

# Great Inspirations



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PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIC ROTH

**B**y 1980s standards, the master bathroom in this Lexington, Massachusetts, home was sufficient. There was enough space for two, a large vanity counter, even adequate storage space. But its bland bath didn't meet the needs of the new homeowners, who wanted an updated master bathroom in keeping with the elegance and style of the rest of the home. They asked residential designer and contractor Thomas Buckborough, of nearby Concord, to come up with a plan to completely renovate and expand the room.

Working with interior designer Janet Gaffey, of Santini & Company, also in Concord, who had already started working with the couple on the look of the

Reviving  
an outdated  
bathroom



**OPPOSITE:** The new shower stall, trimmed to match the tiles on the tub surround and wall, has a built-in marble bench, body sprays and a rain shower. The arch of the heated towel bar repeats the curves of the whirlpool and vanity. Radiant-heat marble floors are ideal on cold mornings. **THIS PAGE:** Doors on the new vanity have been cleverly faux painted to resemble burl wood; door pulls are made of natural-stone river rock. Above the vanity, pendant lights are hung at eye level to make grooming tasks easier.

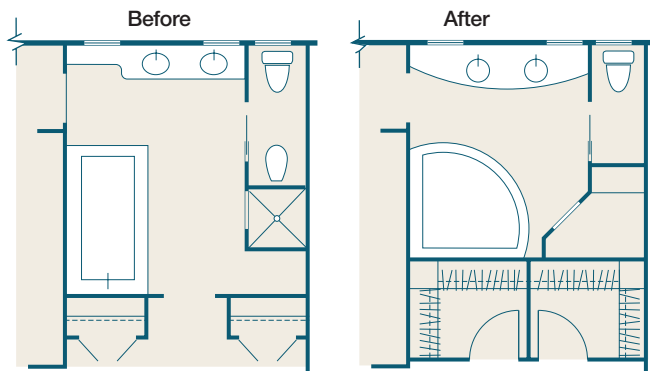
bathroom, Buckborough realized that simply replacing existing fixtures with updated versions would be an inadequate solution for the couple. “The shower was too small to be comfortable for the six-foot-five husband,” says Buckborough. “In addition, they wanted more closet space and natural light, plus some luxurious extras like stainless steel sinks, hand-painted tile and a towel warmer. We needed to rethink the space.”

### Practical Solutions

The old bathroom had two entrances from the master bedroom. Buckborough closed one of them and moved the wall, creating a space large enough for two walk-in bedroom closets. In the bathroom, the new wall provided the extra room required for a corner whirlpool, big enough for two, plus space for a large custom shower stall. Eliminating the adjacent bidet created room for a built-in bench in the shower. To add design drama as well as more light, Buckborough specified a cathedral ceiling and skylight over the vanity.

The vanity itself is the centerpiece of the new master bathroom. “The old vanity was haphazard and unbalanced,” says Buckborough. “The new vanity is gracefully curved to balance the off-center windows.” Overhead, a curved soffit matches the lines of the vanity; it also serves as a plant shelf and holds recessed lights, positioned to reflect light upward from the hammered-nickel sinks directly below. Marble floors, custom tile, and faux-painted walls and cabinets complete the space, giving it the look of understated luxury the couple wanted in their new private retreat. ■

**BELOW:** In order to move the back wall, the old tub had to be replaced. Moving the wall created a squared off area that was perfect for a large corner whirlpool tub. **OPPOSITE:** Columns of tile flank the corners of the new whirlpool, showcasing the fixture and adding Greco-Roman flair to the room design. Walls were delicately faux painted to repeat the style of the imported hand-painted tiles.



**ABOVE LEFT:** The original bathroom had two entrances. **ABOVE RIGHT:** One wall was closed off and moved to create two large closets in the master bedroom. The bidet and small shower stall was removed and replaced with a larger shower. The conventional tub was replaced with a corner whirlpool, and a new vanity was installed with stainless steel sinks and fixtures.

FLOOR PLAN: STEVEN STANKIEWICZ

Luxuries like a large whirlpool tub, elegant fixtures and hand-painted tiles transformed this master bath into a relaxing retreat.

### What Was Done

- Closed off a second entrance to create wall space for a corner whirlpool and larger shower.
- Moved one wall to add room for spacious walk-in closets in the master bedroom.
- Eliminated a bidet to make space in the shower stall for a bench.
- Added a cathedral ceiling and skylight to visually expand the area and brighten it with natural light.



**ABOVE:** The second entrance to the old master bath created a walk-through plan, which resulted in a small tub and a cramped shower. Laminate cabinets were serviceable but uninspired.