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**Microwave oven**—Sharp Electronics Corp.; 800/237-4277; [sharpusa.com](http://sharpusa.com). **Dishwasher**—Miele, Inc.; 800/463-0260; [miele.com](http://miele.com). **Perimeter sink**—from the Shaws Original collection—Rohl; 800/777-9762; [rohlhome.com](http://rohlhome.com). **Faucets at perimeter and island sinks** Royale in polished nickel—Herbeau Creations of America; 800/547-1608; [herbeau.com](http://herbeau.com). **Tile behind stove** Dover White Tile—Ceramic Design Ltd., Westport, Connecticut; 203/454-0032; [ceramicdesignltd.com](http://ceramicdesignltd.com). **Chandeliers over island** Winston in polished nickel—Remains Lighting, New York City; 212/675-8051; [remains.com](http://remains.com). **Chandelier over breakfast table** Menton Hanging Shade—Vaughan Designs, New York City; 212/319-7070; [vaughandesigns.com](http://vaughandesigns.com) [T]. **Barstools**—Pottery Barn; 800/922-5507; [potterybarn.com](http://potterybarn.com) (product line varies). **Rug at breakfast table** custom—Serendipity Interior Design, Norwalk, Connecticut; 203/846-0809. **All baskets, copper pot**—Barbara Bourgeois, Main Street Antiques Center, Woodbury, Connecticut; 203/263-0046.

**Pages 92-97**

**FEMININE FLOURISH**

**Architect:** Chad Nehring, AIA, Nehring + Associates Architecture, LLC, 152 Deer Hill Ave., Suite 304, Danbury, CT 06810; 203/743-4466; [nehringarchitects.net](http://nehringarchitects.net).

**Interior designer:** Cindy Rinfret, Rinfret, Ltd., 354 Greenwich Ave., Greenwich, CT 06834; 203/622-0000; [rinfretltd.com](http://rinfretltd.com).

**Builder:** Frank Usowski, Francis Development, LLC, Old Greenwich, Connecticut; [ffusowski@aol.com](mailto:ffusowski@aol.com).

**Tile installation**—Jeff Delgado, Clinton, Connecticut. **Tub Napoli**—Victoria + Albert Bath, LLC, Columbia, South Carolina; 803/748-1228; [englishtubs.com](http://englishtubs.com). **Sink, faucets**—Kohler Co.; 800/456-4537; [us.kohler.com](http://us.kohler.com). **Wallpaper** Poppy & Butterfly—Cowtan & Tout, New York City; 212/647-6900; [cowtan.com](http://cowtan.com) [T]. **Dressing table, chair**—Hickory Chair Co.; 800/349-4579; [hickorychair.com](http://hickorychair.com). **Fabric for dressing chair** Towaille—Holland & Sherry, Inc., New York City; 212/758-1911; [hollandandsherry.com](http://hollandandsherry.com). **Trim for dressing chair, fabric for window treatment** Jig Saw—Kravet; 800/645-9068; [kravet.com](http://kravet.com). **Fabric for window sheer** Inlet Strie—Lee Jofa; 800/453-3563; [leejofa.com](http://leejofa.com) [T]. **Light fixture with crystal beads**—John Richard, Greenwood, Mississippi; 662/453-5809; [johnrichard.com](http://johnrichard.com). **Linen cabinet**—Oly; [olystudio.com](http://olystudio.com) [T].

**Pages 98-103**

**INDOOR SAFARI**

**Architect:** Robbie Fusch, president, and Lindsey Fusch Durrett, decorator, Fusch Architects, Inc., 4308 Avondale Ave., Dallas, TX 75219; 214/696-0152; [fuscharchitects.com](http://fuscharchitects.com).

**Interior designer:** Kristin Mullen, Covetable

Designs, Dallas; 214/357-5646; [covetabledesigns.com](http://covetabledesigns.com).

