

*A thoughtful layout
allows an Arizona couple
to enjoy their casually
elegant bath together
without feeling cramped
or crowded.*

room for Two



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THIS PHOTO: The centerpiece of the bath is a freestanding white acrylic tub with a backrest at each end for enhanced comfort. Sheer curtains and Roman shades lend privacy without shutting out sunlight. OPPOSITE: Practical accoutrements double as decor in the wife's vanity area.





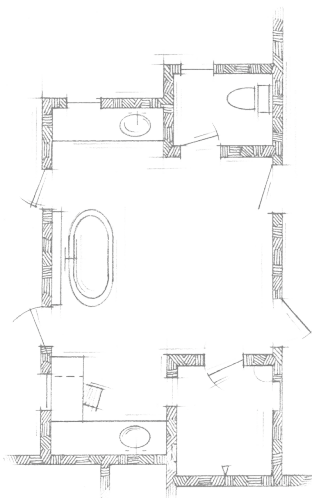
OPPOSITE: The husband wanted drawers and a closed cabinet in his grooming area. A shaded sconce and recessed overhead fixtures illuminate this corner when natural light is low. A lowered ceiling subtly defines the area and creates a feeling of intimacy. TOP: The room's four sconces supply soft lighting through translucent white-linen shades and make a stately bow to the traditional vibe throughout the house. ABOVE: Old-style levers control the wall-mount tub fillers.

THIS RELAXING BATH RETREAT is just outside the busy living areas of a Phoenix-area home occupied by a couple and their three boisterous young sons. But it also sits at the end of a long planning journey that included a brief, unsatisfying detour into make-it-work territory.

When the couple first fell in love with the nearly 1-acre corner parcel, they figured they would try to make its existing home suitable for their family. But after living in the small, cramped 1960s house for some time, it became clear they needed to start from scratch. They moved into temporary quarters so the house could be razed and the site cleared for its replacement—a sprawling one-story, five-bedroom home designed by architect Jim Blochberger with plenty of input from the husband and wife on their needs and preferences.

The style that evolved inside the completed home was “fairly traditional, modest in its aesthetic but really young and family-friendly,” says Caroline Tyler DeCesare, who developed the design along with Nicole Grkovic. Remembering their regular design meetings, Grkovic says, “Our clients favored a soft, serene bathroom, kind of like a retreat, but they didn’t want anything too

the plan



The 14×24-foot master bath features separate vanities—including a designated makeup station for the wife—with a freestanding tub near the room’s center. A walk-in closet provides generous storage, helping the main area stay clutter-free. Doors flanking the tub open to a private courtyard.

“Good design is not about the parts; it’s the sum of the parts.”

—CAROLINE TYLER DECESARE, DESIGNER



grand.” Finding the right wall color became a major focus, and the issue was resolved when the designers suggested a robin’s-egg blue the couple found both soothing and flattering. Abundant light pours into the bath through windows and doors on one side, but privacy is assured with translucent linen café curtains on the windows and Roman shades on the doors, which open to a courtyard.

“This bath is designed the way we imagined our clients would use the space,” Grkovic says. “The wife wanted to be able to sit down and do her makeup,” so a stool with an upholstered seat became part of the plan. “The husband obviously didn’t have that need but wanted good storage,” she adds, pointing out that he preferred drawers to shelves in his grooming area.

Recalling the design process and all the components her clients wanted to include, DeCesare says, “It was all about their comfort and their lifestyle. Good design is not about the parts; it’s the sum of the parts.”

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DESIGNER INSIGHTS: MAKE ROOM FOR TWO

“A bigger master bathroom means a happier marriage!” designer Caroline Tyler DeCesare says. She shares her thoughts on designing a bath with a couple in mind.

- *Create a space* with personal amenities that each partner can reach, relate to, and use effectively. That might mean making room for both a soaking tub and a walk-in shower, or accommodating a makeup table or grooming station, to meet each user’s needs.
- *Separate functions* so that if two people are using the bath at the same time, neither feels crowded or compromised. If space allows, include separate vanities on opposite walls and a closed toilet compartment.
- *Be sure* each partner’s primary need is satisfied, whether it’s accessible storage, sufficient light, or casual comfort.



THIS PHOTO: A glass door opens into a 6×7-foot shower, scaled so two can comfortably use it simultaneously. The walls are faced with white subway tiles, which complement the marble mosaic flooring throughout. **OPPOSITE:** Carved into one shower wall is a two-shelf niche that keeps soaps, shampoos, and sponges within easy reach.