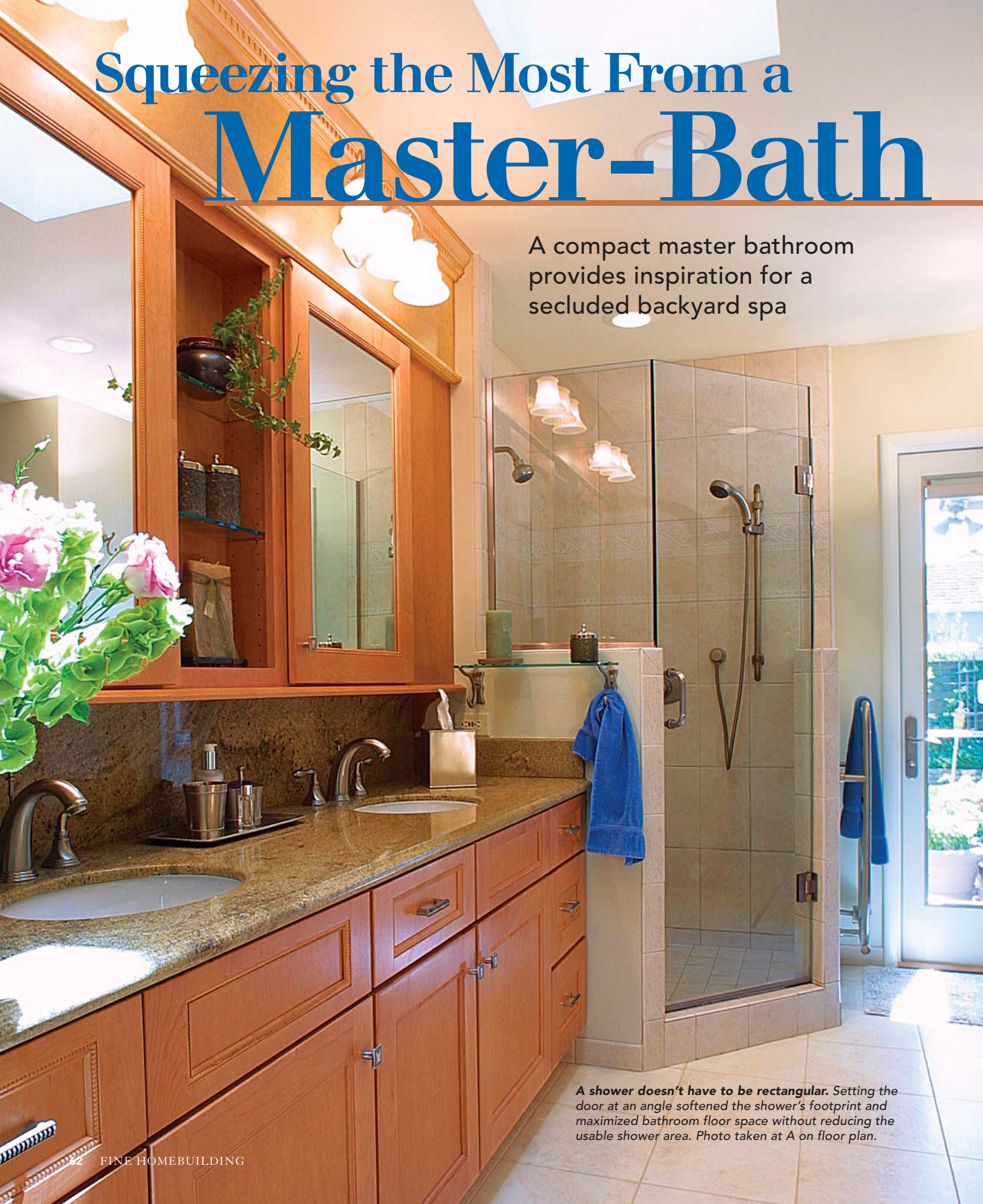


Squeezing the Most From a Master-Bath

A compact master bathroom provides inspiration for a secluded backyard spa



A shower doesn't have to be rectangular. Setting the door at an angle softened the shower's footprint and maximized bathroom floor space without reducing the usable shower area. Photo taken at A on floor plan.