**Cabinetry** dark walnut by Wm Ohs, Inc.—Jackson Hole Cabinets and Design Group, Jackson, Wyoming; 307/733-5390.

**Countertops** polished granite in Silver Cloud, **flooring** polished limestone—Walker Zanger; 877/611-0199; [walkerzanger.com](http://walkerzanger.com). **Tub** Bateau V in zinc custom finish—The Bathworks; [thebathworks.com](http://thebathworks.com). **Sinks** Round #C002—Linkasink; 866/395-8377; [linkasink.com](http://linkasink.com). **Sink faucets** #ETL583 in nickel, **bath faucets** #OMTU02 in nickel—Waterworks; 800/998-2284; [waterworks.com](http://waterworks.com). **Wallpaper** Hudson Chevron Check #LWP22320W—Ralph Lauren Home; 888/475-7674; [ralphlaurenhome.com](http://ralphlaurenhome.com) (product line varies). **Sconces** similar items available—Edwina Hunt Lighting, New York City; 212/308-1914; [edwinahunt.com](http://edwinahunt.com). **Chandelier** Hexagonal Pineapple—Charles Edwards Lighting; [charlesedwards.com](http://charlesedwards.com). **Mirrors** custom—Barco Mirror & Glass, Inc., Addison, Texas; 972/980-0151; [barcoglass.com](http://barcoglass.com). **Decorative plates on wall**—John Derian & Co., New York City; 212/677-3917; [johnderian.com](http://johnderian.com). **Vintage shutters at tub**—Sentimento Antiques, New York City; 212/750-3111; [sentimentoantiques.1stdibs.com](http://sentimentoantiques.1stdibs.com). **Vintage fern botanicals**—The Frame House, Dallas; 214/871-5001. **Zebra towels**—Pottery Barn; 800/922-5507; [potterybarn.com](http://potterybarn.com) (product line varies).

**Pages 104-109**

**LIVABLE LUXURY**

**Architect:** Aldo Di Vitto, Aldo Di Vitto Architect, PC, P.O. Box 8616, Pelham, NY 10803; 914/738-7248; [adivitto@msn.com](mailto:adivitto@msn.com).

**Bath designer:** Mel Elion, senior designer, Bilotta Kitchens, 564 Mamaroneck Ave., Mamaroneck, NY 10543; 914/381-7734; [bilotta.com](http://bilotta.com).

**Contractor:** John Rookwood, J. Rookwood Contracting Corp., Brewster, New York.

**Cabinets**—Bilotta Kitchens, Mamaroneck, New York; 914/381-7734; [bilotta.com](http://bilotta.com). **Shower enclosure, mirrors**—George Distefano, Glassolutions; Newburgh, New York; 845/569-0001; [glassolutions.com/commercial.htm](http://glassolutions.com/commercial.htm).

**Cabinet hardware and towel bars** Cricket Cage in Chalice finish—Carpe Diem Hardware; 888/431-1664; [carpediemhardware.com](http://carpediemhardware.com).

**Countertops and floor border** polished Persian pistachio onyx, **floor field tile** small lace basket weave in polished Thassos with polished Persian pistachio onyx dots—Romstone Fabrication Corp., New Rochelle, New York; 914/654-0161; [romstonefabrication.com](http://romstonefabrication.com). **Tile tub surround** Glimmer Passion Flower by Sisis—through American Tile & Stone, Carrollton, Texas; 972/243-2378; [americantileandstone.com](http://americantileandstone.com). **Tub Classic Oval** in white with whirlpool—Waterworks; 800/998-2284; [waterworks.com](http://waterworks.com). **Sink** Studio

Undermount Lavatory—American Standard; 800/899-2614; [americanstandard-us.com](http://americanstandard-us.com). **Faucets for sink and tub** Marilyn—André Collection; 800/756-2284; [andrecollection.net](http://andrecollection.net). **Shower faucet Private Label** collection—Klaffs; 800/552-3371; [klaffs.com](http://klaffs.com). **Sconces, chandelier**—Schonbek Worldwide Lighting, Inc.; 800/836-1892; [schonbek.com](http://schonbek.com). **Vanity stool**—Horchow Home Catalog; 800/456-7000; [horchow.com](http://horchow.com). **Window treatments**—Handy Andy Window Blinds, White Plains, New York; 914/946-4329; [handyandyblinds.com](http://handyandyblinds.com).

Designs, Dallas; 214/357-5646; [covetabledesigns.com](http://covetabledesigns.com).

