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Peaceful retreat

Ample natural light and a restrained color palette give this master suite a restful ambiance

In substantial houses, the master suite can be seen as the kingdom within a kingdom, taking up a large percentage of the floorplan. In this personal realm, there are often two design imperatives – privacy and a feeling of serenity.

This master suite was designed by architect David Martin, in collaboration with interior designer Barbara Scavullo and the owners. The home is a contemporary farmhouse style, with gabled roofs, wood ceilings, and double ridge beams framing long skylights. However, in the bedroom, where light control is paramount, there are no skylights – they are only in the connecting corridor and bathroom, says Martin.

“Instead, other approaches were taken to optimize a light, airy feel. For example, the ceilings are a light-toned plaster, not wood, and there are small windows above the soffit.

“Access to the bathroom and bedroom is by a central corridor. This opens directly to the bathroom and while there is no door, a bench-mounted glass privacy screen in the center of the room shields the tub but still allows light to filter both ways. This screen, together with the oval bathtub and freestanding wall that holds the shower controls, gives the bathroom a vertical, highly sculptural appeal.”

A fixed mitered corner window further optimizes solar penetration, and outlooks, without the obstruction of hardware. Below this and almost out of sight, two operable windows provide cross ventilation. These are translucent to shield views from the ground level outside.

Privacy from within the home is achieved by sets of pocket doors, one at the entry to the bedroom, and another closing off the entire master suite at the beginning of the circulation corridor.

With the cool limestone floor, wall tiles and glass privacy wall offset by the warmth of the wood cabinetry, the bathroom achieves an easy material balance. Both rooms feature a muted palette, with an emphasis on soft, natural tones.



These pages: This master bathroom forms part of a master suite by architect David Martin, working with designers from Barbara Scavullo Design and the owners. A vertical glass privacy panel shields bathers from the connecting corridor, while the translucent glass allows light to filter through both ways. The shower stall to the right features a limestone blade wall set between glass panels. A beige countertop and green subway tiles contribute to the subtle color palette.







Architect: James LaRue, LaRue Architects (Austin, TX)

Interior designer: Paula Ables, Paula Ables Interiors

Builder: Shoberg Homes

Bathtub: Kohler Tea For Two from Ferguson

Vanity cabinets: Shaker style in alder wood with Pecan stain over Rustic Grey stain by Gary White Cabinets

Hardware: Emtek Finger Pull

Handbasins: Kohler Kathryn from Ferguson

Faucets: Hansa from Ferguson

Shower fittings: Kohler Watertile shower head and body spray, Kohler Stillness showerhead, Kohler Hotel hand shower, Kohler Oblo volume and thermostatic valves

Flooring: Ivory Classic travertine from AG&M

Wall tiles: Teardrop glass by Vogue Bay; Light Emperador marble and ZD Cashmere stone and glass mosaics

Paints: Benjamin Moore

Lighting: Besa Lighting from Lighting, Inc

Accessories: Atlas Fulcrum; Emtek

Roller shades: Mermet from Modern Energy

Story by Colleen Hawkes

Photography by Coles Hairston

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Left: Decorative tiling creates the wow factor in the bathroom. The large shower incorporates three different tile types – teardrop glass tiles, Light Emperador marble, and a colorful ZD Cashmere mosaic in glass and stone. The mosaics form columns that define the his-and-hers shower settings. Glass walls in the shower ensure the owners can enjoy the view out a large window above the tub. Other features include a recessed medicine cabinet and Shaker-style vanity cabinetry.