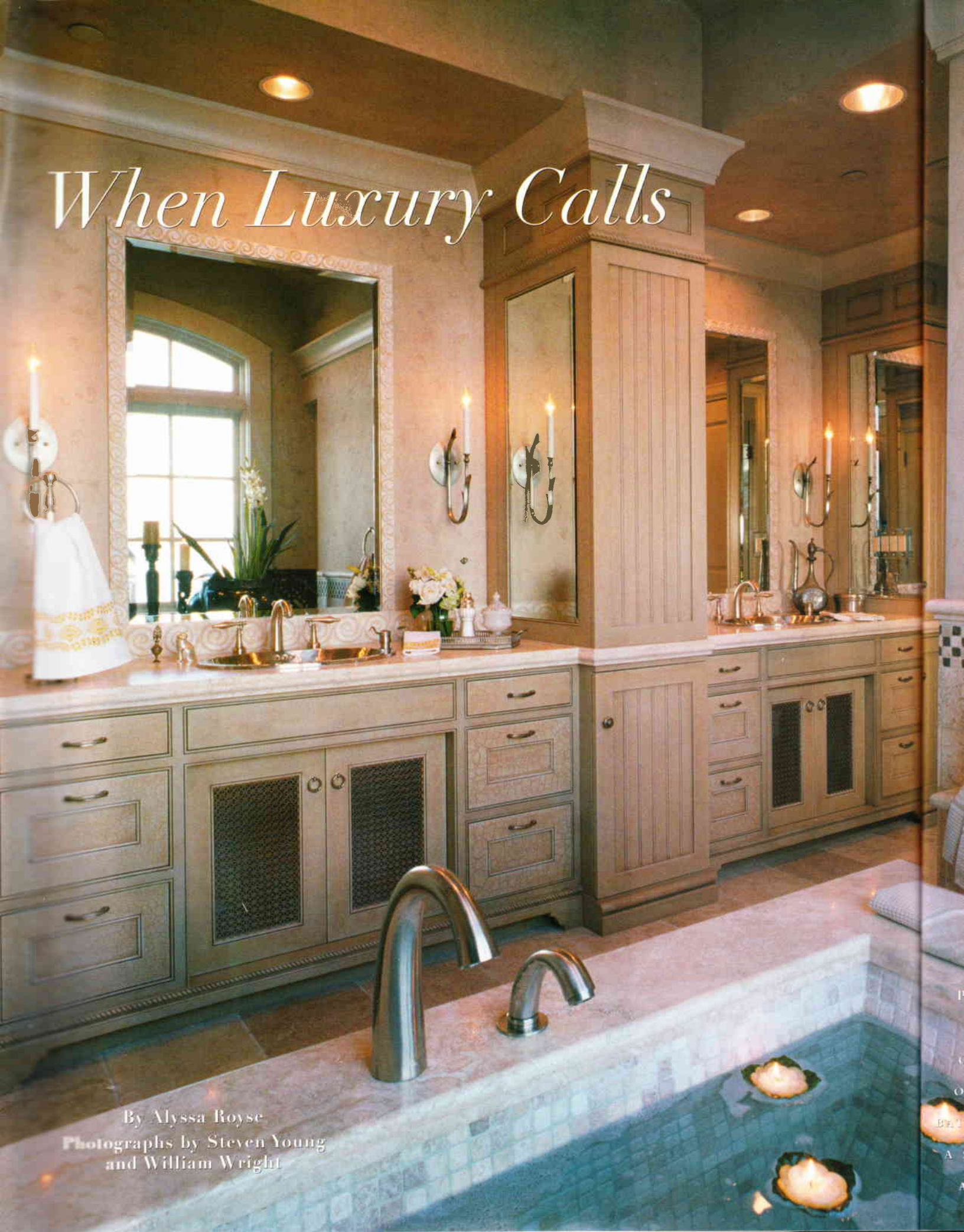


When Luxury Calls



By Alyssa Royse

Photographs by Steven Young
and William Wright

How to get THE LOOK

Use a storage divider to separate vanities.