**Cabinetry** dark walnut by Wm Ohs, Inc.—Jackson Hole Cabinets and Design Group, Jackson, Wyoming; 307/733-5390.

**Countertops** polished granite in Silver Cloud, **flooring** polished limestone—Walker Zanger; 877/611-0199; [walkerzanger.com](http://walkerzanger.com). **Tub** Bateau V in zinc custom finish—The Bathworks; [thebathworks.com](http://thebathworks.com). **Sinks** Round #C002—Linkasink; 866/395-8377; [linkasink.com](http://linkasink.com). **Sink faucets** #ETL583 in nickel, **bath faucets** #OMTU02 in nickel—Waterworks; 800/998-2284; [waterworks.com](http://waterworks.com). **Wallpaper** Hudson Chevron Check #LWP22320W—Ralph Lauren Home; 888/475-7674; [ralphlaurenhome.com](http://ralphlaurenhome.com) (product line varies). **Sconces** similar items available—Edwina Hunt Lighting, New York City; 212/308-1914; [edwinahunt.com](http://edwinahunt.com). **Chandelier** Hexagonal Pineapple—Charles Edwards Lighting; [charlesedwards.com](http://charlesedwards.com). **Mirrors** custom—Barco Mirror & Glass, Inc., Addison, Texas; 972/980-0151; [barcoglass.com](http://barcoglass.com). **Decorative plates on wall**—John Derian & Co., New York City; 212/677-3917; [johnderian.com](http://johnderian.com). **Vintage shutters at tub**—Sentimento Antiques, New York City; 212/750-3111; [sentimentoantiques.1stdibs.com](http://sentimentoantiques.1stdibs.com). **Vintage fern botanicals**—The Frame House, Dallas; 214/871-5001. **Zebra towels**—Pottery Barn; 800/922-5507; [potterybarn.com](http://potterybarn.com) (product line varies).

**Pages 110-115**

**NATURAL BEAUTY**

**Architect:** James Gabriel, AIA, Architects Hanna Gabriel Wells, 1955 Bacon St., San Diego, CA 92107; 619/523-8485; [architects-hgw.com](http://architects-hgw.com).

**Contractor:** Richard Gerace, RGB Group, Inc., 2602 State St., San Diego, CA 92103; 619/293-3377; [rgbgroupinc.com](http://rgbgroupinc.com).

**Cabinetry design**—Architects Hanna Gabriel Wells, San Diego; 619/523-8485; [architects-hgw.com](http://architects-hgw.com). **Fabrication of cabinets**—Evanko Custom Cabinetry, Inc., El Cajon, California; 619/441-0114. **Countertop** crema nova limestone—Florentine Co., San Diego; 619/298-6143. **Sink**—Toto USA, Inc.; 800/350-8686; [totousa.com](http://totousa.com). **Sink and tub faucets** Axor, shower controls—Hansgrohe; 800/334-0455; [hansgrohe-usa.com](http://hansgrohe-usa.com). **Tub**—Kohler Co.; 800/456-4537; [us.kohler.com](http://us.kohler.com). **Suspended mirrors** custom brackets purchased separately—Dombracht USA, Inc.; 800/774-1181; [dombrachtusa.com](http://dombrachtusa.com). **Stone floor** Green Nature—The Five Elements. San Diego; 877/695-2092; [thefiveelements.net](http://thefiveelements.net). **Installation of floor**—Carini Tile & Marble, San Diego; 858/484-8002. **Glass shower enclosure fabrication and installation**—Mirror Shower and Glass, San Diego; 619/858-0801; [mirrorshowerandglass.com](http://mirrorshowerandglass.com). **Frosted windows**—Fleetwood Aluminum Products, Inc.; 800/736-7363; [fleetwoodusa.com](http://fleetwoodusa.com). **Bamboo flooring** flat grain with caramelized coloring—through RGB Group, Inc., San Diego; 619/293-3377; [rgbgroupinc.com](http://rgbgroupinc.com).

**Page 128**

**FINISHING TOUCHES**

**Kitchen designer:** Jodi Caden, Caden Design Group, 1020 S. Old Woodward Ave., Birmingham, MI 48009; 248/203-6006; [cadendesigngroup.com](http://cadendesigngroup.com).

**Cabinetry**—Caden Design Group, 1020 S. Old Woodward Ave., Birmingham, MI 48009; 248/203-6006; [cadendesigngroup.com](http://cadendesigngroup.com).

**Cabinetry hardware**—Schaub & Co., 866/724-2827; [schaubandcompany.com](http://schaubandcompany.com).

**Mixer**—Sunbeam Products, Inc.; 800/597-5978; [sunbeam.com](http://sunbeam.com).

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**This Photo:** The arched line of the tub backsplash echoes the floor-level onyx outlining the whirlpool tub. Multipanel millwork and a tray ceiling are French-inspired architectural details.

**Opposite Left:** Attractive inset latticework provides ventilation for the whirlpool tub's plumbing.

**Opposite Right:** A heated floor, tiled in a basket-weave pattern, is accented with green onyx dots. Shimmering mosaic tile encases the tub, which is topped with pale green, striated onyx.



# livable luxury

A designer's sophisticated mix of color, texture, detail—and yes, electronics—satisfies her two toughest customers: herself and her husband.

Writer: Brice Gaillard Photographer: Michael Partenio Field Editor: Brice Gaillard

Right: Glamorous green onyx, iridescent glass tiles, glazed cabinetry, and polished nickel faucets and fixtures give this spa-like master bath elegant character. Opposite: Mirrored cabinet doors open to reveal a third mirror, creating a three-way view.



