



Modern Prairie

The new bathroom perfectly suits the 1915 Prairie School house.

By Patricia Poore / Photos by Susan Gilmore

“We wanted upgrades—but we needed designers with a historic-preservation ethic,” say homeowners Susan Smith and Brian Lewis. Years before, the couple had discovered David Heide Design Studio when they took an architects’-homes house tour. As they contemplated renovation of their historic house in St. Paul, “our first thought was to call Heide.”

Attributed to the firm of Bentley & Hausle, the 1915 house is a fine example of residential Prairie architecture. Long-time previous owners had taken good care of the house but its interior was somewhat dated in appearance and function. Upstairs, for example, five little bedrooms shared one bath.

Although Lewis and Smith first considered an addition with a new back entry, budget had them keeping the original layout. Upstairs, three tiny rooms became a primary suite: two bedrooms were absorbed into one large bedroom and the third became the new bathroom. Original walls stayed in place and partitions were added to create privacy alcoves for the water closet and custom shower. With period-friendly fixtures, classic white tile, and a serene palette, the room nods to Prairie School motifs while offering modern comforts.



1. PLANNED FOR PRIVACY

The bath suite is nicely partitioned. On the wall opposite the tub, the toilet and showerbath each get their own little room.



2. PRACTICAL CONVENTIONS

The large, curvy soaking tub all but defines baths of this era. Easy-to-clean white subway tile and small hexagon mosaics on the floor complete the picture.

3. SUBTLE MOTIFS

The historic leaded windows remain unchanged; their square motif became a decorative element in new work. Trim details are cued by the house or Prairie School precedent.

BE INSPIRED...

Among Heritage Tile's historical collections are subway tiles and mosaics. Shown here: Subway Ceramics wall tile in Gloss Bianco with Marble Greek Key in Carrara White and Jet Black. The Marble Mosaics floor is honed Basketweave in Carrara White and Jet Black. heritagetile.com



Lighting in the bathroom was designed by the Heide studio. Similar is the 'Humboldt' One Light Straight Arm Sconce from Brass Light Gallery; square sconces with frosted shades complement Prairie and Craftsman houses. Available in 15 finishes including nickel options. Fixture: \$309. Shade: \$27. brasslightgallery.com



Stickley's 'Little Treasures' Copper-Top Drink Table is modeled after a plant stand by Grand Rapids Arts & Crafts designer Charles P. Limbert. A copper top is mounted on a square base with spindles and arched aprons. Of solid oak, it's 24" tall and 11" square. MSRP \$1,153; inquire at your local Stickley dealer. stickley.com

The 'Brighton' acrylic, double-ended, freestanding tub is an affordable alternative to porcelain on cast iron. It comes in 59", 67" and 71" lengths; no faucet drillings, multiple drain finishes, optional tub foam insulation. The 71" tub is \$1,999.99. Vintagetub, vintagetub.com

