



Project Case Study

Spotlight on creative, problem-solving kitchens and baths

Master Suite Remodel Brings the Outdoors In

By Kim Berndtson

It's impossible to miss it. The massive, nearly floor-to-ceiling window just beyond the free-standing tub provides a spectacular view of Colorado's majestic forestland and serves as a backdrop for a master suite designed to be a sanctuary for the busy homeowner.

"My client is a busy professional – an airline pilot who travels a lot," explains Erica Kalkofen, CEO, MBA, DC, ek•kitchens&design, llc., in Winter Park, CO. "She wanted a master bath that would provide a spa-like retreat to come home to, with a master closet that would offer more storage and an efficient organization system."

The end result is a master suite with a free-standing bathing tub, barrier-free walk-in shower, cabinetry with organized storage and lighting that brightens even the darkest corners – all complemented by a master closet designed specifically to accommodate her active lifestyle.

BOLD, YET QUIET

The process began with a 1980s-era nondescript white/oak space. The dated, built-in deck tub had cracked, leaving the homeowner reluctant to even use it. The enclosed shower felt small, dark and cramped. A tiny storage closet left little room for organizing supplies.

The master closet was even worse. "She couldn't find anything, let alone pack quickly and efficiently," Kalkofen says. "It was chaotic at best, and she did not feel relaxed [in the space] at all."

Kalkofen worked in concert with contractor Toby Dellamano, Archer Dream Homes, in Winter Park. "We have worked together for about six years on new-build and remodel projects," she says. "His crew and I like to collaborate and share ideas. We have a relationship where we each feel comfortable contributing ideas. It's a great collaborative process."

Since the pair was unable to change the footprint of the space, they needed to get creative to make the room feel open and airy, yet calm and soothing.

The process began by removing the already-large 4'x4' half-round



The nearly floor-to-ceiling window gives the homeowner a treetop view of the national forest. The MTI Whirlpools' free-standing Antigua bathing tub adds to the spa-like environment.

window and replacing it with an even larger 4'x8'-tall tempered, fixed glass window. The window sits about six inches off the floor, which allowed Kalkofen to position an MTI Whirlpools' free-standing Antigua tub directly in front of it.

"When my client sits in the tub, she has a treetop view of the national

forest," she says. "It's very soothing, daring, bold and expansive, yet quiet all at the same time."

Black moulding around the window, which is a departure from the natural cherry used throughout the rest of the space, draws even more attention to the view. "It helps the eye see the view, not the

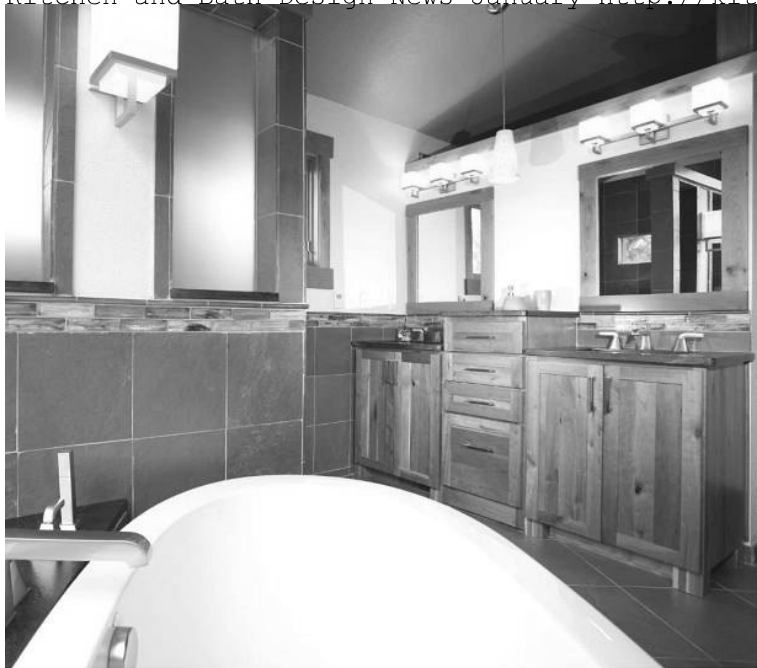
trim," she notes. "Our objective was to bring the outside in, and make the bathroom feel huge. With this trim, there's nothing stopping your eye when you look at the scenery."

TEXTURES STIMULATE THE SENSES

To address the dark, cramped shower, Kalkofen removed a



Photos: Art Fernan, Fernan Photo Vision



Custom cherry vanities provide organization for daily storage items. A taller drawer base in the middle gives definition to the countertop and provides an extra drawer for storage.

portion of the enclosure wall and replaced it with two fixed-pane windows accented with frosted glass, which allow more light to filter into the space. A glass door adds to its expansiveness, as does the curbless, Quick Drain USA drain that offers a zero-threshold appearance.

