

SUCCESS!

Minor rearranging provided elbow room in the 45-square-foot bath—even 10% makes a difference in a small room.

**INSET** (before) The bath had last been remodeled in the 1980s. **OPPOSITE** The mirrored door is painted the tile color. (far right, from top) Tile frames the medicine cabinet. • A vintage ceiling fixture adds a note of whimsy. • Custom casement doors protect the window in the shower. • A vintage ceiling fixture adds a note of whimsy. • Custom casement doors protect the window in the shower.



BEFORE





## TRUE BLUE REDO

In a Prairie-style house, the bland 1980s bath is redesigned for comfort, and with a 1920s vibe. **By Michael Crull / Photos by Rich Michell**

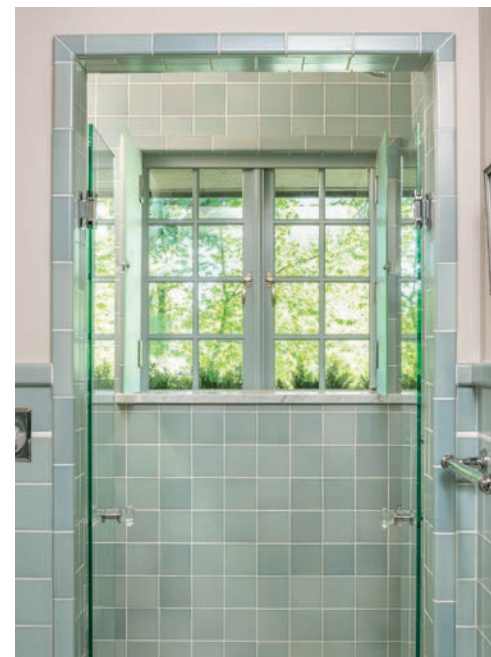
**Here in the Twin Cities** and beyond, thousands of wonderful old bathrooms survive from the 1920s and '30s. You know the ones: period tile, pedestal sink, Art Deco lighting—also clogged pipes, a tub but no shower, the window in the wrong place. The same problems plagued our main bathroom.

Our 1922 house was purchased as a fixer upper. Some years ago, we did a very necessary kitchen renovation, and added a powder room at that time. (My husband, David

Heide, is principal in David Heide Design Studio, and I'm the firm's senior interior designer.) As built, the house had only one bathroom, upstairs. It's just 9' x 5'4" and had accommodated an entire family.

Functional but inelegant and cramped, it had been remodeled in the late 1980s. I reimagined it as a simple but subtly glamorous 1920s space.

We borrowed several inches from the adjacent hallway, allowing a more generous and symmetrical shower area. We gave up







## THE POWDER ROOM

In the same house, the powder room (below) is in the kitchen addition at the rear, an earlier design for their own home by David Heide and Michael Crull. Unlike the tiled upstairs bath, this room used by guests is done in a more “furnished” style, seamlessly flowing into the living spaces. It shares an Arts & Crafts-era palette with the exterior of the 1922 Prairie-style house.

Black wall paint and tiles from Mission Tile West in Derby Brown complement the strong architecture of the room.



**LEFT** Taking the place of a floor radiator, a recessed niche with a shelf is decorative while adding a bit of counter space.

**FAR LEFT** (top) A new paint scheme brings out the best in the 1922 home, which before had been done up in green and white. The off-center entry block softens the cubic massing. (bottom) In the powder room downstairs, the painted cabinet was designed by the Heide studio.

the only bathtub in the house, and we see our clients often doing the same thing. The new shower is more generous than the tub was, and has an integrated seat.

We really wanted to get away from the sanitary-white-bath concept. Color was introduced in the 1920s, first in tile. We also decided to ignore the current mania for grey. We found tile shards during demolition that suggest the original tile was green. But, as David puts it, “blue speaks to us, it’s peaceful and calm and watery.”

Tile is used not only on the floor and walls, but also as trim around the casement windows and medicine cabinet. Decoration is minimal, addressing the small size of the room.

The bath isn’t showy, but we did obsess over details. Casement windows over the tub—which now are in the shower—had had an inward swing. They were re-engineered as outward-opening windows with a pull-across, interior screen that

retracts invisibly into the right-hand jamb. Small, hinged glass doors protect the wood windows from shower water. (The glass is textured for privacy.) The tile trim is waterproof. All in all, that shower area is the most expensive three feet of any construction we’ve done!

Towel bars are glass and fixtures are period-correct chrome. Crystal knobs echo originals on second-floor bedroom doors. Antique Art Deco sconces flank the medicine cabinet over the original sink. The ceiling fixture is vintage, featuring a reverse-painted glass collar surrounding a conical glass shade.

We removed the bulky radiator in favor of a low-profile, wall-mounted Runtal unit that takes up no floor space. The shelf over the radiator had been, if nothing else, useful countertop space. In its place is a nook set into the wall; the marble shelf displays a vase of flowers but can also hold a guest’s toiletries.