

THIS PHOTO: The modern soaking tub adds sensuous curves that soften the room's lines. "I love the sculptural feel of it," interior designer Kathleen DiPaolo says. Homeowner Cecilia Hirko says the shape reminds her of a cocoon. "It just completely envelops you," she says. "To me, watching TV while soaking in a tub is the ultimate luxury. It's like heaven." OPPOSITE: Succulents bring a bit of the garden indoors.



Brimming with natural light, this spacious bathroom deftly marries modern sensibility with the great outdoors.



Quiet Reflection

WRITER *Ken Wysocky*
PHOTOS *Edmund Barr*
FIELD EDITOR *Andrea Caughey*
STYLIST *Robin Tucker*



THIS PHOTO: Adjacent to the tub and shower area, the anteroom features a double vanity and a trio of medicine cabinets tucked within a large expanse of mirrors. To keep the vanity from appearing too bulky, DiPaolo opted for a floating design. "It feels lighter because it's up off the floor," she says.

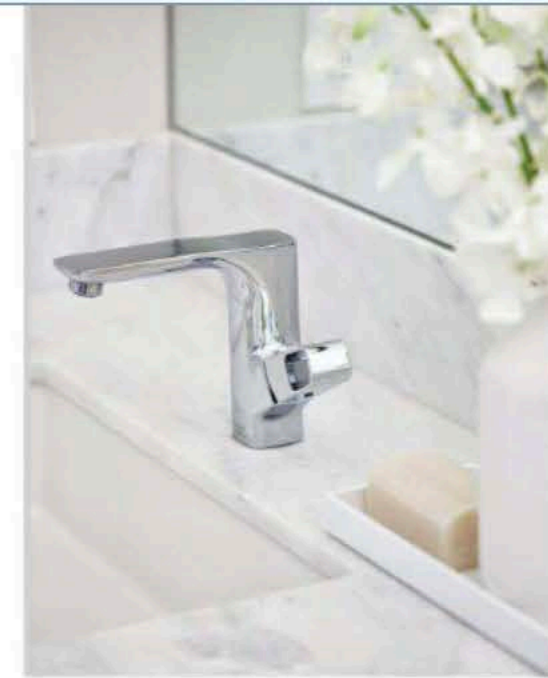
A MASTER BATH THAT EMBRACES THE OUTDOORS,

yet still offers privacy? Sounds like a tricky proposition. But at Cecilia Hirko's home in La Quinta, California, the solution was perfectly clear: A bank of nearly floor-to-ceiling windows that offers soothing views of a walled garden. "I know the term is overused, but I really wanted a spa-like experience—to bring the outdoors inside," Cecilia says. "The entire garden wall is covered with a flowering vine, and hummingbirds visit our feeders in the morning. It's just so bright and beautiful. This is one of my favorite rooms in the house."

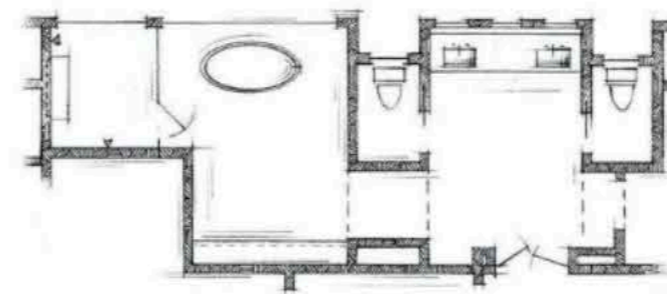
To underscore the room's modern, less-is-more ambitions, interior designer Kathleen DiPaolo opted for streamlined metal trim on the windows that boldly frames the outdoor view. "The window frames bring your eye across, so the room looks even more expansive when you enter," DiPaolo says. "The clean lines really modernize the space."

Basking in sunlight, a simple, organic-shape freestanding tub embodies the bath's contemporary spirit. Above the tub, a drum-

TOP RIGHT: An unusual handle design gives the vanity faucets a distinctly modern profile. "They feel lighter because you can see through them," DiPaolo says. RIGHT: Cabinetry opposite the tub provides both open and closed storage. Behind the open shelves, lightly textured silk wallpaper in a watery blue adds "a little splash of color, but nothing too overpowering," DiPaolo says. BOTTOM RIGHT: Laundry hampers are cleverly integrated into the bank of built-in shelves and cabinets.



