

FAMILY *affair*

How a designer maximizes the space and function in a small family bathroom

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The family bathroom is arguably the most-used room in a home. It has to function for everyone, from kids to parents and sometimes guests. In order to meet the needs of a wide range of people, a custom and well-thought-out design is integral.

This bathroom, designed for a family of five in the Lorne Park neighbourhood of Mississauga, did not have size on its side. There was not a lot of room to play with the overall layout, so in terms of space planning and budget, the fixture locations were kept in tact and budget was re-directed to custom storage and finish details.



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THE MUST-HAVES

Given the number of people using the bathroom, having two sinks, plenty of storage and a shower/bathtub combination was key. The bathtub and toilet run along the one side separated by a half-wall and frosted-glass feature divider. The frosted glass allows light through into the shower area, but blocks the toilet from view. The entire length of the opposite wall is used for a vanity and storage.

There are always ways to save and splurge in a bathroom, and the biggest splurge here is custom cabinetry. Having two sinks was non-negotiable with three children. The custom vanity has two large sink cabinets and three drawers in the centre—one for each child to keep their personal belongings.

Toward the entry door, there is a full-height linen tower that is set back a few inches to give the feeling of more space at the doorway. Given the overall height, there is an open nook at the top for towels or decorative items, as this area is not as functional for everyday use.

There are two large doors that open up to adjustable shelving for linens and toiletries. Below are two larger drawers for mom and dad to keep their bathroom products, followed by full-width deeper drawers.

The linen tower is finished with a furniture base so that it feels like a custom piece that could stand alone. For practicality, there is a toe-kick setback behind the furniture base so it doesn't become a dust trap below.

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

The storage is doubled in the bathroom, but of equal importance are the materials used to ensure that this bathroom would be family-friendly and stand the test of time.

The vanity countertop is a marble look, but is actually a quartz product. Quartz is extremely durable and easy to clean. There is a three-inch quartz backsplash installed around the edges to protect the walls and cabinetry from splashes.

The flooring is a porcelain tile, made to look like Calacatta marble, but with no maintenance. To make it feel more special and custom, it is installed in a herringbone pattern. The smaller scale tile in a honed finish

eliminates opportunity for slipping on wet floors, with more grout lines and no sheen.

In the shower the same quartz was used to create shower niches and a pony wall with a frosted-glass feature divider. The shower walls are clad in a grey subway tile with an easy-to-wipe glossy finish. To create interest without a huge investment, and to satisfy the adults' taste, there is a mother-of-pearl mosaic band to highlight the shower niches.

The client really wanted a white and clean bathroom, but marble was out of the budget and the maintenance over time was something that this busy family knew was not realistic. Marble alternatives that are durable and beautiful give them the clean esthetic they desired at a more affordable price.

A light grey ivory is sprayed on the vanity cabinets and the walls have subtle contrast in an even lighter ivory. A hint of teal is added through a custom roman shade and framed photography for a serene spa feel.

A TOUCH OF LUXURY

Beautiful lighting in wall sconces above the vanity is the final touch. For everyday use, the linear sconces above the mirrors are perfect, while the gorgeous polished-nickel, shaded sconce in the middle is the perfect layer for applying makeup.

Mother-of-pearl round mirrors provide contrast to the hard edges in the space and reference the shower tile. Even the little details such as light-white bronze cabinet hardware were selected with care. They are the perfect little jewel on the simple cabinet design and are easy for little hands to use.

The bathroom was dark, dated and lacked functional storage, but its bright white palette and custom solutions make the room feel larger and give every family member a place. ♦

SOURCES

Cabinetry, Roman Blind, Artwork: Custom Designed by Katie Campbell Interiors & Design **Mirrors, Lighting:** cocoonfurnishings.ca **Accessories:** homesense.ca, gingers.com, thebay.com **Hardware:** oakvillefinehardware.com



MARBLE ALTERNATIVES

Marble is a beautiful and luxurious finish option, but is not a practical option for some homeowners due to the ongoing maintenance required. Here are a few alternatives to consider when you want the clean, fresh look of marble but with little to no upkeep.

- **QUARTZ** Can be used in a number of applications, but most often for countertops in kitchens or bathrooms. The primary ingredient is quartz, combined with polyester resins and pigments to give it colour. Quartz is stain- and scratch-resistant, and most importantly is non-porous. (Used as vanity countertop, knee-wall ledge and shower niche boxes).
- **PORCELAIN** Porcelain is a dense, hard surface that is known for being used in tile applications for flooring and walls. The possibilities are endless these days, with some marble look-alikes that are extremely realistic and require zero maintenance. Also, when installed in a herringbone pattern (as seen in this bathroom's flooring), you get a really custom high-end look for a fraction of the cost.
- **SOLID SURFACE** Solid-surface countertops, such as Corian, are made of acrylic that is durable and low-maintenance for years. They resist stains, moisture and repel the growth of mould and bacteria. They come in a wide variety of finishes, including some that mimic the look of natural stone.



Katie Campbell Interiors & Design is a full-service residential design firm located in Oakville, Ont., serving the Greater Toronto Area. katiecampbellinteriors.com