

# Graded on a Curve

For this master bath, it takes more than straight lines to bring peace

By Alice Liao

For some, serenity lies in the simplicity of a straight line, the candidness of rectilinear forms. Others see it in a gentle arc or an undulating shape. Such was the case for designer Anthony Albert Passanante, CKD, of Peter Salerno Inc., when a couple in Wyckoff, NJ, hired him to turn their master bathroom into a peaceful and spa-like retreat. Passanante's first response? Curves. "Curves can do wonders to the eye," he said. "Something about them is very soothing." Add to that a refreshing palette of sea-green glass and soft white finishes, as well as an aesthetic that is as minimal as it is open, and the result is one that welcomes in the morning and rejuvenates at night.

Passanante's design breathes new life into a space that was desperately in need of a makeover. Walls were clad in pink and white wallpaper that featured both stripes and florals, and an oversized gray tub surround, outfitted with a pink tub, dominated the space, hampering its flow. The shower and toilet were partially sectioned off from the rest of the bathroom, and a gray laminate vanity and pink basins and floor tiles had all seen better days. The color scheme, in addition to being outdated, did little to brighten the room, which, despite having a window and skylight, appeared gloomy and shabby.

The remodel addresses these problems while staying within the existing perimeter walls and employing a similar floor plan. New plumbing fixtures are situated in roughly the same locations as their predecessors, noted Passanante, and the window and skylight, aligned with each other, remain as they were to orient a whirlpool that serves as a focal point in the space.

To eliminate the bulk of a tub surround and thus open up the room, Passanante opted for a freestanding tub whose generous size can comfortably seat two and whose graceful contours convey a simple elegance. Absent an enclosure in which to conceal equipment, the whirlpool is remotely powered by a motor hidden in a nearby closet and operated from a wall-mounted keypad that allows the homeowners to set their preferences before stepping into the bath. In front, a floor-mounted tub filler, selected for its sculptural quality, dramatically completes the bathing area, which, noted Passanante, forms the first view of the space as one enters the bathroom. Of the tub filler, he added, "We saw it as a work of art."

The bathing area is counterbalanced by a large custom vanity whose wavelike front enhances the tranquil setting. At 8 ft. long, the unit offers ample elbowroom without eclipsing the other bath elements, and its natural maple finish adds brightness to the space while visually connecting it to the adjoining bedroom, where all of the wood furniture, noted Passanante, is also maple. To lighten its mass, the vanity is elevated off the floor by a series of height-adjustable polished chrome legs and topped with a thin Crystal Jade slab, veined in green and cut to a mere 3/4-in. thickness. Replacing the pink basins and their pink-knobbed faucets are twin glass vessel sinks in sea-foam green and tall deck-mounted faucets, which together exude modern élan. Behind the sinks and above a glass backsplash, a large mirror spanning the length of the vanity extends to the ceiling, lending it the appearance of greater height.

Although Passanante's solution has removed the divider between the vanity and the toilet, the new shower is still fully enclosed. It has, however, lost a door and gained some curve appeal, thanks to an arced wall tiled in green glass mosaics. "The curved shower was tricky," said Passanante. "When I came up with the concept and as we were building it, my contractors looked at me as if I had two heads." The mosaics, whose small size suits them to curved surfaces, also line the shower's interior, which is equipped with built-in shelving, overhead lighting and a single showerhead and thermostatic valve. Asked about additional shower features, Passanante responded, "That's all the couple wanted. They're very simple people." In the evenings, three recessed spotlights graze the exterior of the shower with warm halogen light, creating sparkle and nighttime interest.

To tie the space together, the floor is paved with off-white marble tiles in a large 12-in. x 12-in. format. According to Passanante, the tiles were chosen for their square edges, which allowed them to be abutted as tightly as possible. Because the ensuing grout joints are "really, really tiny," the effect produced is of a continuous surface, seamless and ultra-clean. The illusion is reinforced by the lack of veining in the marble, as Passanante noted, "We had a very clean lot."