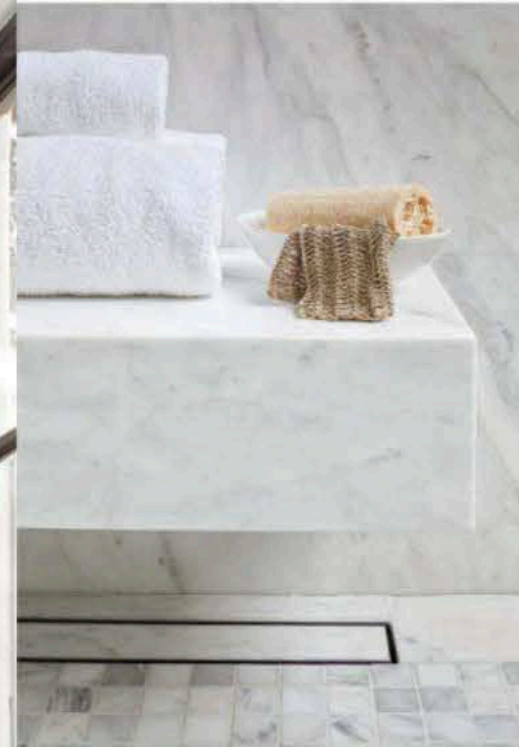
the plan



This expansive bathroom separates its hardworking areas from its luxurious ones. A wall-to-wall vanity with integrated sinks in the anteroom provides sleek storage and ample counter space, while a conjoining room serves as the bathing area. The freestanding tub enjoys a prime position by floor-to-ceiling windows that overlook the walled garden; a frameless glass door elegantly partitions the shower stall from the tub area.

“The window frames bring your eye across, so the room looks even more expansive as you enter. The clean lines really modernize the space.”

—CECILIA HIRKO, HOMEOWNER



OPPOSITE: The shower stall's book-matched slabs of Borghini marble bring subtle visual drama to the monochromatic color scheme. A mosaic fashioned from 2x2-inch Carrara marble tiles adds interest underfoot. FAR LEFT: Good design is all about the details, as evidenced by this shower drain that mimics the rectangular bench and shower niche above it, as well as the nearby window panes. “The repetition keeps the room feeling clean, simple, and modern,” DiPaolo says. LEFT: A rain-style showerhead supports the room's spa-like vibe.

DESIGNER INSIGHTS: SOPHISTICATED TILE

Even though we walk all over bathroom tiles, they still deserve some respect as an important design element. Interior designer Kathleen DiPaolo shares her tips.

- *Stay grounded.* In bathrooms with tall ceilings, DiPaolo suggests using tile that visually anchors the space. In this bath, the charcoal gray floor tile perfectly balances the room's lighter elements.
- *Embrace curves.* Too many square edges can make bathrooms look clinical. The remedy? Tiles with rounded patterns that help soften the lines.
- *Play up the pattern.* To keep the focus on an eye-catching pattern, pick a grout color that closely matches the tile's base.
- *Mix it up.* Use different shapes and sizes of the same material to create a sense of textured harmony.

shape pendant nods to the outdoor scene with a nature-inspired design that adds a touch of whimsy to the sophisticated space. Simplicity shines again in the nearby shower, which features frameless glass, white marble, a rain-style showerhead, and a cantilevered bench.

At 350 square feet with 10-foot ceilings and the wall of windows, the bathroom is spacious, bright, and airy in its own right. But those qualities are further heightened by small windows above the 9½-foot-long vanity in the anteroom, which allow even more natural light to pour in. Meanwhile, a low-key palette of whites and creams ensures that the garden holds everyone's attention. “I wanted to focus on the garden, to make it pop,” Cecilia says. “And by not going with a lot of color, it also makes the room appear bigger.”

The only visual flourish is at floor level, where handmade charcoal gray concrete tiles from Portugal draw worthy acclaim. The tiles feature a distinctive pattern of curves that seem to mimic lapping waves. The overall effect? A sanctuary truly worthy of being called spa-like.

Resources begin on page 122.