

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2019

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Design
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• **INTRODUCING**
THE NKBA'S
30 UNDER 30

• A LOOK INSIDE A
CARBON-NEUTRAL
HOME

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2019

OUTDOOR LIVING/VANITIES/REFRIGERATION

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Permitting Pains

Working with multiple guidelines & restrictions in an extensive condo project

A FORMER CLIENT WAS PLANNING to move out of her house in Orlando and into a nearby condo. The entire space needed a serious renovation, which included four bathrooms, a kitchen and all of the flooring. Because so much square footage of the condo would be under construction (95 percent), designer Chris Druschel of S&W Kitchens had to overcome multiple permitting hurdles in this Level 1 project.

“We had one month to design, select and price this entire project, which required a whole different set of guidelines,” he explained. “For example, I had to show an emergency escape plan for the condo, which is unusual for our process, where I drew arrows from each room that led to the exit, and all doorways needed a minimum of a 32-in. opening.”

CHALLENGE 1: LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The client’s home is on the fourth floor of a residential condo building, which Druschel said was the main cause for complications and added about 20 percent extra to the design team’s anticipated schedule. A lot of condo buildings have a special service elevator for transporting trash, etc., up and down, but this one did not.

“Because the elevator is shared with tenants, we were only allowed to bring one garbage can of debris down each ride,” said the designer. “Once at the bottom, it was a 1,000-ft. trek to the closest truck of ours to unload/dump.”

Druschel’s solution to this challenge was what he calls a steady stream of constant people power bringing down some 29 tons of trash from the demolition nonstop.

ABOVE This intense condo project required the renovation of the kitchen and four bathrooms. The space was complicated by various ceiling heights, so several walls were removed, and soffits were raised. Druschel said he and his team had to make several decisions on the fly because of all the restrictions.

CHALLENGE 2: REDUCING NOISE

With condo bylaws, sometimes the hardest obstacle can be having to work specific hours and only parking in certain spots. With this project, the biggest hurdle was the short time frame the team was given to remove the flooring because of the noise disturbance it would cause for the homeowners below.

“The condo association only allowed us five business days to remove 3,000 square feet of mud-set travertine and glued hard wood,” said Druschel. “We rented a floor-removing, Zamboni-style machine with a scraping shovel to make sure we hit the deadline, which we barely achieved.”

The association was not planning to allow the team any leverage on the five days, so this was another all-hands-on-deck charge, and it proved successful – even though the Terminator floor-removal machine barely made the weight restriction on the elevator. Also because of the noise their work would cause, some of the tradespeople had to do things like cut cabinets at their own homes instead of inside the condo or on the balcony.

By **CHELSIE BUTLER**



LEFT To accommodate the relocation of the tub in the master bath and avoid drilling into the concrete, Druschel designed a platform to be placed under it for the plumbing.

SOURCES

DESIGNER: Chris Druschel, S&W Kitchens;
PHOTOGRAPHER: Rickie Agapito, AOFOTOS

KITCHEN

CABINET HARDWARE: Amerock; **CABINETS & HOOD:** Omega Cabinetry; **COUNTERTOPS:** Cambria; **DISHWASHER:** Fisher & Paykel; **FAUCET:** Moen; **RANGE:** Wolf

MASTER BATH

ACCENT, SHOWER TUB FLOOR TILE: Crossville; **CABINET HARDWARE:** Amerock; **CABINETS:** Omega Cabinetry; **COUNTERTOPS:** Pompeii Quartz; **OVERALL FLOOR TILE:** Happy Floors; **TUB FILLER:** Brizo; **TUB:** BainUltra

GUEST BATH

SHOWER WALL NICHE: Happy Floors; **WALL TILE:** Crossville

CHALLENGE 3: MASTER BATH OBSTACLES

The team discovered that there were two large plumbing stacks that could not be removed in the master bath after the plans had already been drawn up.

“We had to re-design on the fly and come up with a new layout that accommodated the stacks,” explained Druschel. “The placement of the freestanding tub was a huge factor, and we had to find a new location for it three weeks into the project.”

The designer came up with a solution of relocating the tub to a different wall and placing it on a platform to accommodate the plumbing since they could not drill into the concrete below. He also had to build a plumbing chase for the new tub location, and then everything else was reconfigured.

In the former master bath, there was an awkward placement of the walls and soffit. Although Druschel knew that raising the ceiling height could affect the fire suppression systems and mechanical lines, the client insisted and wanted the height to be consistent throughout the unit, which added to the timeline.

CHALLENGE 4: GUEST BATH HEADACHES

According to the designer, one of the guest bathrooms was supposed to be a tub-to-shower remodel, but they were unable to accommodate a shower because of unforeseen structure limitations. The drain line diameter in the slab was smaller in size than a tub drain, which also caused its own set of issues.

