



Master The Bath

Incorporate what you love into your bath to create the ideal place for relaxation

The most well-designed baths must always play several roles. Not only are they functional workstations at the busiest times, they are pretty places to relax in and retreat to after tiresome, long days. When designing a bath, there are numerous considerations to ponder. Is there enough storage space for towels and necessities, such as soap and cleaning supplies? The surface may look ideal, but one must make sure it's easy to clean and its beauty will have longevity with so much use. Does it work for bathing and grooming oneself, but lack style? Who will be using the bath, just your partner or kids too? Depending on whether you're doing a small redo to update your bath or a large full-blown makeover to create your dream spa, consideration and selection of specific materials will be a priority to achieve your goal.

An easy and very affordable way to dress up the bathroom is a color transformation. Many bathrooms have white fixtures, making it easy to establish the palette you desire. A wall covering or paint selection will change the feel of the space dramatically. Bring in accents — such as a graphic rug, interesting wall art, and some unique lighting — to change your look quickly and easily. A bold stripe on a washable rug always adds a punch to a room. If appropriate, insert door panels with a fabric to add color, pattern, and texture. Many times a vanity can be painted to change the look without compromising the budget. If storage is an issue, a sisal basket and hooks placed properly can be very decorative and are a great place to store necessities. Towels are always ready for bath time when rolled and stuffed into an open basket. Use baskets in a variety of sizes for other bathroom supplies, such as toilet paper, hair dryers, and wrapped soap. For a traditional look, add beadboard wainscoting that lands about 38" above floor level.

It's easy to create style to make your bathroom special. Pull in furniture pieces that seem unique and clever for comfortable style. Simple changes, such as hardware, can turn an ordinary vanity cabinet into a stylish centerpiece. Add a footstool by the tub or perhaps a comfortable chair if there is enough space. Don't be afraid to include warm textures in your design. I have used porcelain tile that simulates wood floors to add a soothing and natural vibe. It is beautiful and practical at the same time. There are many stone-look products on the market today. Laminate flooring and vinyl tiles are affordable alternatives to real stone without

compromising style. These look-alikes can offer the affordability, warmth, and traction when wet; and many times have an easy installation. Handmade tiles and organic textured rugs are available, and will embrace a calming effect and while adding character to a bath.

Many times if the space is small, I opt for a pedestal sink rather than a closed vanity. To make the space seem larger, I choose to make my mirrors as grand as possible. When selecting the paint finish, be careful to choose a semi-gloss rather than a flat due to the damp conditions in the bathroom. Mildew resistant paints work the best in these high-moisture interior spaces. For woodwork and cabinets, stick to the semi-gloss as well. It will be easier to scrub and is considered the most durable.

If you're looking for drama in the bath, there are many resources available. Surround your spa tub from floor to ceiling with beautiful tile that catches your eye and draws you into the bathroom. Use the tile to introduce color and pattern into the space. Tile options are extremely diverse: cement tiles, fused glass tiles, mosaic tiles, and tumbled stone tiles all in a variety of color, size, shapes, and patterns are available. The abundance of tile makes a bath look luxurious and rich. For some incredible impact, use small tiles with tight grout to cover the entire floor in the bath. Penny rounds are always fun and usually work on a budget nicely. Create symmetry with matching vanities and possibly nickel finishes if you're looking for a bit of glamour. Add a chandelier over a soaking tub if code allows for an amazing lighting effect. We all like a little sparkle sometimes.

Color will make your basic white bathroom come to life. A colorful shower curtain can even be enough to have a dramatic effect on a space. Even better, you can change it the next day and have a brand new personality added. Colors and texture will be easier to combine and deliver that simple look if only one material is used on floors and walls. Always invest in the metal. Use quality faucets, polished nickel knobs, and other hardware. Think of it as investment decorating, as they absolutely make everything look that much richer in the bathroom. ■

Candice Adler is the owner and designer of Candice Adler Design in Cherry Hill, NJ, candiceadlerdesign.com, 856-216-8170. Serving South Jersey, Philadelphia, and the surrounding area.



- Bathroom designed by Candice Adler
- Cabinetry provided by Euro Line Design
- Plumbing fixtures provided by Artistic Hardware
- Tiles provided by Coast Tile
- Contracting provided by Bud Graves