



AFTER

A Quest for Calm

WHITE PAINT TRANSFORMS A GREEN-TILED HALL BATH INTO A PLEASANT STOP FOR GUESTS



BEFORE

BEFORE:

Bright green tile, wild wallpaper, a dated sink faucet, soap dishes and lighting, plus a too-small mirror and lack of artwork gave the bath a utilitarian, rather than a luxurious spa feeling.

AFTER:

(Left) New artwork, Kohler faucet, lighting and medicine cabinet/mirror add spa glamour to this once-tired bathroom.

When I first met with Denise Vecera and she turned on her hall bathroom light, I must admit I took a very deep breath.

The room was extremely bright green and very different from the quiet, neutral Zen-like style of the rest of her lovely home.

Her budget was only \$2,500, yet she wanted a total transformation, so I knew immediately we could not afford to gut the room and start over. She knew her hall powder/guest bath needed a functional, inexpensive update to blend with the rest of her 1950s-era home, which already had been totally remodeled.

TILE TASK

Since she had admired Paula Murphy's vintage white kitchen featured in the May 2006 issue of *Houston House & Home*, we decided to spend the minimum amount possible to restyle her existing bathroom and make it flow with the rest of the house (and she actually came in below budget).

The old 1950s green tile was "hard for a mother to love" and didn't go with much in today's marketplace.

tip Since the dated green tile was everywhere — walls, floor and countertop — I recommended we cover up as much of it as possible. I suggested she cover the floor with a loose-laid, bound latex-backed seagrass rug, custom made by Creative Flooring. Since durable seagrass comes from the sea, it does not water stain like sisal, which comes from the agave cactus and is not suitable for wet areas and feels prickly, rather than rope-like, under foot.

Because tile walls don't get the same wear and tear as shower and floor tiles, I recommended she hide them with paint. First, you clean the tile with TSP, sand the tile lightly and then paint with Graham Aqua Borne Ceramic undercoater and white Graham Aqua Borne Ceramic paint, special products one of my clients had successfully used to paint her kitchen ceramic tile. It is a two-step undercoater/top-coat process that is quite durable. You can read about it at www.grahampaint.com/product_enamels.htm and it is available from Premium Paints of Houston.

tip Re-purposing ceramic wall tile by painting it keeps it out of landfills.

CURTAINS & CABINETS

I recommended she leave the floor and shower tile alone, hiding the bright green shower tile behind a fresh white "Monogrammed Catina" shower curtain from www.ballarddesigns.com and hiding the floor tile under the custom seagrass rug.

While I suggested she could replace the vanity with an IKEA "Flaren" ▶

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AFTER

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Painting the wall tile and wallpaper and hiding the bright green floor tile underneath a custom, loose-laid seagrass rug totally changed the bath. New fixtures, lighting and repurposed artwork from other rooms add a more luxurious feeling. The antique Chinese stool came from Foxglove Antiques.

BEFORE:

Bright green ceramic tile and busy, exotic wallpaper were spoiling the looks of this unglamorous circa-1950 hall bathroom.



BEFORE

JOETTA MOULDEN offers home makeovers using your own home furnishings to create the home you've always dreamed of. Joetta believes your pieces that have been collected through the years are a reflection of your personality and can be artfully arranged.

Her ability to focus on your personal style and not let her own preferences influence the design of your home makes her unique. See more makeovers on her Web site at www.shelterstyle.com, e-mail her at joetta@shelterstyle.com or call 713.461.2063. Shelterstyle.com recently was given a "Pages of Happiness" rating and "Super Service Award" presented to the rare 5 percent of companies that achieve and maintain a superior rating on www.angieslist.com, a word-of-mouth network for satisfied consumers.

trade secrets

- Think outside the box. You can paint wallpaper and tile if you use the correct primers and paint.
- A professional knows about covering dated ceramic tile flooring with a durable and practical custom loose-laid, latex-backed seagrass rug and, thus, saving tile tear-out, replacement and labor.
- Think "green." Existing bathroom cabinets can be trimmed with wood picture molding and painted, instead of ending up in a landfill.
- Sometimes the most effective strategy is to not gut your bathroom, but to rethink the surfaces that are already paid for.

sink cabinet and "Hollviken" sink, Denise decided instead to simply add wood trim and paint her existing vanity.

tip Because the existing circa-1950 linen cabinets were incredibly plain, I provided Denise with both a drawing and the name of a handyman who could add wood trim to her cabinet doors. She had him add the same trim to the sink vanity cabinet doors and dummy drawers, as well as add new drawer pulls to the fronts of the bare dummy drawers to dress them properly.

WALL TREATMENTS & FIXTURES

The handyman first floated the seams of the brightly wallpapered walls with joint compound and then sanded and primed with a special wall primer specifically made for painting wallpaper. Lastly, the walls were painted with Benjamin Moore's flat "Philadelphia Cream" (HC-30), a warm, neutral color that complements the neutral seagrass floor and Denise's existing bamboo blind.

During the meeting, I also recommended she remove her dated soap dishes from the wall and hang art over the sink, which will happen at a future date. In addition, I suggested she install a new brushed nickel light fixture (from M&M Lighting) and Kohler faucet, plus a medicine cabinet, 24-inch towel bars and shower curtain rod, all from The Home Depot, to further update the bath.

tip A bathroom should be as lovely as the rest of your home. Since Denise found a unique metallic tile piece from Eclectic Home, we moved it from her office to hang over the bathroom window. The pair of antique Oriental woodcarvings over the toilet wall came from Eastern Art Furniture on Harwin Drive that we moved from the end of the hallway to the bath.

The framed carving over the new towel bar came from Noel Furniture, and the Sid Dickens tiles beside the sink came from Events.

Denise initially hoped the room would clean up enough to make it acceptable. Instead, the new powder bath is a room she is proud to send guests to when she has dinner parties.

"Everyone who sees it cannot believe how awesome the room looks and how 'green' and inexpensive the renovations were. Now, I feel guilty even thinking about a total remodel," Denise says.