“Typically when we encounter this, we put a pipe reducer coupling on to transition it,” said Druschel, “however, we couldn’t chip or cut the slab, so we had to stay with the same location and pipe diameter.”

The usual placement of the recessed shower niche had to be relocated because of an unmovable cast-iron plumbing stack. The designer moved it to stretch around the corner instead, which turned out to be a clever solution the client loved.

Druschel admitted that he ordered the wrong tub size because he assumed the space could accommodate a standard unit, but it in fact was a larger, more unusual size.

“We had to order another tub, which was hard to get in and out of there – especially since it was cast iron,” he added.

Another challenge was that the client was out of town for the majority of the project, so there were lots of phone calls and pictures emailed back and forth.

“She trusted me since I had done another project for her, and there were a lot of things I didn’t even call her about – although of course there were some I did have to consult with her on,” said Druschel. “Some decisions I made on my own, and she was happy with all of them.” ●



LEFT In the guest bath, the shower niche wraps around the side instead of taking up its standard placement because of an unforeseen plumbing stack.



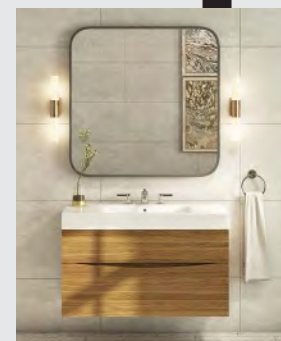
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What's Hot in Vanities

1. The Locky Vanity from **DRUMMONDS** – originally produced in white Arabescato stone – is now available in Verde Guatemala, a marble with dark green and blue-green tones with white veining. The marble top is supported on legs cast in brass and available in nine finishes, from polished brass to nickel and antique bronze and unlacquered brass (shown here). The undermounted white basins are handmade from china clay.

2. **STRASSER WOODENWORKS** now offers a 60-in.-wide option for its SoDo Collection of contemporary wall-mount vanities. SoDo vanities float above the floor, creating an edgy look while adding the illusion of space. The unit is available with a single center basin, featuring a center two-door cabinet and two wide drawers on each side, or with a double basin with two center drawers and dual cabinets on each side. Its wall-hung application allows for mounting at any height for optimal versatility.

3. The BANIO Modular Organizer from **RICHELIEU** is a U-shaped drawer system for bathroom vanities. The cut-out shape in the back circumvents the plumbing, concealing it from view while improving the functionality of the vanity drawer. Translucent acrylic storage containers can be added as drawer dividers to keep contents tidy, and they can be rearranged and then clipped into place to prevent them from moving around.

4. **CROSSWATER LONDON** is introducing its MPRO Wall-Hung Vanity. Available in four sizes and finishes, the new bath furniture adds to the established MPRO Collection of bath fittings and accessories. Available in four sizes, the 24-, 28-, 39- or 48-in. vanity is finished in white gloss, storm grey matte, American walnut (shown here) or driftwood.

5. The Muse 36-in. freestanding bath vanity from **ICERA** features a tile-out tray for maximum space usage, as well as a furniture-style, solid-wood construction with dovetail drawer joinery and soft-close drawers. Offered with a Carrara marble stone top, the vanity is available in colors like gloss white, matte white, ocean grey, blue (shown here), walnut brown and matte black with trims like satin brass and satin nickel.



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6. Shown here in natural walnut, the PRONTO Uno wall-mount, under-counter vanity from **LACAVA** has two drawers and a plumbing notch in the back. The solid-surface vanity-top sink is available on left, right or center placement, and the cabinetry is offered in white, walnut or ash gray. In addition, the PRONTO Uno participates in the QUICK-SHIP program, which ships within 48 hours of the order.

7. **KEUCO**'s new fingerprint-resistant and easy-to-clean velvety matte-black finish with a touch of metallic sheen is now available exclusively for the sleek and handle-free Edition 11 furniture program, which includes vanity units, side units and tall units in various sizes. Complementing the look are the Edition 11 and Edition 400 faucets and accessories in brushed-black chrome, as well as the new Royal Lumos LED light mirror in a black anodized finish with adjustable light color, dimming function and optional defogger.

8. **THE FURNITURE GUILD** introduces the Paxton Vanity, the brand's latest iteration of metal vanities that pairs minimalist style with functionality. The wall-mount installation features either a seamless solid-brass or steel construction with a hand-welded frame and is available in 25 standard size configurations. Interior options include walnut drawers with glass dividers, glass jar inserts and integrated power/USB outlets.

