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Bathroom of the Week: An Old and New Mix for Teenage Girls

A designer nods to traditional architecture while keeping the design fresh and clean



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A complete third-floor renovation of this Shingle-style San Francisco home included this bathroom, shared by two teenage girls. The girls and their mother worked with interior designer Sabrina Alfin to come up with a style that was classic, fresh and befitting the traditional architecture of the home. In terms of function, there's a separate toilet room, plenty of towel bars, a custom vanity with ample storage, and enough space for both girls to get ready at the same time.



Photos by Paul Dyer

Bathroom at a Glance

Who uses it: Two sisters, aged 13 and 16

Location: Pacific Heights neighborhood of San Francisco

Size: 100 square feet (9.3 square meters)

Designers: Sabrina Alfin (interior design) and Stephen Verner of Verner Architects

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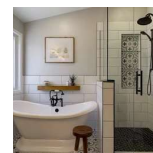
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(architecture)

The bathroom was part of a full renovation of the home's third floor that was designed by architect Stephen Verner. Alfin joined the project to help select the finishes and decorate.

"We wanted to create something classic to go with the traditional architecture but that also felt clean and up-to-date," Alfin says. "These girls are sophisticated and in a few years they'll be using this room when they are home from college. So we didn't want anything to look juvenile."

She came up with a transitional mix that includes a hardworking vanity painted a striking French blue, classic white subway and mini mosaic herringbone tiles, and some retro schoolhouse-inspired accessories. The result is a classic bathroom that feels fresh and will hold up stylewise for many years to come.

The bathtub was a homeowner must-have, and its look typifies the mix of old and new. "My client saw this bathtub at the San Francisco Decorator Showcase last year and absolutely had to have it," Alfin says. "Its simplicity gives it a more contemporary look, but those curved lines nod to traditional style."

The bathtub measures 66 by 31 inches. The tub faucet is wall-mounted and the porcelain faucet handles are a vintage-inspired touch. A bank of windows over the tub lets in lots of natural light. Towel bars are installed just to the right of the tub.

Tub: Emperor, Kohler

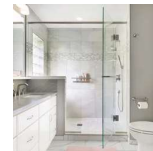
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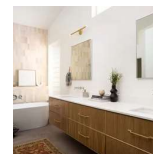
The angled ceiling and window locations dictated the layout. There's a generous shower stall underneath the highest part of the ceiling. The wall without windows provided space for the long vanity for two, and under the windows Verner provided the perfect spot for the tub. A separate toilet room in front of the shower makes it



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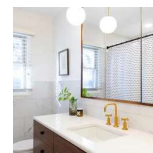
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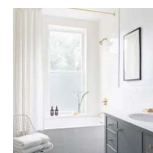
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easier for the girls to share the bathroom while getting ready for school.

The teenagers needed their own spaces for storage and getting ready. The custom vanity gives each their own sink and set of drawers. Two of the drawers contain outlets for hair appliances. The open shelves on the end are great for towels as well as toiletries. And two recessed mirrored medicine cabinets provide additional storage.

The vanity design also mixes old and new. In the traditional category are its furniture-like feet, Shaker-style cabinetry, Calacatta marble-like veining in the quartz countertops, and porcelain faucet handles.

In the more contemporary category are the inset doors and drawers, square sinks, streamlined hardware and thick countertop edge. And while deep blue is a classic, this is a slightly purplish hue that veers more eclectic than navy would have.

While Alfin kept the hard finishes timeless, she brought in some whimsy with the accessories. She accessorized with dip-dyed plant baskets on the wall, a dip-dyed stool and a bathmat with pompom fringe.

Wall paint: Simply white, Benjamin Moore; vanity paint: Kensington Blue, Benjamin Moore; countertops: Calacatta Nuvo, Caesarstone; herringbone floor tile: Savoy collection, Ann Sacks

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Sabrina Alfin Interiors

Vintage-schoolhouse-inspired articulating sconces also add a dose of eclectic style. Black provides some bold modern contrast to all the crisp white in the room. The polished chrome hardware and faucets bring in some shine. And beveled edges add a traditional touch to the mirrors' clean modern lines.

The shower door handle doubles as a towel bar. The shower has a regular shower head and a handheld wand (catch a glimpse of them in the mirror's reflection). Not seen in the photographs is a 24-by-15-inch shower niche that's big enough for all of the girls' toiletries. Alfin tucked it on the other side of the pony wall to keep the items out of view.

There's also a folding teak shower bench mounted on the wall opposite the shower heads.

Sconces: Schoolhouse Electric

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Sabrina Alfin Interiors

Alfin helped balance the budget with relatively inexpensive tile. The mini mosaic herringbone tiles add a small-scale pattern to the floor in the main part of the bathroom and the shower. The white tiles have gray edges. “We matched the grout to the gray on the herringbone tiles,” Alfin says. “Then we used the same gray grout on the subway tile.”

The bathroom suits the girls, who weighed in on the vanity color. And it will continue to work well for them as they mature, as well as for adult guests. Alfin helped her clients make classic choices that will stand the test of time.

Takeaways for a Shared Kids’ Bath

- A separate toilet room will make sharing the space easier.
- Give each child their own designated drawer or shelf space.
- Dual sinks and mirrors help prevent teenage squabbling.
- Go classic with permanent fixtures and use accessories for youthful whimsy.
- Size a shower niche large enough to accommodate everyone’s shower products.

See the rest of this kids-floor renovation.

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