



The Grand Strand

Summer or winter, this stunning stretch of coastline offers miles of fun

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Powder Room Basics

Small investment, big impact

by Vicki Payne

Investing in a powder room makeover is money well spent. It is one of the smallest spaces in your home, but dollar for dollar, it delivers a big return. Perhaps you haven't even noticed how dated it has become.

The powder room is the only room in your home where visitors spend time alone observing their surroundings. Dark, out-of-date wallpaper, dingy tile floors and vanities that look like they were built for elves register high on the "this house really needs updating" reactor scale.

Check it out for yourself. Walk in and look around. If your house is more than five years old your powder room probably looks dated. The good news is a guest bath is one of the most affordable rooms to update.

The trick is to stay with the classics. Black-and-white bathrooms are timeless. Five to 15 years from now they will still be in style. The basics of a classic bathroom are white fixtures

accented with chrome and black, white or gray floor tile. This combination of materials is affordable and easy to locate.

Horizontal wood paneling is one of my favorite looks in any small space. This classic wall treatment transforms plain boring walls and makes a space appear larger. Paint the walls and the trim with a semi-gloss white paint.

Carrara marble is still the most enduring look for floors, countertops and tiles. If marble isn't in your budget, subway tiles or 4-by-4 white ceramic tiles will work for the walls. Floor tiles can go large or stay small. Consider the pattern, a classic hexagon or octagon design in 1-by-1 tiles or larger sizes laid in a herringbone pattern.

Lighting, faucets and hardware should always have a chrome finish. Golds, hand-rubbed bronze, brass and brushed nickel finishes go in and out of style. But chrome is ageless. Lighting fixtures can feature glass



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frosted globes or white fabric shades. Exposed light bulbs are very popular in today's lighting but don't always provide enough light. Consider the function. If it's a bathroom where more natural lighting is required, stick with shades.

Vanities have run their course in today's upscale bathrooms, especially powder rooms. The classic look is a white sink mounted on chrome legs. Throughout design history, nothing is as abiding. If storage is needed, consider a stand with a lower shelf or identify a nearby closet.

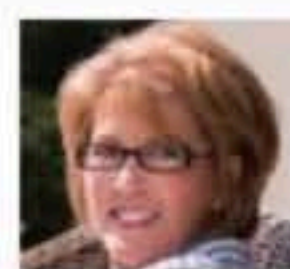
A sink suspended on an open stand or a counter mounted to the walls opens the floor space and make the room look larger and lighter. Palmer Industries' console leg system and integrated sink tops by MTI make creating a vanity for your bathroom easy and affordable. Sink tops are available in a variety of sizes including a 68-inch double bowl with compatible console legs.

If you do elect to use a wooden box

vanity, make it 35- to 36-inch finished height and top it with a Carrara or solid surface countertop in white or black. Select chrome hardware in a simple traditional style.

Time to show your personal style. You can keep the mirror simple by selecting an edgeless, beveled glass mirror or one in an unpretentious white or chrome frame. But for fun, you could always opt for a Venetian-style mirror or one with a great punch of color like sapphire or emerald green.

Keep your linens white and don't over accessorize the space. Less is certainly more when it comes to classic design. **HD**



Vicki Payne Donatelli is an interior designer, project coordinator and popular speaker for renovation and new construction projects. She is the host of the national PBS series, For Your Home. Visit her blog at ForYourHome.com.

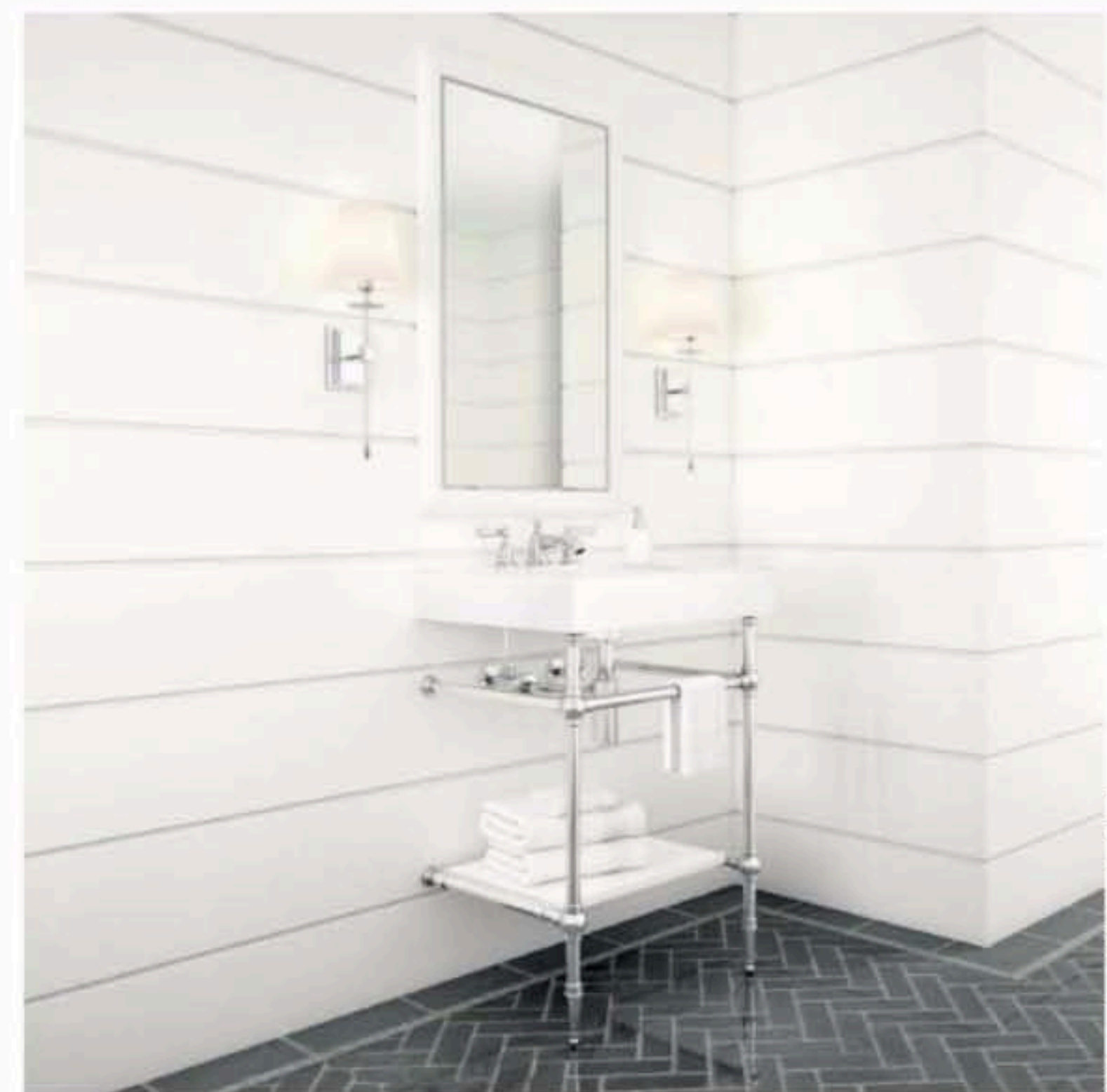


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