9. The Loft Vanity in Bookmatched Stone by **AMUNEAL** – designed with Amy Lau – is fabricated with walnut interiors and clad in ¾-in. thick book-matched marble. Each door and drawer face is edged in solid machined bronze framing the perimeters of the individual stone slabs to make them feel like artwork within a sculpture. The door and drawer faces are available in custom stone options, as well as more than 400 patinated finishes on a variety of metals, including stainless steel, brass, steel, copper and bronze.



Biophilic & Low-Carbon Design

**A Los Angeles home is
built for sustainability**
By Carrie Whitney



WITH HIS L.A.-BASED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANY Home Front Build, Stephen Pallrand had been building, renovating and preserving homes in an environmentally friendly manner for several years. And while many of the firm's California clients had an eye on a home's operational energy – its water and energy efficiency, for example – there was lack of information available on the carbon cost of the structure itself.

This missing link in a home's real carbon footprint led Pallrand to found CarbonShack, a free resource for determining the real carbon cost of a building's construction. To put CarbonShack's mission into action, Pallrand created a prototype house focused on both operational efficiency and the use of low-impact building materials. As a third goal, he wanted to make sure the home also looked good, so an emphasis on handcrafted, natural aesthetics would bring to life the idea that eco-friendly was not synonymous with sterile.

LOWERING IMPACT

CarbonShack allows builders, designers and homeowners to track and manage the carbon footprint of a home by considering materials, waste, energy systems and location so they can modify elements to be more carbon friendly. The organization's website includes a carbon-cost calculator, developed with the knowledge Pallrand gained from building the case-study house. The purpose is to give anyone the tools to understand how their choices in remodeling or construction impact the environment.

Although this house will likely earn LEED Platinum certification, for many homeowners, the standards of LEED are too high. With CarbonShack, they can get a real sense of what various changes to their home would mean for their footprint, and they can mimic any element of the case-study house.

"We want people to have more flexibility," said Pallrand, because even implementing some sustainable features can have a positive impact. "We want to encourage people to do everything they can."

THIS PAGE The handcrafted elements of the home from the plaster hood to the carved island marry aesthetics with sustainability.

The cabinets, island and millwork are all crafted and carved from wood reclaimed from California structures.

Located in Los Angeles and built on a previously empty lot near a park, the case-study home produces more energy than it consumes. It starts with the use of electric energy, which allows for taking advantage of potentially renewable resources, explained Pallrand. In California, the power grid includes geothermal, wind and solar power. While the CarbonShack house might pull energy from the grid at night, its solar panels feed the grid during the day. Knowing going all-electric would mean giving up gas cooking, Pallrand opted for an induction cooktop in the home.

In addition to including a whole-house fan, he incorporated a heat-pump hot water heater and a heat-pump heating and cooling system. More expensive on the front end, these choices save energy and cost of utilities in the long term. Many additional eco-friendly features were built into the home, such as thick insulation, home automation and high-efficiency appliances.

“It was an open-ended investigation, said Pallrand. “All of the lessons we learned really changed the way we approach design now.”

RECLAIMING & UPCYCLING

One practice that did not change was the designer’s custom of reusing materials whenever possible. For the prototype house, he reclaimed Douglas fir from the framing of an early 20th-century house, which was used to frame the new-construction CarbonShack house. This eliminated both the CO₂ that would have been released from the wood as it decomposed and the need for new wood and the carbon cost that would have come with it. Leftover pieces of the framing wood were then used to make cabinetry for multiple rooms in the home.

“We have upcycled that material and continued the life of that framing for another 100+ years,” said Pallrand.

Other wood aspects of the house were reclaimed from existing structures. Philippine mahogany from pews in a Santa Monica chapel has become a dining room table and kitchen island, carved with patterns in keeping with the biophilic design of the house. A decommissioned red-wood bridge in Northern California supplied the wood for the millwork in the kitchen and master bathroom – bolt holes were left in the wood to add character.

Working with his in-house team of skilled tradespeople and artisans, Pallrand learned of a plaster technique, which uses straw for reinforcement, so the material – which is typically considered waste – was used in the walls and the plaster ventilation hood.

HOLISTIC DESIGN

With a desire to honor nature and keep the story of the case study house’s energy efficiency front and center, Pallrand – motivated by his wife – concentrated the design on the microscopic world. They asked how the story of the home’s construction could be continued visually once the walls went up, and patterns of mold spores, mycelium and bacteria were the answer. These intricate designs can be found throughout the home, constantly reminding visitors of the important connection with nature.

“We think of nature as separate from us,” said the designer. “The world is not outside; nature is inside of us, and the decisions we make with our bodies and our homes impact nature.”

In the kitchen, the rich look of the wood cabinets and carved wood island is complemented with a tile backsplash designed by Pallrand, inspired by nature



LEFT & ABOVE Locally made tile, an electric induction cooktop and a countertop of recycled paper are just a few of the eco-friendly design features of the kitchen.

