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A 1960s bath gets a 1920s look

Back in Time

BY DAVID MASELLO ■ PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT PETERSON



Before

LEFT: A view of the same wall (above) shows the 1960s style bright-green tiles that framed the original painted wooden vanity cabinet and oversize mirrored medicine chest.

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What had been a fashionable bathroom in 1960 was now dowdy and worn. The design directive given to Bill Simone, president of Los Angeles-based Custom Design & Construction, was to turn this dark, cramped first-floor bathroom with its cumbersome vanity into "a room that had a light, 1920s retro feel to it," he says. According to Simone, the owners of the house, located in California's San Fernando Valley "wanted this guest bath to be upscale in terms of its elements and function."



What Was Done

- Extended the footprint of the space by two feet
- Installed a freestanding claw-foot tub, an oversize separate shower with a marble corner bench, and a custom-built mahogany vanity
- Positioned Carrara marble tiles in varying shapes and patterns to excite the eye
- Put in a double casement window in a windowless wall to bring in natural light
- Detailed the room with a marble chair rail that creates a unifying look by extending into the shower enclosure

OPPOSITE ABOVE:

A custom-built, two-legged mahogany vanity, affixed to the wall, is topped with a ¾-inch slab of Carrara marble. Anodized copper sconces were chosen because their hue matches that of the vanity's wood.

LEFT: The ½-inch tempered glass shower doors were cut around a Carrara marble chair rail that runs the perimeter of the bathroom.

Brushed-nickel hardware is used throughout the room.

BELOW: A claw-foot tub is equipped with a hand spray. Small, hexagonal Carrara tiles appear as flooring while a subway-tile pattern is used on the walls, suggesting wainscoting.

Bill Simone's Top Tip

"Don't be afraid to use freestanding fixtures in a bathroom. Break the traditional mind-set that a bathroom has to comprise built-in pieces. Bring in actual furniture, such as a sculptural vanity, a highly detailed tub, wooden benches to hold towels—even bookcases."



Before

LEFT: A sea-green tub, framed by dull gray tiles and green trim, filled a corner of the old bath. The too-large vanity uncomfortably juts into the tub's space.

Simone had been hired to not only gut and remodel the space, but to add a second floor to the house. This addition let him extend the footprint of the bathroom by two feet. A heavily veined Carrara marble was used on the floor, walls, and in the shower—laid in different directions to avoid monotony. Simone also added a double casement window in a corner of the room, then installed a freestanding tub below it. This bath turned out to be a winner, earning Simone a 2004 Chrysalis Award for Remodeling Excellence. ■

