

MASTER SUITE MAKEOVER: BEAUTIFUL BATHS, LUXURIOUS LINENS, DELICATE DETAILS

COLORADO HOMES & LIFESTYLES™

Make this season
sparkle:
fresh ideas
for gifts & décor



ColoradoHomesMag.com
NOVEMBER DECEMBER 2009

10 things you should know about a

Zen Bath



EMILY MINTON REDFIELD

1 **At the heart of Zen design** are seven principles that comprise “Wabi-sabi,” a Japanese worldview centered on acceptance of life’s impermanence. The seven principles are: asymmetry or unevenness; elimination of the ornate; weathered and aged essentials; unforced creativity; hints and suggestions (rather than the obvious or explained); creativity and imagination; and silence and tranquility.

2 **In the ideal Zen bath**, says Kristi Dinner, principal of company kd, llc, a Denver design firm, you should be able to connect to the outside world. In other words, the best tub placement would be in a corner where two glass walls intersect so that you can contemplate the changing of the seasons—the greatest metaphor for life’s transience.

3 **The reality**, adds Dinner, is that unless you’re building new (and have neighbors far away), you’ll probably have to work with some existing space and privacy challenges. If you can’t reasonably have a wall of windows, then at least make sure your soaking tub is near a big window with coverings that allow light and some view of the outdoors. And don’t put the tub and shower together. “They should be in separate parts of the room,” Dinner says.

4 **Though soft, serene colors work best**—pale greens and blues, taupes, whites, browns—Dinner once designed a dramatic red Zen bath (left) reminiscent of fire.

5 **While colors should not compete** with one another, varying textures are a must. “These should be textures from nature,” Dinner says. Think woven baskets that house lush cotton towels, woven window coverings if privacy is an issue, river rock on the walls or around the tub, wood with its natural grain showing. Everything should feel good to the touch.

6 **The most critical component** in the Zen bath is the soaking tub, which most of us think of as being deep and freestanding. But a sunken tub is easier to climb into—and no less authentic.

7 **The best lighting is warm ambient light.** Though can lighting is a popular choice, Dinner suggests you not put it above the soaking tub. “Who wants to look up and see cans?” she asks. Consider cove lighting in your tub area or wall sconces.

8 **A common misperception** about Zen baths is that the goal is to bring the outdoors in. Not so. The goal is to connect with nature through big windows that allow contemplation of the world’s beauty. What does that mean in terms of design? You do not need to fill your Zen bath with green plants.

9 **Want inspiration?** For the real deal, go to Thailand and visit Anantara’s Golden Triangle Resort. Or closer to home, check in for spa services at Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary in Freestone, Calif. (near Sonoma).

10 **Maybe your remodel can’t include every element** of Wabi-sabi. Be practical with your space and budget. You’ll know that the design works when stress falls away like a bathrobe every time you slip into your tub. □

—Sally Stich