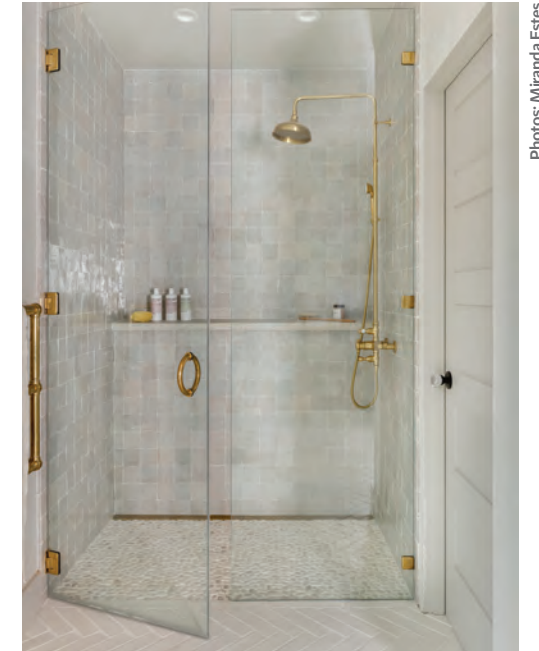




Details in this Vashon Island bathroom are inspired by the owners' travels to Greece and Europe.



Photos: Miranda Estes

ABOVE, FROM LEFT Brass plumbing will age beautifully, as the finish gains a patina when exposed to water or oils in people's hands. Shower walls boast creamy, hand- made zellige tile for an old-world feel.

Three Bathrooms, One Designer

An interior designer unfolds strategies behind three bathroom remodels and styles, from insouciant to eye-catching

written by Melissa Dalton

IF EVER THERE were a place to blend form and function, it's the bathroom. Amy Vroom, a Seattle-based interior designer, explained. "Obviously, a bathroom's going to serve some very functional purposes, but it can give us a different mood or feeling, depending on the homeowner's aesthetic and how it works with the house," said Vroom, who started her interior design firm The Residency Bureau in 2016.

"Your bathroom can feel more spa-like, or it could be more playful and whimsical, or it could be kind-of moody. It's really about how the clients want it to come to life," she said. Vroom offers up examples of this with three diverse designs.

Vashon Island: Light and Airy Main Suite

Set in the middle of Vashon Island on a working farm, this farmhouse had all of the potential to look older than its actual construction date, which was some time in the 1990s. For example, the main suite "didn't get the memo that it's supposed to be an old farmhouse," said Vroom. The room was previously burdened with an oversized jacuzzi tub and glass-block shower. "That was

part of my challenge: to infuse some of the character and charm that you'd find in an older home."

First, the room was gutted, and the use space from adjacent closets immediately gave the layout more breathing room and an airier feel. The client's inspiration photos included a cement sink they photographed on a trip to



“It’s very much a mix of old and new things. ... [It] feels a little bit more interesting and curated, but not in an expected way.”

— Amy Vroom, interior designer

Greece, and old European farm interiors abundant with patina-rich items. “Knowing that we needed to add more character and patina to this space, and keep it light and airy enough for the artwork to be center stage, this really became a study in texture,” said Vroom.

The interior designer covered the floors in terracotta tile, specified a plaster finish for the walls, and anchored the room with an antique French counter, which had to be craned through the window at install. The shower walls now boast creamy, handmade zellige tile for an old-world feel. Even the brass plumbing is slated to age beautifully: it has a “living finish” to encourage patina when exposed to water or oils in people’s hands. “The theme is things that are perfectly imperfect,” said Vroom.

To introduce a little unexpected tension, Vroom capped the antique vanity with two modern rectangular cement sinks and framed by wall sconces with exposed bulbs. The finishing piece was a large abstract painting from the owner’s collection, its vibrant colors contrasting with the paler palette, giving off an insouciance befitting a farmhouse bathroom.



This Vashon Island powder room's moody palette includes a custom walnut vanity, dark green zellige tile, cast-iron sink basin and the ceiling trim painted black to match the floor.

Miranda Estes

Vashon Island: Moody Powder Room

Vroom also tackled the downstairs powder room in the same farmhouse. At the start, it had two things worth preserving: the five-panel wood door and the wallpaper, an old pattern from fashion designer Vivienne Westwood’s collaboration with Cole & Son. The pattern “has little insects on it and felt fun and farmhouse-y,” said Vroom. “We didn’t want to rip that out or have any damage to it.”

Fortunately, the contractor succeeded in preserving much of what was already there, all while adding a tile accent wall, replacing the vanity and flooring, and removing a tricky recessed toilet paper holder in the wall. Wallpaper was patched where needed, using an untouched roll found in the client’s closet.

“Our amazing wallpaper installer really performed a miracle with that,” said Vroom.

This being a powder room, everyone felt comfortable taking more design risks, so opted for a “moody” palette. A custom walnut vanity floats against a dark green zellige tile backdrop. A cast-iron sink basin sits proud of the soapstone counter, with both materials giving a nod to the farmhouse context, but read more modern in their treatment. The floors are concrete tile etched with a star pattern, and the ceiling and trim was painted black to match it.

“It’s very much a mix of old and new things,” said Vroom, adding that such a mix “feels a little bit more interesting and curated, but not in an expected way.”





