

FEBRUARY 2011

House Beautiful

makeovers!

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BATH OF THE MONTH

Design by KEN FULK

San Francisco, California

A long, hot, sensuous soak never looked so inviting, don't you agree?

Interview by
MIMI READ

Photographs by
MATTHEW
MILLMAN



In the master bathroom of a San Francisco house with a Moorish mood, designer Ken Fulk steered straight for exotic glamour. Victoria + Albert's Marlborough slipper tub frames the blockbuster view of the Marin Headlands. The shimmering wall tiles are Walker Zanger's Contessa Arabesco. OPPOSITE: The vanity, patterned with ogee arches and topped with Calacatta marble, was designed by Fulk. Lavender towels "play nice with the gold wall tile." Sconces by Visual Comfort.

BATH OF THE MONTH



MIMI READ: *This is one of those jaw-dropping juxtapositions—that siren bathtub framing an unspoiled water view.*

KEN FULK: I wanted it to be romantic. The tub is like a modern rendition of a claw-foot tub and has a sexy shape—it looks like the nape of someone's neck, or the arch of their back. It's not hard to imagine bathing in it. Just open the wine, light the candles. Even on the moodiest of days it's a stunning perch, like a widow's walk overlooking the ocean.

What was the master bathroom like when you started?

It was the size of a closet and it had no view. This

is an amazing house with a Mediterranean influence and a Moorish vibe. It was built in the 1920s and sits on the cliffs near the Pacific Ocean in San Francisco. But the whole house had a sad, inward quality.

So what did you do?

We moved the bath to the other side of the bedroom, where we'd thought about putting an office—and suddenly it had the view. We gained space by expanding the roofline and pushing out. To make it feel like the rest of the house, with an elegant, exotic air, I sheathed it in slabs of white Calacatta marble and added curves and ogee arches. In my mind, it echoes a

Turkish hammam, those steam rooms with the domed ceilings.

The gold tile on the walls is so soft and feminine—not nearly as scary as it sounds!

Gold tile does sound garish, like something that would pop up in a Vegas hotel room. But this one has a beautiful ogee shape and a quietly iridescent gold glaze. It's handmade, with slightly uneven edges. There's a good dose of silver in there that brings the gold down. On gray days with cool light, and even on foggy days, the room just glows.

Why does the vanity have both open and closed storage?

We designed it with

those arches to feel a bit more like a piece of furniture, yet I didn't want anything overpowering, monolithic, or brown. So we painted it white with a strié on it for softness, and we included open spaces to keep it from looking too massive.

Design is a balancing act, isn't it?

My favorite word is 'tension.' You have to have the right amount of it. This is true of design, true of art, true of relationships. I strove to get the right amount of romance and the right amount of modernity. The goal is to create a room with an opinion, but one that doesn't keep it from feeling timeless. ●

SHE LIKES

“Coming to grips with middle age, I like to accentuate the good, minimize the bad. No foundation does that better than Chanel's Lift Lumière firming and smoothing makeup.”

CHANEL LIFT LUMIÈRE FLUID MAKEUP SPF 15; CHANEL.COM.



The arched window looks toward Point Bonita Lighthouse, and both shower and bath have a view of the Golden Gate Bridge. Walls, floors, and door casings are clad in Calacatta marble, giving the bath a luxurious old-world aura. Waterworks Etoile showerhead.

GET THE LOOK...

Victoria + Albert's Marlborough tub from the Bath and Beyond: bathandbeyond.com.

Waterworks Julia tub filler and hand shower: waterworks.com.

Walker Zanger Contessa Arabesco wall tile: walkerzanger.com.

Calacatta marble slab countertop and shower surround: fox-marble.com.

Towels from Sue Fisher King: suefisherking.com.

FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES