

# classic tale

A dash of design flair transforms a dowdy Victorian-era bathroom into a royal beauty

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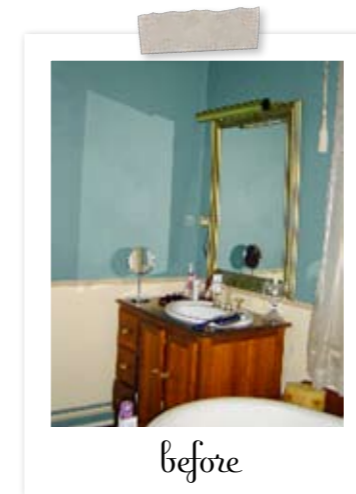


after

## RUB A DUB DUB

Who doesn't dream of a freestanding bath to sink into at the end of a long day? Seriously sumptuous, this freestanding slipper bath from Australian Construction Supplies is the epitome of luxury, giving the room a strong focal point. "The bathroom is so spacious that it needed something grand to tie its elements together," says interior designer Charles.

This beautiful bath very nearly didn't make it into the final room. Just before the renovation was complete, a chandelier that originally hung above it fell, shattering into a million pieces and severely damaging the acrylic tub. "Needless to say, the bath and chandelier were totally ruined but we all learnt a valuable lesson – install the lighting before the bath!" says Charles. The elegant spout tap, also from Australian Construction Supplies, emphasises the bath's minimalist lines and brings sleek contrast to the room.



before

Cracking walls, mouldy floor, failing taps, fluorescent lighting and rusty gold fittings – this bathroom had it all. "The minute I opened the door, I knew I had a challenge on my hands," says interior designer Charles Prior. The house, a stately 19th-century Victorian house in the Sydney suburb of Glebe, boasted a charming facade but a dark and dreary interior. A relic of the 1980s, the bathroom came complete with tacky plastic fixtures and a ghastly green paint job. The walls were disintegrating and – to Charles's horror – all of the render was waterlogged and completely falling apart. "There was nothing else to do except rip everything out and start from scratch," says Charles. Taking style cues from the traditional Victorian house, Charles combined crisp whites with splashes of rich timber to create a fresh and modern aesthetic.

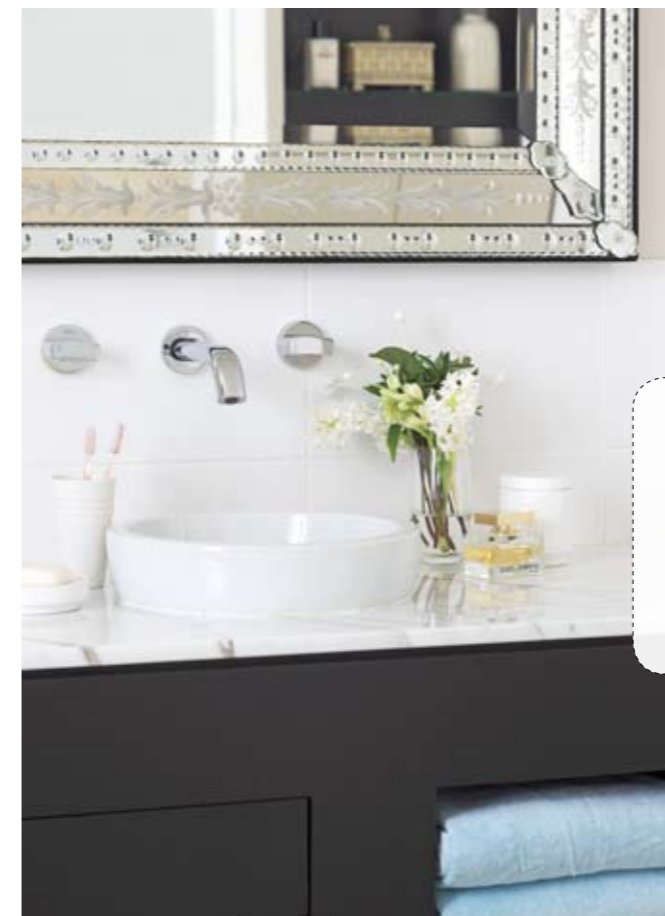


## SHOWER SCENE

Fed up with their cramped corner shower, the owners were desperate for an open bathing experience. In order to create a greater sense of space, Charles opted for a half glass screen from Neil's Glass Service. "It creates a fabulous feeling of openness without losing valuable water heat," says Charles. Not wanting to cut into the tiles to create space for the drain, Charles sloped the shower floor marginally and instead of a standard circular drain, installed a horizontal Grata grate from Rogerseller. An elegant, 3-star WELS-rated Mizu showerhead and Mizu chrome mixer from Reece complete the look.

## PAMPER ZONE

Charles and the team at Baxter Creative custom built a vanity made from black satin polyurethane and black melamine and topped it with smooth Carrara marble. Boasting innovative push-catch doors and drawers, this standout piece of furniture lends Oscar-worthy drama to the room. Catalano CX basins from Rogerseller harmoniously tie the crisp marble and dark tones together, while wall-mounted Profilo Oval basin tap sets save on valuable bench space. >



**Boasting** INNOVATIVE PUSH-CATCH DOORS AND DRAWERS, THIS STANDOUT CUSTOM-BUILT VANITY LENDS OSCAR-WORTHY DRAMA TO THE ROOM

## MIRROR, MIRROR

Inspired by sophisticated Italian palazzo-style glass Venetian mirrors, the owners commissioned Mostly Mirrors to custom build one to suit their new luxe bathroom. Measuring the length of the vanity and weighing in at a mighty 170kg, Charles secured the mirror using dyna bolts, which punctuate deep into the surrounding wall. The mirror's ornate, decorative border and velvet-lined sides take glamour to a whole new level. "Every bathroom needs a stand-out piece," says Charles, "something that will make your guests say, 'Wow!'"



## LIGHT HEARTED

Blessed with natural light, the bathroom has been fitted with minimal lighting. Discreet downlights from Inlite have been inset into the original decorative plaster ceiling, giving a gentle glow, while dimmer switches control task lighting. Wall lights, also from Inlite, have been installed either side of the vanity to provide extra light.

## FROM THE GROUND UP

The 'Coliseum Travertine' floor tiles from Sareen Stone are all about contrasting texture, with an earthy palette giving warmth to the primarily white space. "We used the largest floor tile possible," says Charles. "Usually a bathroom needs a small tile to allow for drainage, but the vast space enabled us to use these large travertine slabs." The larger tile also means less grout, making it easier to clean.

A porcelain rectified tile in Satin White from ColorTile extends part way up the wall. "The space would have been too cold and clinical if we'd tiled to the ceiling," explains Charles. "We wanted to continue the clean, fresh look of the rest of the house." A coat of eggshell acrylic paint in Old Church White from Porter's Paints finishes the job. "This warm white has beautiful depth," says Charles.

## LESSONS LEARNED

"This bathroom had been renovated many times over but never had the proper foundations laid," says Charles. "When we were ripping out all the old fixtures, we discovered that the render on the walls was very old and waterlogged and needed to be replaced before any further work took place. It caused a delay of nearly six weeks."

Contact Charles Prior of Baxter Creative on (02) 8399 0943, or visit [www.baxtercreative.com.au](http://www.baxtercreative.com.au) for more information. 

## SHELF INDULGENCE

"The key to creating a serene and soothing space is storage," says Charles. The bespoke vanity boasts bountiful drawers and cupboards behind its sleek exterior, while open shelving provides easy access to necessities like towels and bathrobes. Incorporating storage into the shower recess proved to be a little trickier, but the perfect opportunity presented itself during the installation of the wall-hung toilet. "We had to build a fake wall in order to create room for the cistern – extending it along the length of the wall created a nifty area with enough space for us to cut an open shelf," says Charles (see page 127).

## budget breakdown

- Shower:** \$894 (includes Grata shower grate from Rogerseller; Mizu shower arm, Mizu showerhead and Pol mixer in Chrome, all from Reece).
- Vanity:** \$7930 (includes custom-made vanity from Baxter Creative; two Catalano CX basins and two Profilo Oval wall basin sets, both from Rogerseller).
- Bath:** \$4298 (includes freestanding slipper bath and bath filler from Australian Construction Supplies)
- Floor and wall tiles:** \$4398 (includes floor tiles in 'Coliseum Travertine' from Sareen Stone and porcelain rectified tiles in Satin White from ColorTile).
- Custom-made mirror:** \$2500, Mostly Mirrors.
- Paint:** \$82 from Porter's Paints.
- Labour:** \$10,000

**total** \$30,102