

Flamingo Rose

This rose coloured bathroom forms part of the extensive renovation by Decus Interiors of a Federation-style home in Lindfield, Sydney, for a family of five.

TEXT ELANA CASTLE | PHOTOGRAPHY PRUERUSCOE

Located within the original portion of a refurbished home for a family of five, interior designers Decus Interiors elected to draw on the property's architectural history.

"The brief was for the space to have some traditional qualities, however we used contemporary materials," explains Alexandra Donohoe Church, founder and managing director of Decus Interiors, referring to the use of original timber flooring and traditional brass tapware. "We introduced a pink handmade tile as an element of folly, and designed freestanding joinery with a Calacatta stone top." The pink textured tile was selected to tie in with the original fireplace mantel in the adjacent bedroom.

Spatially, the designers were able to create two zones within a tight footprint by dividing the floor into two distinct materials – limestone forming the wet zone.

Texturally, the space is rich and inviting, accentuating the home's architectural heritage as well as defying the space's narrow dimensions.

Lindfield Bathroom

ARCHITECT Decus Interiors

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FINISHES

Ait Manos pink gloss tiles and honed Messina Limestone grey tiles from Onsite. Wall paint in Vivid White from Dulux. Honed Calacatta Borghini stone splashback and vanity top from CDK Stone.

FURNITURE

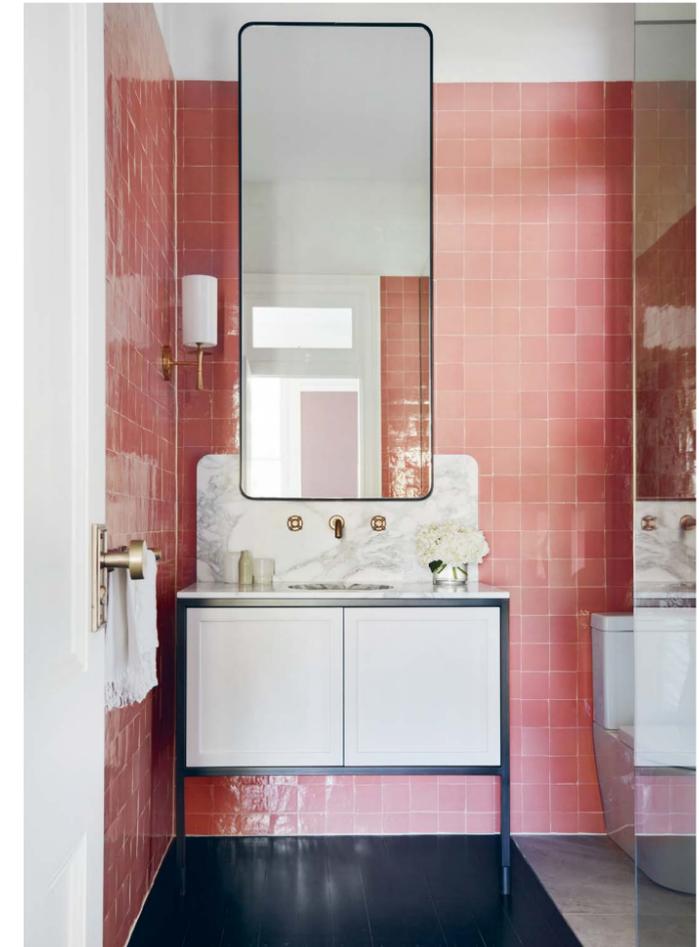
Custom mirror by Intermain.

