

CALMING WATERS

Contrasting tones and textures
bring peace and harmony
to a master bath.

BY MICHELLE LEISE

Julie Malek, a self-proclaimed tub person, faces hectic days that include keeping up with her 6- and 7-year-old daughters. To drain away the stress, she made a commitment to herself: At the end of each day, she gets a bath—a long, soaking bubble bath. “At night when I get in the bath, I feel like I’m escaping,” she says. “It’s the perfect getaway right here at home.”

Having a great tub wasn’t the only criterion when Julie and her husband, Rick Kornfeld, added a master suite to their 1920s Dutch Revival home. The couple also wanted the bath to evoke a calm, meditative feeling, so they enlisted the help of interior designer Kristi Dinner, architect Doug Walter, and project manager Hamid Khellaf, to build a retreat with style.

“The way you create harmony is by including elements that complement each other. Everything works together to achieve a balance,” Dinner says. “That’s what makes this space so striking.”

To create balance in the bath, the design team combined a number of opposing forces. Cool, watery



OPPOSITE: In addition to balancing colors and textures in Julie Malek and Rick Kornfeld’s master bath, interior designer Kristi Dinner also balanced the budget by choosing inexpensive quality materials. The limestone floor and tile for the shower and tub deck were cost-efficient. “It’s not about how much you spend but what the pieces say together,” Dinner says. **ABOVE:** To make the best use of a narrow space near the tub, Dinner designed a storage cabinet to hold towels, sheets, and other linens.

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greens pair with dark wood tones. Smooth tiles on the vanity and floor play against textured beaded-board cabinets and bamboo-covered windows. Clean Asian-style design melds with a French-inspired vanity and wall tiles that recall those found in Paris Metro stations.

Light and lack of clutter were other elements needed to make the area serene. Walter and Khellaf added a skylight and double windows to brighten the north-facing room, and a large mirror (which doubles as a medicine cabinet) illuminates the space by reflecting sunlight off the walls. To contain any mess, a built-in cabinet stores linens in an otherwise unused and narrow space, and the custom-made vanity, inspired by a furniture piece Dinner saw in France, holds everything from washcloths to Rick's watch collection. Cubbies by the tub make sure shampoos, bath salts, and candles are always nearby.

While the room looks as if it came together effortlessly, deciding on all the details took plenty of weekly meetings. Even choosing the perfect tub became a project. "There's nothing worse than building a bathroom and having a bath that's not comfortable," Dinner says. "So, I had the homeowners meet me several times and get in the tubs we were looking at—actually take off their shoes and get in. We spent several lunch hours doing that!"

Julie eventually found exactly the right tub, and now knows it awaits whenever she needs to relax. □

Photographer: Emily Minton. Architect: Doug Walter, AIA. Project manager: Hamid Khellaf. Interior designer: Kristi Dinner. Field editor: Mindy Pantiel.

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TOP: Satin-finished nickel faucets boast a sleek design that combines form and function. ABOVE LEFT: Rick prizes his watch collection, so Dinner created a storage station especially for the timepieces. An open display rack was originally considered, but the lined compartment drawer in the vanity became the best choice for clutter-free space. OPPOSITE: The homeowners dropped their requirement for dual sinks, opting instead for one large model that resembles a basin sitting on top of a cabinet. "It's always better to have one great sink than two that are squished together," architect Doug Walter says.



