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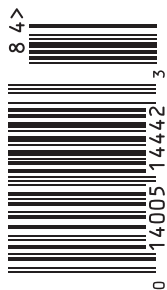
# BEAUTIFUL BATHS

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# Water Colors

The ocean's shimmering, shifting blue-green hues drove the design of this bath tiled in glass.

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Blue-green glass tiles cover walls and this 6-inch-deep ledge that spans the exterior wall, organizing shower essentials and providing display space.





The rolling hills and coarse textures of Santa Clara, California, have their allure. While most of this home is built with earthy materials in a Tuscan style common to the region, the designers of this bath were asked to create something apart—a shimmering, sleek retreat that would feel in sync with, yet removed from, the home’s overall design. The task fell to principal architect Michael Rex and project architect Michael Matsuura, who opted to shift focus from land to sea in the bath. “Everything here had to evoke the feeling of water, subtly,” Matsuura says.

Rex and Matsuura clad the room in simple square fused-glass tiles, glistening between cool sea green and aqua blue. All four walls are covered in glass, detailed with a decorative border design of stepped triangles, grouped into squares to create small pyramids. “The room could have been straightforward, almost stark, but these accent tiles add nuance,” Matsuura says. They also enhance the room’s sense of dimension, used in place of traditional molding and framing on the windows, doors, mirror, and vanity.

For the floors, the architects chose concrete, which has one important thing in common with glass: Both withstand getting wet. This suits the room’s most vital connection to water, which is its entirely open shower—without defining



**Opposite:** Water is welcome everywhere in the glass-tiled space, with an open shower sited near the soaking tub. Both bathing spaces make use of the same wall-to-wall decorative-tile window ledge.

**Top:** A chaise longue covered in terry cloth offers a relaxing spot for reading or grooming.

**Above:** A sleek chrome tub filler with a hand shower rises from the heated concrete tile floor.



**Opposite:** The vanity's cabinetry is protected from water by a thick rectangular frame of concrete stained to match the floor tiles.

**Top:** Triangular fused-glass tiles in a ziggurat pattern outline the mirror, windows, and doorways.

**Above:** Two vessel sinks echo the glass tile's watery hue, but in a lightly frosted finish to minimize water spots. Chrome faucets arch gracefully, adding a sense of fluidity.


walls, curbs, or curtains. Instead, the bath's entire floor functions like a large shower pan, gently sloping to a single drain. Hot water runs through pipes under the floor, helping to speed drying, warm feet, and minimize steam. Installed in square tiles and tinted a custom gray-green hue to harmonize with the glass-covered walls, the concrete is slightly tumbled for textural contrast.

Wood cabinetry is used sparingly and placed out of the shower's spray. But the architects compensated by providing handy storage on a 6-inch-deep ledge that spans the length of the 17×8-foot room. Embellished with tiles in the ziggurat motif, the feature links the shower, tub, and lounging area. "The ledge is integrated into the room, so at first you don't notice it," Matsuura says, noting that vases, candles, and bath essentials on the ledge almost look as if they're floating.

Even the vanity received an untraditional treatment: A dramatic frame of slab concrete shields maple-veneer drawers in the 8-foot-long piece. Modeled after a Parsons table, the thick shell was poured as a single dramatic slab in the same tint as the floor. Such consistency in color and materials helps this bath keep its focus. Its beauty is in its function: water, water everywhere.

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HIDDEN TECHNOLOGY enhances a sense of serenity. Electric radiant heat warms this mirror to dissipate steam. A flat-screen television nestles behind the two-way glass. Once turned on, it shines through.