

# Coastal Retreats

BATHROOMS EMBRACE THE PANTONE COLOR OF THE YEAR

BY RICK ROMANO

It's no secret that bathrooms are the most personal space in any home. Now designers are mixing practical fashion with comfort.

In the case of two area renovations, that comfortable fashion has taken on a coastal retreat motif — each with its own spin. Pantone, a national color authority, named the coastal retreat-friendly, blue-tone Serenity (#3919) as one of two colors of the year for 2016.

Designers Leslie Dohr, ASID, of Deep River Partners Ltd. in Milwaukee, and Matthew Jahns, owner and certified remodeler of Refined Renovations in Wauwatosa, say that while the Pantone designation does not drive their work, blue tones are an important element in capturing a popular spa-like environment.



## Multifunctional Contemporary

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TRICIA SHAY

Dohr's Mequon project incorporates blue tones in a master bath and dressing room.

"My design solutions are more classic, designing a bath as a restful retreat where you can start and end your day," Dohr says. Her design — mid-century modern with a European flair — includes two connected spaces defined by color and materials.

A soft-tone wall covering and hardwood flooring, for example, separate the dressing area from the heated porcelain tile floor and mosaic tile in the bath, combining light and dark grays with blues.

Dohr says the goal was to make the tub deck the focal point. She purposely positioned the heated flooring to point to the tub, which sits in front of tall windows that provide a centerpiece of natural light.

She layered artificial lighting for tasks and accents to extend the natural light. An old barrel favored by her client serves as a soap dish stand next to the tub.

"That provides a personal touch, and it's unexpected so it makes the room more interesting," Dohr says. "My favorite part of the project is how all the materials came together to create a feeling."



## Historical Update

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NANCY YUENKLE AND BARB PAULINI

In his Tudor home project in the Washington Highlands neighborhood of Wauwatosa, Jahns says the goal was to give the master bath a new millennium update while being true to the 1927 architecture.

“We worked within the existing finite space, which is typical, so we have to be intelligent with the use of that space,” he explains. “It still has to have that feel of comfort and amenities.”

To accomplish that, the project involved removing an existing tub — something Jahns says he would only recommend if there was at least one other tub in the home — so that a generous walk-in shower could be installed.

“People want soothing that will reach their soul,” Jahns says. “This is not merely aesthetics for resale value. The value goes beyond that.”

Jahns adds that while he does not follow the industry’s color of the year, he and his clients relate to Serenity through the selection of materials.

“We are in tune with where the market is going,” he says, “but with a customized approach, you can’t be a slave to that. Many of the blue tones work well in this type of environment, but we also pay attention to the tactile feel of surfaces and edges.”

Here, Jahns blended new fixtures with subway tile and terrazzo marble. He removed a pedestal sink, designed a double vanity and expanded an existing window, ensuring it matched the rest of the home. Sconces are dressed with shades, and an overhead fixture is fitted with a leaf shade — all to present a softer ambience.

“You can achieve a spa-like environment and still be true to the home’s architecture,” Jahns says.

## GET THE LOOK

Products that pair well with Serenity

If you want to know what colors and materials best fit in with Pantone’s color of the year (Serenity, #3919), then ask an expert.

Pros have plenty of advice at Gerhard’s Kitchen and Bath Store, an Upper Midwest chain with a store in Brookfield and one scheduled to open this June in Whitefish Bay.

“Blue has been popular for so many years,” says Judy Kimble, corporate prod-

uct and marketing manager. She suggested all colors seem to be in, though some take time to gain momentum. A good way to use a color of the year, she adds, is with easily replaceable accessories.

Cheryl Cincotta, manager of the Brookfield store, says shades of blue work with a variety of colors.

“I would say gray and even chocolate brown are very compatible,” Cincotta says, noting they can be used in vanity bases and countertops as well as in various patterns of backsplash tiles.

Amy Gartzke, an interior designer who has managed Gerhard’s stores in Sheboygan

and Appleton, likes the gray compatibility and suggests paying attention to faucets and other hardware.

“Chrome is still our top seller,” she says. “Oil-rubbed bronze also works for a more transitional look.”

Options exist beyond chrome, says Jamie Evans, a representative of Kohler affiliate Kallista (both companies’ products are carried by Gerhard’s). She likes the unlacquered brass faucet her company features as an option for that compatible-blue look.

“It’s a nice option because you can let the brass age or treat it to keep that subtle tone,” she says. **M**



Ceramic/Impressions oval vanity-top bathroom sink by Kohler



Poplin vanity by Kohler



Kallista Pure Paletta by Laura Kirar wall-mounted basin faucet