BELOW Including a waterless urinal in a bathroom offers significant water savings.





and fired by local artisans. The nearby staircase features another design reminiscent of the microscopic world. Because tile cannot usually be preserved, it is a product that must be made new. Working with local artisans rather than importing tile offered a more sustainable way to incorporate a newly made item, and it meant that the designs were one of a kind.

“We’re trying to reintroduce architectural ornament,” said Pallrand. “We want our new homes to have that feel of humanity.”

The kitchen flooring utilized more of the reclaimed Douglas fir, which in this case frames tile so that even small pieces of wood could find purpose. The kitchen countertops look like stone but are made of recycled paper.

Sustainability in the bathrooms focuses mostly on water use. In California, water has a high carbon cost, and plumbing is required to be low flow. One bathroom includes a waterless urinal, an option that might not be common in residences but can conserve a significant amount of water. Bathroom sink faucets are motion controlled so that water is only running when needed.

The natural-world design appears in the bathrooms with more handcrafted tile. In the bathroom with the urinal, a remnant piece of marble was used for the countertop, and the cabinetry was crafted from the Douglas fir. Here, floor tiles display a spore pattern, which is replicated as a wall accent.

A second bathroom displays a bold yet delicate wall tile pattern of bacteria. The stainless-steel vanity references a medical theme to complement the tile. A third bathroom features salvaged fixtures from a house that was being demolished. These are paired with unlacquered brass faucets and hardware, living objects intended to tarnish and age over time. Mycelium patterns in the tile speak of the organic world inside and outside of the home.

In the kitchens and bathrooms, gray water is used for irrigation and to add back to the water table. Nevertheless, ground-tolerant landscaping limits the need for watering.

“We made beauty out of sustainability,” said Pallrand. In fact, “beauty is sustainability,” because the more beautiful something is, the more you want to save it.

ABOVE LEFT Reclaimed wood cabinets with a recycled paper countertop offer a way to reuse materials in the bathroom.

ABOVE MIDDLE A pattern from nature meets with a pedestal sink and green tub salvaged from an old home.

ABOVE RIGHT A stainless-steel vanity cabinet pairs well with the bacteria-inspired wall tile.

SOURCES

DESIGNER: Stephen Pallrand, CarbonShack & Home Front Build;
PHOTOGRAPHER: Cris Nolasco

KITCHEN

BACKSPLASH: Custom by CarbonShack, Clemente Orozco & Mission Tile West; **CABINET HARDWARE:** Duverre; **CABINETS:** Custom by CarbonShack & Spanish Galleon; **COOKTOP:** Thermador; **COUNTERTOP:** PaperStone;

DISHWASHERS & OVEN: Miele; **FAN:** Modern Fan; **FAUCETS:** Waterstone; **FLOORING:** Mission Tile West; **FREEZER DRAWER:** Perlick; **HOOD:** Custom by Home Front Build; **HOOD LINER:** Best; **ISLAND DOOR PANELS:** David Reyes; **LIGHTING:** Custom by CarbonShack & James Peterson; **MICROWAVE DRAWER:** Sharp; **SINKS:** Rohl

MASTER BATHROOM

(WITH URINAL & BIDET)
BACKSPLASH/FLOOR/SHOWER/WALL TILE: Custom by CarbonShack, Clemente Orozco & Mission Tile West; **BIDET, SINK & TOILET:** Icera; **CABINET HARDWARE:** Duverre; **FAUCETS:** Kohler; **FLOORING:** Mission Tile West; **LIGHTING:** Sonneman; **MIRROR:** Baci; **SHOWERHEAD:** California Faucets; **URINAL:** Duravit; **VANITY CABINET:** Spanish Galleon

BATH #2 (MYCELIUM/GREEN PLUMBING FIXTURES)

FAUCETS: California Faucets; **FLOOR TILE:** Custom by CarbonShack, manufactured by Mission Tile West; **LIGHTING:** WB Lighting; **MIRROR:** David Reyes; **SHOWER ENCLOSURE & SHOWERHEAD:** California Faucets; **SINK, TOWEL BARS & TUB:** Salvaged; **WALL TILE:** Mission Tile West

BATH #3

(BLUE BACTERIA BATH)
FLOOR TILE: Mission Tile West; **HARDWARE/ACCESSORIES:** Clivenden; **LIGHTING:** Sonneman; **MIRROR:** Baci; **SHOWERHEAD:** California Faucets; **TOWEL STAND:** Nameeks; **TUB:** Salvaged; **WALL TILE:** Custom by CarbonShack, manufactured by Mission Tile West