

TIME FOR RECESS

Insetting tile adds dimension to a new master bathroom



Audra Siao and Stephanie Higgins designed this master bathroom to echo the home's calming atmosphere. "Open toward a canyon view, the residence creates a very relaxing vibe," Stephanie says.

The breezy blue of the sea on a misty day greets you with a soothing embrace when you open the doors of this Rancho Bernardo master bathroom designed by Audra Siao and Stephanie Higgins. But it's not the ocean you're experiencing. It's a backdrop of patterned, matte glass mosaic tile above a deep soaking tub that catches your eye.

"We inset the backsplash at both the tub and the sink wall to create some depth within a room where the ceilings are very tall — pitched from 11 feet at the shorter end to 14 feet at the taller end," Stephanie says. "The niches add visual interest to the expansive walls and balance out the tall ceilings and high windows."

Combined with a floating teak bench that serves as a place to set towels and accessories, the freestanding soaking tub transforms the room into a personal spa. A shower space was

installed across from the tub. Clerestory windows on the shower wall bring in natural light, while windows below them allow a peek-through at sprawling canyon views.

"We incorporated his-and-her sinks with additional built-in medicine cabinet storage, as well as a makeup vanity," Stephanie says. "In order to maintain the modern design, we specified floating walnut cabinetry to bring a natural element to the space. For a clean, crisp finish, we used a manmade quartz slab on the countertop. Our client had installed the same material previously in a kitchen renovation and liked it. Its flecks of quartz provide a beachy feel, and it works well with the blue-glass backsplash."

The shower wall's textured tile plays off the polished-concrete floor. The mix of modern and industrial finishes with a warm, neutral color palette and open-space plan allows for a timeless master retreat. ❖