Photos: Brent Henry Martin



Edmonds: Polished and Playful Kids' and Guest Bath

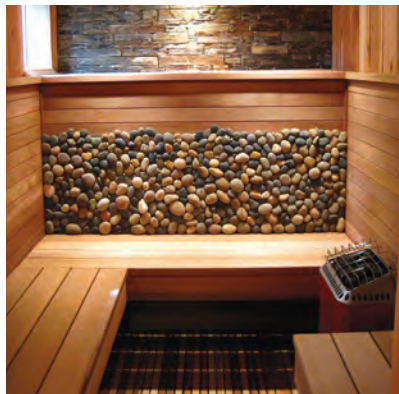
The brief for this hallway bathroom remodel in an Edmonds midcentury home asked for two outcomes that would, on the surface, seem to oppose one another. The room needed to be playful enough for its primary users, two young boys, while also looking polished for visiting guests. "It was about having a little bit more fun with it," said Vroom. "[The clients] didn't shy away from color and pattern, and they wanted to bring more personality to the home."

After slimming the room's footprint and tweaking the layout, everyone fell in love with a rich blue cement tile in a hexagon

shape with a starburst pattern. White rectangular field tile was stacked vertically as a wainscot behind the sink, and wraps the shower. All of the tile gives the kids "space to be messy," noted Vroom, but is also easy to clean for incoming visitors.

The sink is practical and eye-catching—it has two faucets to accommodate both children at once, and the basin was painted a pretty shade of blue to sync with the tile. "By using a wall-mounted sink, we opened up that whole floor space," said Vroom. A floating oak shelf, oversized round mirror, and accessible storage are the finishing touches in the cheerful new space. 🌿

ABOVE Practical and eye-catching are the key words in this Edmonds bathroom. Two faucets serve both children at once, and the basin's blue syncs with the rich blue cement tile in a hexagon shape with a starburst pattern. A floating oak shelf, oversized round mirror, stylish lighting and accessible storage create a cheerful, functional new space.



Reap the health benefits of your own peaceful place to sweat, and build a sauna with a kit from Cedarbrook Sauna & Steam in Woodinville.

DIY: Convert a Room to a Sauna

IT COMES AS no surprise that Brekke Lysaker built his first sauna at age 13. After all, the Lysaker family hails from Norway, having moved to Seattle via Minnesota in the late 1960s, after which Lysaker's father started a sauna-building business in 1971. "He brought a sauna back from Minnesota and sold it in *The Seattle Times* classified ads," recalled Lysaker. "That was the seed that started Cedarbrook."

Based in Woodinville, Cedarbrook Sauna & Steam does a brisk business selling anything you might need for building your own personal, peaceful place to sweat. "It's an ancient tradition, so the health benefits are not arguable," said Lysaker, who sits in his own sauna several times a week. The practice is especially great for these modern, tech-addicted times: "Your phone overheats in the sauna," said Lysaker.

Prospective sauna enthusiasts would do well to check out Cedarbrook's website. There are sauna kits, for either erecting a prefab outdoor sauna building, or converting an interior room, as well as heaters and accessories galore. A Precut Home Sauna Kit includes tongue-and-groove cedar boards sized to fit along with a heater, door, benches and accessories, starting at \$3,615. Detailed instructions and videos on the website offer further guidance.

Here are the basic steps for turning an existing room into a sauna:

» PICK A SPOT

Your new sauna doesn't need to be big—Lysaker has seen a closet converted into one. He suggested a space of 4 feet by 4 feet, up to 8 feet by 10 feet, or anywhere in between.

» PREP

Take the room down to studs and tap an electrician for the proper wiring for lights, switches if wanted and the heater. Sauna heaters require 220 volts of power, except infrared. The floor should be non-permeable, like tile, cement or pavers.

» INSULATE

Insulate the walls and add a specialty aluminum sauna-foil vapor barrier, which is necessary for traditional sauna construction. It reflects heat into the space and contains vapor.

» ADD CEDAR

Encase the walls and ceiling in tongue-and-groove cedar paneling. Enjoy the wood's delicious smell—and natural antimicrobial properties. Add removable cedar grating or duckboard to the floor, which is also found in a kit at Cedarbrook.

» INSTALL HEATER

Attach the heater to the wall using mounting brackets, leaving space for it to vent below, as well as an exit vent for cross-ventilation. Surround the heater with a guardrail for safety. Bring the electrician back to connect wiring.

» FINISHING TOUCHES

Trim out the places where boards meet, install the benches for lounging, and don't forget the door. A pre-built, pre-hung cedar sauna door will be the easiest to install.

» RELAX

"Put the phone down. Get in the sauna, and just sweat it out," said Lysaker. 🌿

Colorful Bathroom Goods

Hand-poured in small batches in Seattle, the coconut and apricot wax candles from Cancelled Plans are a perfect pop for the bathroom. With scent names like “Alone Time” and “Do Not Disturb,” you’re practically obligated to shut yourself away in a bubble bath and relax.

www.cancelledplans.us



A macrame wall hanging adds unexpected texture as an art piece. Check out the artist designs at the Portland-based Modern Macrame, from the calming blues and yellows of “Lunar Intentions” to the rusty red hues of “Desert Sunset.”

www.modernmacrame.com

Yes, this is technically called a ceramic salt bowl, but its petite size makes it perfect for odds and ends such as hair ties or a stray earring, and keeping a vanity counter organized.

Handmade in Wren, Oregon by Land Bird Ceramics, and available at Tender Loving Empire, the simple white exterior is a fun contrast to the bright, colorful glaze inside.

www.tenderlovingempire.com



Interior Designer Amy Vroom uses zellige tile, a glazed terracotta tile handmade in Morocco, for instant character in the bathroom. Vroom’s Vashon Island picks came from the California-based Clé, which offers a range of shapes and sizes, and a rich spectrum of color, from light pearlescent blues and greens, to a moody midnight port, like the wine.

www.cletile.com