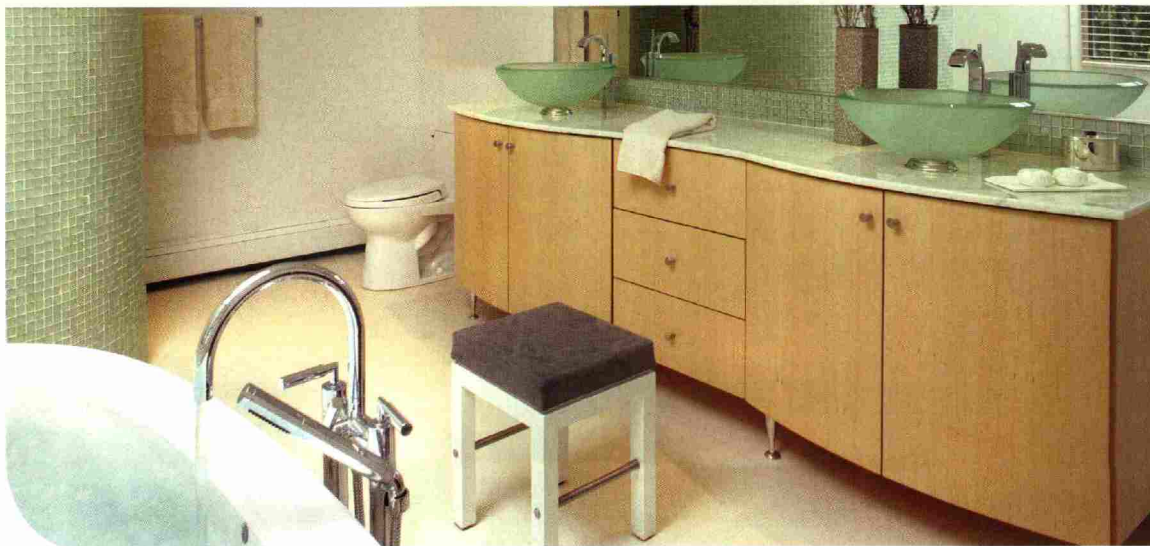
The bathroom remodel is part of a larger renovation that encompassed the kitchen, a second bathroom and a powder room. Because Passanante served as both designer and general contractor on all four spaces, and the couple was away on the West Coast for much of the project, he enjoyed greater freedom in realizing his vision and making sure that all details were executed to perfection. And while the clients ended up selling the house to move out west for good, the experience, said Passanante, "actually worked out really well." ■

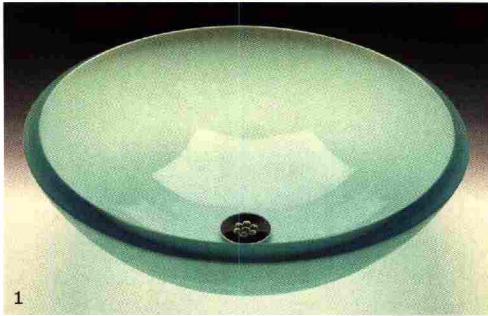
## SOURCES

**Designer:** Anthony Albert Passanante, CKD—Peter Salerno Inc., Wyckoff, NJ; [www.petersalerno.com](http://www.petersalerno.com) **Manufacturers:** Tub: BainUltra; Tub filler and sink faucet: Dornbracht; Sink: Alchemy; Toilet: TOTO USA; Tile: [Oceanside Glasstile](http://www.oceansideglasstile.com); Flooring: Mediterranean Tile **Photography:** © Peter Rymwid



*Light-filled and modern, the remodeled master bathroom is a cleaner, minimalist version of its former self. Gone are the pink and white wallpaper, the forlorn vanity and the awkward tub and tub surround. Replacing them are a sparsely elegant bathing area (left), soft white finishes that soothe and a maple vanity (below & bottom) whose bowed front and countertop seem faintly evocative of a tranquil ocean.*





**1** To complement the green shower wall, the vanity is equipped with two Misto vessel sinks from **Alchemy**. Formed of frosted glass, each sink measures  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. thick and is offered in diameters of 15 in. and 18 in. with a machine-polished edge. **Circle No. 249**

**2** Forming the focal point of the bathroom is the Sanos whirlpool from **BainUltra**'s Balneo series. The freestanding tub offers bathers an all-over body massage thanks to the company's Thermo-Masseur hydro-thermo massage technology and, at 72 in. x 40 in. x 24 in., is roomy enough for two. A soaker model is also available, as are optional and custom colors, chromatherapy and sound therapy. **Circle No. 250**

**3** **Dornbracht**'s Tara Classic floor-mounted tub mixer on risers completes the bathing area. Standing 37 in. tall, the fixture comes with a spout that rotates 360 degrees, a handshower with a 49-in.-long hose and rotating hose connectors, and a manual diverter. A variety of finishes are available. **Circle No. 251**

**4** Two **Dornbracht** deck-mounted faucets (now discontinued) similar to the company's Mem single-lever lavatory mixer were selected for the vanity area to minimize clutter and keep the look clean. Mem features a fixed spout with a  $7\frac{7}{8}$ -in. projection, measures  $13\frac{3}{8}$  in. high and is offered in various finishes. **Circle No. 252**

**5** The new master bath is equipped with **TOTO USA**'s UltraMax Toilet with Soft-Close seat, now available in a WaterSense-labeled Eco version (shown). The toilet features a one-piece design and the G-Max commercial-grade flushing system, which uses a wide 3-in. flush valve and powerful siphon jet to deliver 1.6 gpf. **Circle No. 253**

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