



before

sweet retreat

A functional family bathroom is transformed from a dated space into a stylish adult sanctuary

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After five years of family-focused living with their three children in an unrenovated bungalow, Melburnians Liz and Todd decided it was time to invest in a mature parents' refuge. "We wanted to create a beautiful space that could be a recreation place, somewhere away from the frantic pace of family life where we could revive our spirits," explains Liz. Before the renovation, the main bathroom was located downstairs. The couple expanded this space to create an ensuite and dressing room, moving the family bathroom upstairs and "making downstairs all about us!"

Thumbing through a magazine years ago, Liz happened upon Apaier's 'Seascapes' bath, a sumptuous oval tub that became the starting point for the entire renovation. "It looked so luxurious and resort-like," says Liz, who loved the sense of tranquillity evoked by its curved lines. "We bought the bath and twin 'Sanctum' basins to match, and chose to install them without bases for a sensual feminine feel, which contrasts beautifully with the clean, architectural design of the bathroom."

Liz selected silver-toned horizontal wall tiles with a textured finish to give the bathroom a "grown-up" feel. "We put in a feature wall of long, skinny tiles to emulate a waterfall effect as the shower water runs down them," she explains. "It contrasts with our kid-friendly upstairs bathroom, which is white, bright and durable."

Storage was an important inclusion – "Towels, underwear, socks, gym gear, pyjamas are all stored in the bathroom cabinets so we don't have to take them in," says Liz – while under-floor heating was an equal priority; "It gets very cold during Melbourne winters. We set it to switch on half an hour before we get up, so we can walk across cosy warm tiles in our bare feet when it's five degrees outside."

A skylight and floor-to-ceiling windows, which overlook east- and west-facing courtyards, bring an infusion of light and contribute to the sense of serenity in the room. "We planted bamboo on both sides so we'd get dancing shadows in the bathroom all day long," says Liz. A female Buddha was chosen for the east-facing courtyard so that Liz and Todd could look at her tranquil face from the shower. "She releases positive karma on us every morning!"

Calming influences

Bathed with natural light from the new skylight and full-length windows, the shower is bookended by bamboo and serenely overlooked by a female Buddha from The Grotto in St Kilda. By opting for a frameless glass shower screen, and avoiding unnecessary bulk and clutter, the couple have created a spacious contemporary sanctuary.

Counter culture

A pair of Apaier 'Sanctum' basins in Cotton, chosen to complement the bath, are arranged side-by-side on an Essa Stone benchtop in Wild Truffle and teamed with Rogerseller 'Tonic' wall-mounted spouts and basin mixers. The mirrored panel beneath the bench echoes the bank of handle-free mirrored cabinets above and helps to visually extend the space. Dulux Antique White USA gives a warm white finish to the wall edging and ceiling, working harmoniously with the richer hues of the tiles and timber-look cabinetry.

Hidden treasures

Cabinetmaker Greg Stephens of GNS Cabinet Makers crafted the bathroom's cabinetry, including a velvet-lined jewellery drawer. With a second mirror set in the alcove above, the space has become a dedicated vanity area. "I wanted to create a dressing table area to make getting ready to go out quick and easy," explains Liz. >



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Sculptural elements

The gentle curves of an Apaiser 'Seascapes' bath in Cotton is teamed with the clean lines of a floor-standing bath spout, ceiling shower rose, rail shower and towel rail, all from Rogerseller. "I wanted the visual noise to be kept to a minimum, so I chose simple fixtures that wouldn't date," says Liz. A frameless shower screen allows the feature wall of 'Cemento' tiles in Silver from Earp Bros to reign as the standout element of the bathroom. A match for the larger 'Cemento' tiles used on the floor, the tiles were chosen to "complete the room's smoky, sophisticated feel," says Liz.

source list

AnyTile (03) 9563 4422, anytile.com.au. **Apaiser** (03) 9421 5722, apaiser.com.au. **Dulux** 132 525, dulux.com.au. **Earp Bros** (03) 9328 8598, earp.com.au. **Essa Stone** 132 136, essastone.com.au. **GNS Cabinet Makers**, 0412 972903. **Rogerseller**, 1300 781 966, rogerseller.com.au. **The Grotto** (03) 9525 5044. 



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Storage solutions

A shallow alcove, set into a wall of ivory Marco Polo tiles from AnyTile, cleverly solves the issue of limited storage – one of the few drawbacks of a freestanding bath.



budget breakdown

Bath and basins.....	\$6069
Cabinetry.....	\$5800
Tapware, fixtures and fittings.....	\$5765
Toilet.....	\$1700
Tiles.....	\$3055
Design and labour.....	\$4000
Under-floor heating.....	\$1500
Buddha.....	\$700

total..... \$28,589