



# Spanish lesson

Although within a new addition to an historic home, this suite respects the 1920s Spanish architecture



**Balancing the new with the old** is always a challenge when you have a home in an historic preservation zone. For starters, every aspect of a remodel needs to go through a review process.

But respecting the historic architecture of such a home can bring plenty of rewards, as this project demonstrates. The suite is within a new addition to a 1920s home, which has a

Spanish style of architecture.

Architect Linda Brettler says the addition adds a generous 4000sq ft to the house, and accommodates the entire master suite.

"We had the advantage of a high ceiling, as the addition is stepped down from the rest of the house, but the roof height remains the same," she says.

"Because the house is in an historic preservation zone, the

suite needed to complement the architecture, so we chose to introduce key Spanish motifs, including arches, niches and alcoves. This was also a way to break up the space and make it seem more private and intimate. We didn't want a great sense of openness."

Brettler says the palette needed to be quiet and serene, so the points of difference are in the detail, rather than color

accents. However, Brettler did choose a dark wood stain for the handcrafted vanity to help ground the space visually.

"In true Spanish style, the dark wood vanity is like a piece of furniture. Because the rest of the room is light filled, it provides a balance. The cabinetry also reinforces an Arts and Crafts element that can be seen elsewhere in the house."

The architect created three

separate niches, each framed by a Spanish arch – one to accommodate a large tub, one for the toilet room and one for the shower stall.

"I added a half wall to the side of the tub that meets the vanity, so the wood is not right up against the tub," says Brettler. "It also makes the niche look more substantial."

In keeping with tradition, the architect introduced a

tilled wainscoting that wraps around the entire room. This features high-gloss Ann Sacks Earthenware tiles. The soft gray tones complement the Walker Zanger Vintage glass mosaics that line the wall behind the vanity, and above the wainscoting in the shower.

"We paid a lot of attention to scale," says Brettler. "While the mosaics are very small, the wainscoting tiles are medium

sized, and the Walker Zanger Venatino floor tiles are large. And instead of capping tiles on the wainscoting, we have used slabs of marble, so the trim is continuous. It creates a very finished look."

The walls above the tiled wainscoting are painted in a very soft shade of pale green.

"A pure white bathroom would not have been nearly as interesting," says the architect.

**Facing page:** This bathroom in a new master suite needed to complement the design of an historic Spanish-style house built in the 1920s.

Architect Linda Brettler introduced Spanish architectural motifs, including arches, niches and alcoves.

**Above:** A dark wood vanity, cabinet door and mirror frames help to counter the light tiled elements in the bathroom. Brettler specified tiles in three sizes – small glass mosaics, medium wall and large floor tiles.





**Above:** The toilet also has its own alcove with an arched entry. Setting the bath within a deep surround has provided ledges for bath products and towels.

**Facing page:** Watery blue-green glass mosaics line the upper walls and ceiling in the shower stall. The railing around the top of the wainscoting extends right into the shower. The same marble also features on a bench seat, and in the floor tiles.

In addition to the main windows, there is a small square window above the vanity, and a rectangular window in the shower area. This niche is fully tiled, with glass mosaics lining the ceiling as well as the walls, creating an inviting watery sanctuary.

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**Architect:** Linda Brettler AIA, Linda Brettler Architect (Los Angeles)  
**Builder and cabinet company:** Metropolis Construction  
**Bathtub:** American Vivo  
**Vanity cabinetry:** Dark-stained wood  
**Vanity tops and edge on wainscoting:** Carrara marble  
**Basins:** Kohler Memoirs  
**Faucets:** Newport Brass with Jacobean finish in polished nickel  
**Shower fittings:** Kohler Margaux in polished nickel  
**Toilet:** Toto

**Tiles in shower stall and above vanity:** Walker Zanger Vintage Glass tiles in Pearl Luster in upper portion; Ann Sacks Earthenware tiles in Dew with gloss finish in lower portion  
**Floor tiles:** Walker Zanger Venatino in White  
**Wall tiles:** Ann Sacks Earthenware in Dew gloss  
**Lighting:** Artcraft Steven & Chris Collection

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