

17-year-old bathrooms are like new again

With new tiles and fresh ideas, these homeowners breathed new life into tired bathrooms

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PORTSMOUTH — When Cindy and Roger Sherman bought their Portsmouth house, they knew it needed work. The home needed updating, and the first place to start was the bathrooms.

As Ms. Sherman said, "They were horrendous."

With a handful of ideas cut from "Architectural Digest," a vague sense of a color scheme and a specific budget in mind, she set out to renovate one bathroom first. Tops on the list was the ground-level guest bathroom.

The problems were cosmetic as much as functional. Despite its odd angles, the room had to be wheelchair accessible for Ms. Sherman's mother, and it also needed to be kid-friendly for their many guests with children.

Today the bathroom sparkles. With the help of Gaye Weatherly, owner of Weatherly Tile & Stone also in Portsmouth, the Shermans overhauled that bathroom plus two others in the house.

Those with glass bathrooms

Ms. Weatherly introduced the

Shermans to glass tiles, a relatively new product in the world of tile and stone.

"Glass is easy to clean because it's not porous, so it's virtually germ-free," said Ms. Weatherly. The advantages to putting down glass, especially in the bathroom, have made it extremely popular over the last couple of years, and more companies are coming out with more colors and designs all the time.

Ms. Sherman selected a mosaic of tiny blue glass tiles for the shower floor. Luminescent under bright bathroom lights, the shower floor appears as jewelry, and large square ceramic tiles along the shower walls cast undulating waves of blue. White grout borders the tiles, maintaining a lightness in otherwise unlit corners of the bathroom.

"I am really happy with the way everything turned out," Ms. Sherman said. Inspired by the myriad of textures and colors presented in Ms. Weatherly's showroom, Ms. Sherman returned for a smaller renovation in an upstairs bathroom.

"I did not want to redo the entire floor of the bathroom, because it's the only one upstairs between two guest bedrooms, so it couldn't be out of commission for long. I brought home samples and matched the existing tans and beige with newer styles so it all

blended," said Ms. Sherman. She essentially updated the entire look of a 17-year-old bathroom by replacing the vanity and tiles along the backsplash.

"It made a huge difference and was worth every penny," Ms. Sherman said.

Finally, Ms. Sherman went back to overhaul the master bathroom. Willing to spend a bit more to get exactly what she wanted, she pointed initially chose tumbled marble and honed marble, a pricey combination.

"What I wanted was so expensive, so we kind of worked backwards. I picked out what I liked, then Gaye modified my choices to better fit into my budget," Ms. Sherman said.

She splurged on a \$25-per-square-foot handmade basket weave of Jerusalem gold limestone and thassos white honed marble made by a women's cooperative in India.

"It's a lot easier to spend the money when you know it's not going to some sweatshop. The beauty of it is that it's all handmade by women," Ms. Sherman said.

"The whole experience was really fun. They only drawback is that I have guests who stay longer than usual. They say they'll go home on Sunday, but by Wednesday, they're still here! Perhaps we made it too nice," she said.



Transforming old bathrooms can be easy if you use the right approach: pretty new tiles, crisp fresh paint, modern fixtures and lots of creative ideas.