

# New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building



*Warming* Trend

Refreshed + Refined

The transformation of a dark, awkward space in a former church called for an ecumenical design solution. The architect and designer collaborated to create a soft, intimate en suite bath and dressing room with rounded corners and standout cabinetry.



# Escape Rooms

Timeless style and spa-like luxury define three primary en suite retreats.

*Text by* MARIA LAPIANA

## Sacred Space

Rafters were among the many design challenges facing the architect of this en suite bath in one of nine luxury condominiums in the former St. Aidan's Church and Rectory in Brookline, Massachusetts. "The original bath wasn't well planned," says Chris Hosford, founder and design director of Helios Design Group. "The fixtures were old, the ceilings tall and irregular, and the eaves of the church complicated things," he adds.

The space was also impossibly dark. "There was one tiny window and a few skylights," says Tim Schiefer, whose firm, Schiefer & Co, built out the space, fabricated the millwork, and did the interior design.

Curved corners softened the bath while blush-toned Venetian plaster lightened it up. Bold casework abounds; the striking tambour walls and cabinetry are made of bleached walnut; the rest of the millwork is white oak.



The woman's dressing room was designed with the client's vast wardrobe in mind. There's lighting behind every closet door (fronted with inset black glass). "You can turn on all the lights at once," says Schiefer, "or just a few to suit your mood."



The flooring is Shell Reef limestone tile.

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** A Sputnik chandelier and integrated LED lighting concealed behind the closet doors illuminate the dressing room. The tambour millwork was fashioned from bleached walnut. The cozy hallway leads to a shower on the right and a water closet on the left.



**ARCHITECTURE:**  
Helios Design Group

**INTERIOR DESIGN, BUILDER, AND CABINetry:**  
Schiefer & Co

**PHOTOGRAPHY:**  
Cody O'Loughlin

**STYLING:**  
Sean William Donovan

The white-oak beams infuse the space with a subtly rustic feel.



## Modern Mix

This primary bath is detailed, but it still presents as a sleek, minimalist space,

“with a mildly rustic feel,” says Rachel Brooks of Feinmann, Inc., a design/build firm in Lexington, Massachusetts. The bath underwent a significant expansion,

For the vanity top and backsplash, designer Rachel Brooks chose Silestone in charcoal with a suede finish.



says the project designer, whose firm was solely responsible for the room's transformation: architecture, construction, and interiors.

"We were charged with adding space, natural light, and storage," she says. "It evolved into something more." Because the client had lived in Colorado, Brooks proposed a few Western notes. "I'm from Wyoming, so we connected on that level," she says. "I immediately thought natural wood, views of trees, and a stone element that evokes nature."

Brooks delivered on the client's requisite soaking tub and designed around it, mixing materials along the way. The walnut cabinetry and vanity are floated to make the space appear open and airy. She used stone-like porcelain tile for the walls and floor, the latter in a herringbone pattern. Made of flat-sawn white oak, the beams "really bring home a feeling of nature," she says. "They feel 'mountainy' to me."



**ABOVE:** The centerpiece of the space is BainUltra's Celestia tub. The polished-nickel floor-mount tub filler is from Kohler. **LEFT:** Brooks chose the same tile—Elysium's Mystic Pearl polished porcelain—in two sizes for two different looks on the shower walls and the floor.

**ARCHITECTURE,  
INTERIOR DESIGN,  
AND BUILDER:**  
Feinmann, Inc.

**CABINETS:**  
Greenfield

**PHOTOGRAPHY:**  
Nat Rea

## Top-Floor Glam

The design narrative for this strikingly modern bath in a Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, penthouse was led by the client’s passion for mosaics. “We knew we wanted to go with a black-and-white feeling,” says interior designer Nancy Hill.

When the en suite bath was taken down to the studs, the layout was reworked to improve views—and more. The design marries warm woods with refined black-and-white details. All the furnishings, fixtures, and finishes were curated by Hill, who worked closely with the builder, Patrick Collins of Kenneth Vona and Son Construction. “It really was an amazing collaboration,” says Hill.

They chose oak for the custom storage towers on both sides of the vanities and makeup table



between them. Leathered marble counters add durability and a velvety look. For the shower walls they went with Nero Marquina marble tiles from Ann Sacks. The shower’s window is frosted even though there’s plenty of privacy, says Hill, “because it *is* the penthouse, after all.”

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** For details, see Resources.



**ARCHITECTURE:**  
John Chapman  
Architect

**INTERIOR DESIGN:**  
Nancy Hill  
Interiors

**BUILDER:**  
Kenneth Vona  
and Son  
Construction

**CABINETRY:**  
Kenneth Vona  
and Son Millwork

**PHOTOGRAPHY:**  
Michael J. Lee

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:** The no-threshold shower features a large frosted-glass window that brings in an abundance of daylight without sacrificing privacy. The shower’s mosaic floor tiles from Artistic Tile are made up of travertine and Silver Wave, Azul Cielo, and Thassos marbles. A makeup table separates twin sinks in oak vanities in this deco-inspired bath.