■
Add scale and visual interest to a monochromatic space with bands of accent tiles.

■
For a touch of sophistication, try nickel fixtures instead of chrome.

No longer relegated to the realm of pure function, bathrooms are becoming a place where people can relax, refresh and rejuvenate—all in the comfort of their own homes. The most luxurious examples fit like custom-tailored suits, meeting every need and craving of the individuals who occupy them.

When Carolyn and Phil Feldsine remodeled their Mercer Island home, they wanted a master bath that reflected the beauty, serenity and variety of textures found in their waterfront site.

Project architect Mark Elster of AOME Architects and interior designer Pamela Pearce brought those diverse textures into the bathroom with hand-finished plaster walls that have the simple dimpling of aged stone. An earthy palette of Ann Sacks tiles covers the floor, counters and bath deck, providing a sense of natural simplicity. The wood cabinetry appears timeworn, much like the trees visible from the expansive windows. Wood columns separating the his-and-hers vanities conceal generous storage spaces.

Custom paint finishes, imported fixtures and specially selected cabinet pulls were used to make essential elements such as cabinets look more like furniture. Built-in benches in the tiled shower not only provide a place to enjoy the view, but the added levels create a sense of extra depth and space.

For Carolyn, however, the mosaic soaking tub is the truest luxury. In order to get a perfect fit, the tub wall was molded to the shape of her back in a process that involved her sitting in the tub (with her jeans on, she's quick to add) so that the plaster and tile could be layered and chiseled to conform to her body. From this custom nook, Carolyn can choose to look out at the view or turn on the flat-screen TV hidden in a wall recess.



PLASTER WALLS, EARTHY
TILES AND CRACKLED
CABINETS LEND A SENSE
OF AGE TO THE FELDSINE
BATHROOM, WHICH FEATURES
A SEPARATE SHOWER (right)
AND STEPS TO THE TUB.

Project architect Dennis Marsh, also of AOME Architects, worked with Pamela Pearce to create a classically elegant master bath in a remodeled Medina home.

Separated from the bedroom by a private hallway, this bathroom feels like a true getaway. Varied ceiling heights and wall planes envelop the user in a cozy embrace, while sunshine flooding in from a skylight reflects off the marble surfaces and brushed-nickel fixtures.

His-and-hers marble vanities are separated by a sunken makeup table and antique bench that invite relaxation. The varying levels are a key to the seamless functioning of this bathroom. Bound by structural considerations for the roof, Marsh turned a low-ceilinged space into a cozy nook for the marble tub. Across from that, under one of the high points of the ceiling, he fashioned a large marble shower for two fitted with Kallista fixtures.

While the marble floors and wainscot create an austere grace, the room is warmed with textured plaster walls that were painted and then glazed to reflect light from the skylight. Strategically placed silk oriental rugs, silk-upholstered furniture and antiques add a touch of comfort to this elegant bathroom.

"We tried to add finishes that would make their collection of antiques fit comfortably in the new surroundings," says Pearce.

Those antiques are as much about function as they are about form. The 19th-century *bonnetière* not only defines the space between the tub and shower, it houses all the towels—that is, when they're not hanging on the handy towel warmer.

Not immune to the call of technology, the homeowners tucked both a television and a telephone into a small cabinet in the wall—for times when they want the real world to seep into their personal hideaway. ■

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IN THIS MEDINA BATHROOM, FURNITURELIKE VANITIES ARE SEPARATED BY A MAKEUP TABLE AND FLANKED BY FRAMED WOOD MEDICINE CABINETS.

How to get THE LOOK

Place a sunken makeup area between vanities; tuck a stool underneath.

■
Add elegance to the bath with an Oriental rug.

■
Store towels and toiletries in an old armoire.