Addition

BY LISA KOUTSKY STEN

Like many 1950s Mountain View, Calif., houses, Pam and Steve's place was built with only one bathroom. They longed for a master bathroom in their small three-bedroom house, and their wish list included a free-standing shower, a tub, a toilet and bidet, and a double vanity. Fitting all of that in the small space that my firm was allotted required some hard choices by the homeowners, some creative design on our part, and a little inspiration.

Constraints shape the addition

Before consulting with our design firm, Pam had checked the lot setbacks with city officials. Her legwork revealed that zoning ordinances would allow us to bump out only about 8 ft.—a significant constraint. In addition, she imposed her own restriction: Their bedroom window had to stay. This limited the addition's envelope to 8 ft. by 17 ft.

With just 136 sq. ft. to work with, we tried several different floor plans to accommodate as many of their desired amenities as possible, but Pam and Steve had to decide what was really important to them.

A separate tub and shower would have taken up most of the available floor space, so we eliminated the tub. There was room, though, for a tiled two-person shower.

Bathroom details coordinate with other rooms

Pam and Steve wanted their new bathroom to look and feel like the rest of their house. To



AFTER

An addition that blends into the house. Using the same roofline, shingles, and stucco blends the new bathroom with the house. A door from the bathroom to the hot-tub area ties the new space to the courtyard. Photo taken at B on floor plan.



Everything in its place. This bathroom's custom closet holds the day's clothes just a step away from the spacious two-person vanity. Photo taken at C on floor plan.

reflect the style and quality they desired, we chose semi-custom cabinets from Medallion Cabinetry (www.medallioncabinetry.com; 952-442-5171). The beaded detail on the doors and drawers and the maple wood coordinated with the master-bedroom furniture, providing a sense of continuity. To help contain costs, we opted for stock sizes wherever possible. However, we designed the large medicine cabinet to have a substantial, built-in appearance.

The fixtures and sinks also were selected to coordinate with the rest of the house. The simple, clean lines of the Jado faucets (www.jado.com) and the Bates & Bates basins (www.batesandbates.com; 800-726-7680) that we selected complemented the fixtures that were in the other bathroom and in the kitchen. These midprice items fit the project's budget and matched the fine quality of other fixtures in the house.

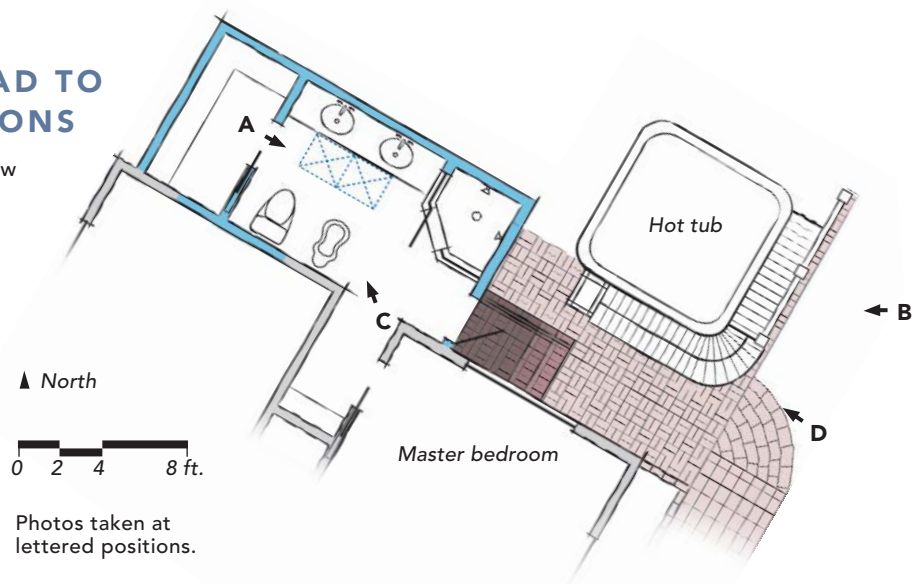
A walk-in closet for the bathroom

We converted the old closet in the master bedroom to serve as a short entry hall to the bathroom. The narrow 6-ft.-6-in.-long passage creates a feeling of separation between the bedroom and bathroom, and it also underscores the light and open feeling of the bathroom.