LIGHTING

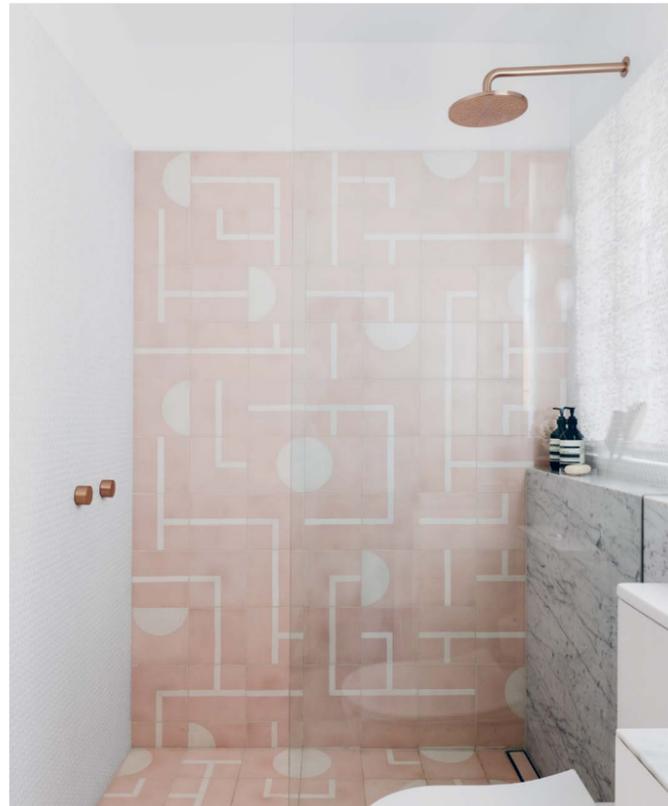
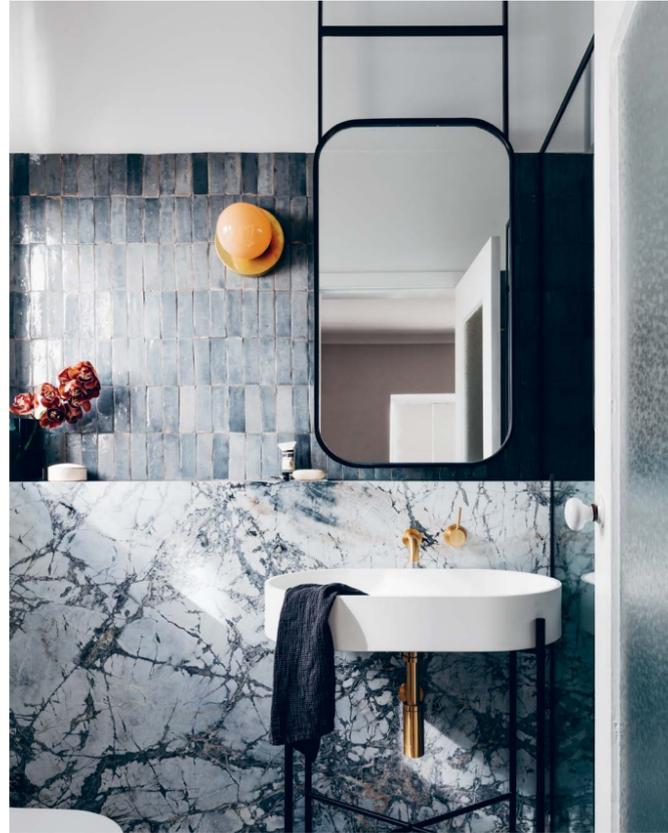
Drunmore single wall sconce by Aerin from Tigger Hall.

FIXED & FITTED

Contemporary three hole basin set with tube spout and crossheads from The English Tapware Company. Classic shower head wall valves by Perrin & Rowe from The English Tapware Company. Custom joinery by Intermain for vanity.



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These days, clients want the day spa experience in their own home and they're looking to the Japanese onsen and boutique design hotels for inspiration. But creating the quintessential bathroom isn't as straightforward as replicating a widely held ideal. There's no one-size-fits-all design solution because spaces need to be customised to clients' needs, though architects and designers don't necessarily have to reinvent the wheel each time. Contemporary bathroom design often relies on the same elements for a successful outcome, no matter the size, budget or scope.

Technology is one such element determining the functionality of today's bathroom, with advancements in research and development producing even smarter features. A quick look through the Kohler catalogue reiterates this; the manufacturer's Moxie showerhead, for example, incorporates a wireless speaker that syncs with Bluetooth enabled devices, while the Veil toilet integrates a bidet controlled by a one-touch remote control.

Bathroom products are now also being engineered with water-saving technologies. From selecting environmentally conscious features to conceptualising entire developments based around environmental, economic and social sustainability principles, issues of how to live better with less impact are coming to the forefront. Certainly, Breathe Architecture's recently completed Nightingale I multi-residential building in Brunswick is a fine example of how to do sustainability well. With a NatHERS rating of 8.2 stars (out of a possible ten), the bathrooms are simply part of a bigger picture that boasts rainwater harvesting which is used in irrigation and common-area toilets, and 100 per cent fossil fuel free emissions.

In addressing questions of hygiene, there's no more important topic to discuss than the toilet. So many new ranges, including the Veil with its rimless bowl, are elevating standards of cleanliness. Crisp lines and smooth surfaces have long been a desirable aesthetic in bathrooms and for the smallest room in the house, efficiency is still crucial.

While not everyone may need a toilet that doubles as a bidet, an efficient plan is a pre-requisite for good bathroom design, which is what makes Splinter Society's

Elwood House bathroom so compelling. This project is exemplary for its minimalist scheme and simple layout, creating an interior that's hard working and purposeful. Director Chris Stanley has taken advantage of the room's deep, narrow plan and positioned the bathtub at the very rear. Elsewhere in the bathroom, LED strip lights gently illuminate the space and a single in-built joinery unit neatly contains the washbasin and plenty of room for storage.

The artistry in the design is inherent in the exquisite material palette, which features granite, porcelain, stone and cedar battens that immediately draw the eye through the space, making it appear larger than it is. As Chris explains, "Rich materiality is what sharpens the contrast between the clean forms and natural tones and gives this bathroom a modern yet calming feel." There's also artistry in the detailing and while there are no overly decorative features in this bathroom, many other projects use texture, pattern and colour as a means of individual expression and creativity.

Decus Interiors' Woollahra Residence is a case in point, where each of the home's four bathrooms have their own distinct design personality. "We don't stick to any one hard and fast rule with our approach," says practice founder Alexandra Donohoe Church. "Rather, we work instinctively and our decisions are informed by the clients' sense of style, as well as any existing pieces of furniture or objects they own." The result in this instance is a tapestry of sensual surfaces and finishes; coloured tiles, patterned marbles and rich colour.

If the goal is to create a design that ultimately enables relaxation and retreat in the bathroom, then technology, sustainability, hygiene, efficiency and artistry must find an expression in one way or another. Achieving a greater sense of comfort is possible when all five elements are combined, making for a very happy yet highly functional outcome.

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