Every night for years, designer Mel Elion exited the austere master bath in her Harrison, New York, home, slipped under the bedcovers, gazed up at an unattractive slanted ceiling, and outlined for her husband, Jack, all of the elements she'd incorporate into their ideal master suite. "One or two simple changes would have been perfectly adequate for him," she says, smiling. "But after designing kitchens and baths for many clients, I had a vision—and a very specific wish list—for our own master suite." Eventually, the couple implemented her plan, and the resulting master bath showcases her years of design experience.

Already roomy at 9×11 feet, the bath expanded to a more spa-like 9×18 feet when Mel nabbed extra closet space from an adjacent bedroom. The move allowed room for a two-person tub, shower, and vanity, as well as a floor-to-ceiling linen storage cabinet and makeup vanity. With a generous floor plan in place, she began layering amenities one by one.

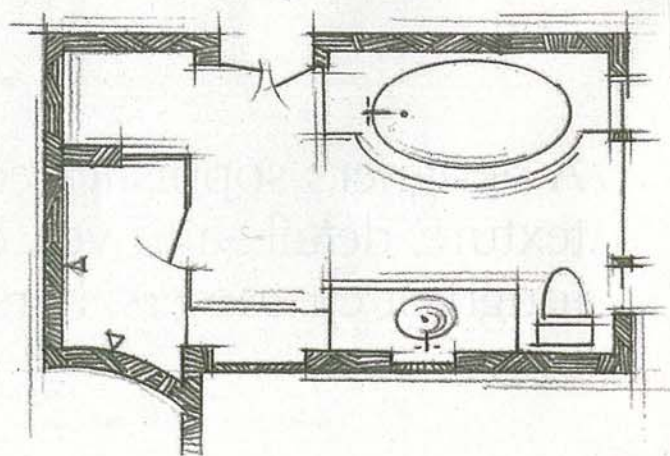
"The original bath was very white, very marble, and very cold," Elion says. "So the goal was to add subtle color, warmth, and livability. We wanted it to be elegant but comfortably so."

With that in mind, she chose a muted green palette, painting the plaster walls a color called River Reed and custom mixing a celadon shade for cabinetry topped with a chocolate-brown

glaze. Iridescent tiles in complementary shades of green line the upper walls of the steam shower and the whirlpool tub surround.

"The tile has life to it," Elion says. "It's green, but it looks like water and takes on movement when the light hits it." Pistachio green onyx—veined in shades of brown—richens the mix, topping the two-sink vanity and lower-surface makeup vanity, lining the lower shower walls, and outlining the tub top, base, and backsplash. For the heated floor, Elion chose a white basket-weave tile. "It provides a textural, neutral base to ground the various shades of green," she says.

Architectural details add to the deft mix of materials.





Cabinetry with egg-and-dart inlaid crown molding takes on depth via recess-panel doors with molding and beaded insets. The makeup vanity cabinetry is accented with fluted columns, and rectangular millwork applied to walls provides formal pattern and graceful embellishment.

But what makes the room a true haven for the couple are the thoughtful lighting and integrated electronics system. Hidden behind a vanity mirror, a television is visible from the tub and can be controlled via remote, as can satellite radio, radiant-heat floors, room temperature, and lighting. Elion placed cove lighting behind crown details in the ceiling, downlights with movable heads that light the room's perimeter and artwork, halogen lighting in the soffits and behind mirrored doors at the makeup vanity, and chandeliers and sconces on the ceiling and walls.

"Lighting is very important to the look and feel of a room, but it's often overlooked," she says. "And by activating the electronics system, we can create a warm, welcoming ambience in the room even before we enter. It creates a real feeling of ease."

Elion believes that a designer's ability to marry color, texture, and detail sets him or her apart from those who can simply design a functional floor plan.

"It's a different kind of measure, one that benefits from experience," she says, "and one that clients recognize as important." And her husband?

"He is floored by the difference that good design and attention to detail made. He now appreciates every detail."

RESOURCES BEGIN ON PAGE 116

**Top Left:** The expansive glass shower door reflects light from the master bath's large windows. Nickel details on the frameless door coordinate with shower fixtures. **Top Middle:** Brown glass tiles neatly separate onyx and iridescent glass tiles lining the shower wall. **Top Right:** A chocolate-brown glaze adds depth and patina to painted cabinetry and coordinates with brown veins within the green onyx used on the vanities, tub tops, and shower walls. **Above:** Delicate cutouts and filigree knobs on the towel bar repeat on cabinet and drawer pulls. **Opposite:** A television is disguised behind a mirror above a vanity sink.