



INTO THE DEEP

A master bathroom carved out of a historic Cambridge home is filled with up-to-date amenities.

BY MICHELE KEITH // PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAM GRAY

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hey met after college, married, and settled happily in a Cambridge one-bedroom. But as their family grew, their condo seemed to shrink. It was time to move.

A little luck turned up a stick-style Queen Anne residence in Cambridge dating from 1894. And though it needed extensive work inside and out, the historic home – Alexander Graham Bell was married on the grounds, and the house later belonged to one of Woodrow Wilson’s daughters – was definitely *the one*. “Their goal,” says Laura Brooks Meyer, the interior designer for the project and co-owner with her husband, architect John Meyer, of Meyer & Meyer Architects in

Boston, “was to bring back the glory of the house,” preserving its rich history while updating it for the 21st century.

Naturally, adding a master bath was part of the plan. To make room, an office next to the couple’s bedroom was recast with a whirlpool tub, steam shower, water closet, vanity, and floor-to-ceiling cupboards. The biggest architectural challenges were swapping a single side-set window for two adjoining ones centered in the wall, and getting the new plumbing right. “There’s no room for error with freestanding tubs,” Meyer says.

While not conjuring any specific era, the room seduces

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HOT STUFF

This is a winter-lover's dream bathroom, with a gas fireplace, heated floors, steam shower, and a stylish freestanding whirlpool tub. (For more on freestanding tubs, see "Soaked in Style," Page 48.)

with old-fashioned grace with its blue-gray walls – Meyer calls Benjamin Moore Seattle Gray a “cross-over” color because the exact shade is not easily identifiable – marble fireplace surround, custom molding, and subtle hints of texture and pattern.

Serene as it looks, Meyer believes that “convenience is equally crucial to tranquility.” That explains the remote-controlled gas fireplace, radiant heating below the Carrara marble floor, towel rack on the tub, and drip-stopping raised edge sculpted into the marble vanity.

The final flourishes add style. Meyer commissioned a hand-painted mural for the water closet's interior showing scullers on the Charles River. And an antique crystal chandelier bought at City Lights in Cambridge provides a soupçon of glamour. “The house has good bones,” says the homeowner. “It just needed an update.” ■