Remodeling

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Sell It Like It Is

Connecting with customers during the sales process can be tough. For John Habermeier, understanding a client's pain and having a consistent sales process are key—page 60

Fair Future

Planning to work forever? If not, do you have a succession plan for your company?—page 70

K+B Special

Design tips, the latest kitchen and bath trends, and more—page S83

Bath Details

Functional and beautiful bath details

BY STACEY FREED

The bathroom has undergone an overhaul in recent years. No longer just a water closet with a sink and tub, it has become a spa and sanctuary at every price point. Skylights and glass block for increased natural light, the use of varied textures and materials and sturdy furnishings, organic lines, fireplaces, and clutter-free counters mark the bath trends for the next few years.

Erica George Dines

De-Clutter the Counter

Clean lines, symmetry, mirrors, a white-marble vanity top, and white subway tile create the illusion of space in this small master bath (right) designed by Amanda Johnson of Small Carpenters at Large, in Atlanta. The wall-mounted faucets "appealed to the client who wanted as little as possible cluttering the vanity, which is made of black-stained beech wood," Johnson says. "The more we could hide and get off the counter, the better."

Joe Bianco

Getting clutter off the counter was a priority in this master-suite bath (left) in a 1900s farmhouse in Clyde Hill, Wash. The countertop drawers and shelves are a take-off of the popular kitchen-appliance "garage." Here, the "garage" cabinets store hair dryers and other vanity necessities.

"The client really wanted to create space and light," says Shamneez Pirani, an interior designer with Estate Homes Design, in Mill Creek, Wash. The textured glass in the maple wood cabinet doors and the cabinet's interior lights above its glass shelves make the tall cabinet feel less imposing. A skylight, transom windows, and the use of glass block in the shower allow natural light to enter the room.

Organic Shapes

This bathroom was originally larger and included a whirlpool tub. "The scale was wrong," says designer and remodeler Michael Anschel, owner of Otoganwa-Anschel Design-Build in Minneapolis. "The clients wanted a more personal bathroom. We made sure to make the scale more human."

Anschel also wanted to juxtapose organic with structured elements. The free-form cut river rock pathway is a counterpoint to the square tile. And the edge of the granite vanity top, which echoes the path's curves, contrasts with the straight lines of the six-faceted vanity. "I like to take a natural object and reference its organic shape in my design," says Anschel, who drew the vanity top's design on the granite by hand.

Both of these elements also guide the user: the walkway leading from the sink to the shower; the vanity top's curves allowing someone to get closer to the sink while separating the two sink areas.

Andrea Rugg

Kitchen Details

Functional and beautiful kitchen details

BY NINA PATEL

Clever, beautiful details add a personal touch to kitchens and allow homeowners to create a space that exactly fits their needs. These projects show how designers went the extra mile to find creative solutions for seating, cooking alcoves, and backsplashes.

Table Service

Down and Out of the Way The owner of this Atlanta farmhouse wanted a kitchen remodel that worked for her daily needs as well as for entertaining guests. Amanda Johnson of Small Carpenters at Large, in Atlanta, designed a fold up/down table on the non-working side of an island. "[The client] wanted an eat-in kitchen, but we didn't want to sacrifice space to make it officially eat-in," Johnson says. "We had to fit a lot into a small space."

The half-circle shape helps maintain comfortable traffic flow around the table when it's raised.

Johnson turned to her custom cabinetmaker Lockwood Custom Furniture, which also crafted the charcoal-stained maple island and surrounding white cabinets. The cabinetmaker crafted a tabletop that, when open, is held up with two cast iron brackets and, when closed, is disguised by a cap that covers the hinge.

Erica George Dines

The height of the curved tabletop is designed to work with standard dining room chairs instead of bar stools. In addition to the folding top, the furniture-look island also holds a downdraft cooktop with drawers on either side. The charcoal stain provides a dramatic contrast with the surrounding white cabinets and white-marble countertops.

Ron Blunt

Double Down The entry and kitchen to this Washington, D.C., row house is on the lower level with a formal living room on the upper floor. The family felt that the living area was too far from the kitchen for their growing family. They charged architect Bruce Wentworth, of Wentworth Studio, in Chevy Chase, Md., with the task of creating a family area in the 13-by-30-foot space. Wentworth removed the hallway wall to open up the space and fitted the kitchen with an island. To give the family a seating area, he attached a built-in table to the island. "The high island and lower table act as a sculptural element," Wentworth says. "We used plastic laminate so it was durable and inexpensive and provided aesthetic contrast to the honed black granite on the island."

The family wanted seating for four to six people. Architect Bruce Wentworth designed a drop-leaf at the end of the table. The fold-down piece is tapered to maintain traffic flow to the staircase when open. The countertop fabricator created the slide-out bars that hold the extension in place. "It's like an old-fashioned drop-front desk," Wentworth says.