

SERENE SOAKS

Creating a private spa space you'll never want to leave

BY HEATHER SHONING

It's been a long week—oh, who are we trying to kid; it's been a long two years! There's work, laundry piling up, grocery shopping, kids, pets, dinner to make. The list goes on. Now imagine having a special spot to relax at the end of the day and release the tension, tame the stress. Imagine taking a long soak in the tub with a glass of wine and a good book or some relaxing music and candlelight. A beautiful spa-like bath is within your reach. We've got tips from local experts for planning your serene space.



Plan the Palette

Color affects your mood and behavior. Some colors are geared toward energy and happiness, while others create a sense of peacefulness and calm. If you're looking for a spa-like, relaxing bathroom, you'll likely gravitate toward peaceful blue-green hues, grays or warm, rich browns. White offers a clean, peaceful ambience.



Details Matter

Whether it's the texture of a tile or the sexiness of a fixture, the devil is in the details, as they say. The supple feel of leather drawer pulls, the elegance of delicate glass and brushed brass light fixtures or contemporary matte black accents—they all count toward the style that makes you cry "comfort!"



Main Materials

Let's face it—in a bathroom, the primary design components are the bathtub, cabinetry and tile. You might opt for a warm, natural wood tone with lots of grain showing for an earthy element and pair it with a patterned tile and organic elements. Or you might choose dark, sleek cabinetry and crisp white tile. Other considerations to think about include wall-mount cabinetry versus traditional, countertop-to-ceiling backsplash versus a shorter style, or a freestanding tub versus built-in. Do you want an enclosed shower with floor-to-ceiling tile, or a glass surround open to the rest of the room?

No answer is wrong, of course. It's all about your preferred spa experience. Woody and natural? Sleek and sophisticated? Modern and minimalist? You choose.

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Organic Oasis

The layered textures and patterns give this space its organic feel, from the porcelain floor tile and small-format version in the shower, to the decorative wall tile and even the capiz shell chandelier. A plant in the corner and warm, woven wood accents are perfect finishing touches. Mixed metals—black and brushed gold—add even more dimension to the space. "Creating your own spa bath is all about color and what makes you feel relaxed," says interior designer Helly Duncan of Design Matters Home. Because a bathroom is really all hard surfaces, Duncan suggests adding softness through texture, which can include different sizes of tiles and tile patterns (even if they are monochromatic).

This project was a collaboration by:

Velocity Built LLC
velocitybuilt.com

Helly Duncan,
 Design Matters Home

Beth Chisholm,
 Beth Chisholm Kitchen
 Architecture

Macy Rutledge,
 Flatirons Kitchen and Bath

Hillcrest Glass



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Open, but Still Private

Transom-like windows capture the essence of nature outside, while ensuring privacy from nearby neighbors. Even dark wood cabinetry feels light thanks to its floating style. The glass shower surround and bright white tile are fresh and clean, while the tile texture creates a soothing sense of ocean waves. Homeowner Julie Cohen worked closely with Arcadea Architecture while designing the space and has since started her own design firm. She wanted a calm, restful feeling—a place to relax at the end of the day, and when she fell in love with a large-format glass tile, she designed around that. “I call it ‘the color of water,’” she says, “and it was the launching point for the design.”

Cohen suggests that an easy way to create a spa-like, calming bathroom is by eliminating clutter. An easy way to accomplish that is with a vanity with ample storage so nothing needs to be out on the counter. “Sometimes clients like the look of vanity with open areas,” she says. “In this case, rolled up towels can lend to the spa-like feel.”

This project was
created by:

Arcadea Architecture
arcadea.com

Julie Cohen,
Cohen Creative Design



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Modern and Not

This tub on its teak pedestal takes center stage in this primary bathroom, behind it a bold patterned white tile reminiscent of a midcentury design. The warmth of the wood pairs perfectly with the stone blue backsplash hue in a modern textured tile, while the walnut cabinetry harkens to prairie style in its simplicity. Streamlined fixtures in polished silver take a backseat to the rest of the details in this space. "This bathroom needed to be a bit of an escape, where the homeowners could regroup and refresh themselves in order to face the busyness of their typical day," says Cecelia Daniels, lead designer at Rodwin Architecture + Skycastle Construction. "We accomplished this with soothing, natural color schemes paired with more fun and interesting shapes. And, of course, all of the natural light we could muster." ☺

This project was a 50/50 collaboration by:

Rodwin Architecture +
Skycastle Construction
rodwinarch.com

Kimball Modern Design
+ Interiors