To replace the master-bedroom closet, we considered several locations for a new walk-in closet, including stealing space from the adjacent bedroom. However, we ultimately placed it at the end of the bathroom. This unusual layout gave us a 4-ft. by 7-ft.-6-in. space outfitted with custom melamine shelving and drawers. With his-and-hers hanging space at each side of the closet, dedicated shoe and

TIGHT SETBACK LINES LEAD TO CREATIVE DESIGN SOLUTIONS

Because the homeowners were limited to a narrow 8-ft.-wide footprint for the addition, the master-bedroom closet became the hallway to the new master bath. Space for a new walk-in closet came from one end of the bathroom. The purchase of an outdoor hot tub while the addition was under way inspired a doorway from the bathroom to the hot-tub area. With this connection, the hot tub functions as an outdoor space tied to the master-bedroom suite.



sweater storage, and drawers for jewelry and smaller items, everything has its place.

Skylight lets the sun in and the steam out

The walk-in closet, the large medicine cabinet, and a shared wall left little space for windows or ventilation. The bathroom, however, is light and airy. An electrically operated ridge skylight centered over the double vanity brings plenty of natural light into the room and helps to vent moisture from the shower. We also installed a Panasonic Whisperlite fan (www.panasonic.com; 866-292-7292) over the toilet area. We coupled this nearly silent fan with a multiple-setting delay-off switch. Pam can push the 30-minute button and leave the house, and the fan will continue to vent shower steam until it turns off automatically.

Chance purchase enhances design

Because we eliminated the bathtub from the plan, I had proposed a location for a future outdoor soaking tub. But a local distributor's sale prompted Pam and Steve to purchase a hot tub during the project. This accelerated our timetable and changed the design.

Opting to renovate a worn, weary-looking dog run, we sited the spa to create an outdoor space incorporating the master bath. A planned window and base cabinet adjacent to the shower were scrapped in favor of a door and stairs leading to the hot tub. The full-length glass in the door (www.pella.com) creates a sense of continuity between the indoors and outdoors.

Lattice around the hot tub and Pam's plantings provide privacy and a sense of enclosure. The result is a romantic outdoor space that feels and functions as part of the bathroom. It also is part of a larger outdoor living space. Beyond the hot tub, a pergola-shaded eating area lets Pam and Steve enjoy an outdoor dinner before soaking away their work-day stress.

Pam and Steve use this outdoor space year-round, and on cool evenings, the door-side towel warmer keeps a cozy towel handy for the short trip outside. □

Lisa Koutsky Sten is a senior designer with Harrell Remodeling in Mountain View, Calif. Photos by Charles Miller, except where noted.

FEEDBACK



Just-out-of-the-dryer towels, every morning

It's a real treat to reach outside a cozy, steamy shower and grasp a warm towel to wrap around yourself before stepping into the comparatively cool bathroom. During cooler months, especially in a bathroom with three exterior walls, a towel warmer is just the thing to make the morning routine a little more enjoyable. Not only do towel warmers heat towels, but in humid climates, they dry towels, which helps them stay fresh.

The homeowners say the towel warmer is a luxury they'd include in their next bathroom remodel. Using the hard-wired electric Myson model (www.mysoninc.com; 800-698-9690) in this bathroom, Pam and Steve have to plan ahead about 15 minutes for a warm towel. They decided the wait was no big deal, but for those who have trouble getting organized in the morning, an optional programmable timer is available.

Backyard spa provides a place to relax. A door connects the bathroom to a hot-tub patio. Lattice and plantings help to screen the hot tub and create a private, inviting spot. Photo taken at D on floor plan.

Photo left this page: EmeraldLight.com

