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Photos by JILL GREER

Lilu Interiors designed a clean-lined contemporary master bathroom featuring light maple cabinets, Cambria vanity top, improved task lighting and cozy heated floors.

BEFORE & AFTER

An outdated master bathroom goes from center stage to a contemporary, private spa-like retreat.

By LYNN UNDERWOOD • lynn.underwood@startribune.com

The challenge: Revamp a 1980s dysfunctional master bathroom and give it a clean-lined contemporary style with better lighting, bigger shower and abundant storage.

Design team: Interior designers Lisa Peck and Ally Evander, Lilu Interiors, Minneapolis, www.liluinterior.com, and Tommy Thompson, Double T Construction, Prior Lake.



Lisa Peck

Goodbye to the '80s: Homeowners Kathy and Mike Emerson had already updated and remodeled many rooms in their 1986 Eden Prairie two-story, which they had originally built. The couple were finally focusing on the master bathroom, which boasted a popular 1980s feature: "The Jacuzzi tub was in the middle of the bedroom, and there was carpet around it," said Kathy. "We had to dry off really quick."

The mirrored vanity was along a wall that was also open to the bedroom. Lighting wasn't sufficient for applying makeup or for shaving. And it was difficult to keep the space neat without convenient storage.

"We've done many remodels based on the problem of having a tub in the master bedroom," said Peck. "In the 1980s, it was a high-end feature."

Smart separation: To give the owners more privacy, Peck designed a new bathroom enclosed by walls and entered through a doorway from the bedroom. She repositioned the new vanity, bathtub and larger shower. "We took space from the master bedroom to create more storage," said Peck.

Spa getaway: Peck put in a heated tile floor, deep soaking tub and spacious tiled shower with two different showerheads.

Purple power: The Emersons, who are big Vikings fans, chose purple stained-glass accent tiles, even around the vanity mirror, to tie all the elements together. "It adds richness and color and lifts their spirits," said Peck.

Vanity design details: The clean-styled cabinets are natural maple. Kathy was open to something completely different from the original dark stained cabinets. "Our taste has changed," she said. The new cabinets "give it a light, airy spa feeling." The dual-sink vanity top is neutral taupe-and-cream Cambria, "to keep [it] from overwhelming the space," said Peck. "The stained glass is the accent piece."

Let there be light: Contemporary light fixtures mimic the bathroom's horizontal lines. LED lights also illuminate the vanity mirror from behind. A solar tube in the ceiling draws natural light into the windowless room. "The moonlight even comes in at night," said Kathy.

Savvy storage: An "appliance garage" with plug-ins stores electric grooming tools out of sight.

The result: "The bathroom is timeless because the color palette is personalized to the client, as opposed to being based on current trends," said Peck. Plus it adds value to the home because it's cohesive with the other remodeled spaces, she said.

Best part: "After a gym workout, I put in a little bit of lavender and relax in the soaking tub before bed," said Kathy.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Purple stained-glass tiles add colorful accents. A hair dryer is stored in a swing-open "appliance garage." The remodeled bathroom included a bigger, better tiled shower.



Provided photos

BEFORE: The vanity and whirlpool bathtub were part of the master bedroom, a popular 1980s design feature that offered little privacy.

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