

WRITER MARY VINNEDGE
PHOTOGRAPHER PATRICIA BURKE
DESIGNER SUZETTE DONLEAVY
ARCHITECT JEREMIAH J. REGAN, AIA

Vintage Vibe

A modern guest bath in Oceanport takes design cues from the past

THIS BATHROOM IN OCEANPORT: Welllll, its charm is a matter of black and white.

Designer Suzette Donleavy and her client wanted each of the new home's bathrooms to have a distinctive identity, with this guest bath in neutrals and the others in stronger colors. "We wanted to do something very vintage but with modern amenities. This one has the timeless classic look you'd have found 100 years ago."

And the design choices feed into that overall goal. For instance, when sunlight isn't beaming into the focal-point oval window, two traditional chandeliers underscore an ageless ambience while brightening the room. The wall tiles used in the tub's backsplash are a mix of relief designs (an oval under the crown to reflect the shape of the window plus a scroll pattern at the bottom) along with 3-by-6-inch subway tiles, a time-tested combination. They add subtle texture yet don't compete with the just-as-classic diamond-accented floor tiles. The white Carrera marble on the vanity countertop and bathtub deck is another contribution to the aura of traditional elegance.

The neutral finishes — tile, marble, paint, satin nickel — allow just a simple switch of accessories, mainly the towels, to give the chameleon room a completely different attitude, says Donleavy, owner of Well-Designed Interiors in Rumson. (Imagine the change in energy with cherry or emerald towels rolled up on the shelving, perhaps accented with a few collectibles in the same colors: a sense of drama instead of its current serenity.)

She incorporated some of the homeowner's existing

accessories — the ornate golden crown above the shower as well as the large swan figurine — to complement her design scheme as well as the architecture by Jeremiah J. Regan, AIA, of Long Branch. "Without the crown, the walls would seem a little flat because I didn't have an opportunity to use fabrics in the room," she says. Donleavy specified cream wall paint to make the snow-white tile pop; the tone also plays nicely with the seashell prints used under the window as "a bit of shore influence."

Donleavy designed the shelving to "add function and intimacy and to give a feel of symmetry to the room." The shelf unit between the vanity and bathtub isn't technically symmetric to the one at the end of the tub, she explains. But it brings a sense of balance and provides a nice amenity for the homeowner's many visitors — landing places for eyeglasses, a book, toiletries — once they decide whether to opt for the deep soaking tub or the roomy shower.

Mary Vinnedge loves to read in her soaking tub — just as guests using this bathroom can do. Feel free to reach out to her about this article at EditorForRent.com.

SOURCES interior design, Suzette Donleavy of Well-Designed Interiors in Rumson; architecture, Jeremiah J. Regan, AIA, in Long Branch; builder, Neighbor & Groves in Wall; tile, Monmouth St. Tile in Red Bank; Devonshire tub, Portrait sink and IV Georges collection satin nickel fittings for tub, shower and sink, all Kohler through Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery in Lakewood; chandelier, Minka Lavery in Corona, California; black woven stool, Waterworks in New York City.

For contact information, page 124

What visitors wouldn't appreciate this guest bathroom, with its classic style and creature comforts?