Evergreen Slate tile, in a soothing blue/green color, lines the shower walls and is repeated on the floor and remaining bathroom walls. "We used the same pattern throughout to visually make the room appear larger," she says. Randomly placed groupings of Sumi-E Zushi mosaic tile add interest to the floor. Zushi tiles also create a "rug" on the shower floor, and midway up the tiled walls, Zushi mosaic bricks line the room. An Estate Metals metal pencil liner sits atop the glass to complete the look.

"The unique combination of materials, details and installation make this design stand out," she says. "The tile, mixed with glass mosaic and brick and topped with the metal pencil liner, offers a textural difference that stimulates the senses."



The base and upper cabinet unit built flush to the wall provides storage for towels and linens (left). A Hansgrohe tub filler adds a stylish note to this soothing yet invigorating master bathroom.

A Panasonic light/fan in the shower offers additional brightness to the previously dark space. "Even though the room faced west and received a lot of natural light, there were dark pockets," she says.

Kalkofen added additional lighting, including several sconce lights from Kichler Lighting and a

pendant light from ELK Lighting. "We put everything on dimmers that we could, and switched the room in such a way to create different levels of lighting, depending on the lighting needed or the mood desired," she says. "Now all corners of the bath are well lit, regardless of whether the sun is shining into the huge window, or if it's pitch dark outside."

ORGANIZING THE CHAOS

In the previous space, one long vanity served triple duty, functioning as a place for daily storage, linen storage and bulky item storage. Kalkofen

gives definition to the countertop.

"Even though the storage length is the same [as before], the usable storage capacity has doubled," she notes.

The vanities are topped with black soapstone, accented with Hansgrohe faucets – to coordinate with those in the shower and at the tub – and Emtek hardware. "They offer an overall rhythm that is pleasing and soothing, yet invigorating as well," she says.

To further address storage issues, Kalkofen converted the tiny storage closet into a base and upper cabinet unit built flush to the wall. "This allows more storage because it's organized and compartmentalized rather than just having an open closet with shelves," she relates. "That tiny closet was a catch-all for bath items, but now it's a clean looking, organized glass-front cabinet for towels and linens, with deep drawers for larger items."

This change also eliminated a door, one of many in the original space. "There was a door to go into the bathroom, a door to go into the water closet, a door to the tiny closet and a door into the main closet," she says. "There were just too many doors for the space."

With the storage closet door gone, Kalkofen eliminated more by removing the one to the master closet and changing the water closet door to a pocket door. "Those changes made a huge difference," she says. "It streamlined everything and made the space more soothing."

In the master closet, elfa shelving by The Container Store and organizational accessories by Sidelines control the chaos that existed in the previous space. CALS Lighting track lights brighten the area. Kalkofen designed the space to include a packing/unpacking station with a laundry sorting area underneath. An ironing board folds out from a shelf to provide for quick pressing. A storage area for luggage, a shelf for accessories, valet rods for dry cleaned items and a rack for shoes offer further organization.

A full-length mirror at one end is also used to visually extend the room. "We kept everything organized," Kalkofen says. "[As a result], she saves a lot of time in the morning."



maintained two sinks, as requested by the client, but replaced the old vanity with custom rustic cherry vanities accented with shaker-style doors, slab drawer fronts and furniture details. Each vanity has its own pull-out storage for daily items. A taller drawer base between them allows neat and tidy accessibility, and

Project Highlights

- Erica Kalkofen of ek•kitchens&design, llc., in Winter Park, CO, remodeled the master suite of a busy airline pilot who wanted a more relaxed, soothing master bath and more organized, efficient master closet.
- An MTI Whirlpools free-standing Antigua bathing tub sits in front of a nearly floor-to-ceiling 4'-x-8' window to provide the homeowner with a spectacular view of the national forest.
- A combination of materials, details and installation make the design stand out, offering a mix of Evergreen Slate tile, Sumi-E Zushi glass mosaic tiles and brick, topped with an Estate Metals metal pencil liner. Custom natural cherry cabinetry with black soapstone vanity tops are accented by Hansgrohe faucets (Atlantis Collection) and Emtek hardware to offer a rhythm that is pleasing and soothing, yet invigorating.
- Lighting from CAL Lighting, Kichler Lighting and ELK Lighting brighten dark pockets of the master bath and master closet.
- In the master closet, elfa shelving and organizational accessories by Sidelines control the chaos. The space includes specialized areas, such as a packing/unpacking station with a laundry sorting area and fold-out ironing board.