





BEFORE



AFTER

## From Bathroom Blah To Fresh New Spa!

You don't have to spend big bucks or undergo a major remodel to enjoy a relaxing spa. Spend a few hours transforming your bathroom this weekend and create your own at home!

Most of the time when you see a “bathroom makeover” or “home spa” on TV or in magazines, the room is so large and the price tag so high that it puts it out of reach. It's nice to look at, to be sure, but not realistic for many.

How about a home spa for the rest of us? Even if you have a small bathroom with a built-in tub like the one shown above, you still have ample opportunities to create a relaxing, inviting space that you wouldn't mind spending time in. In fact, we were able to take this average-sized bathroom and give it many of the features of a relaxing spa retreat.

**Stunning Shower** — The key feature in this spa makeover, of course, is the sleek, six-jet column we installed inside the shower. You can see a hint of it peeking above the door in the *Photo* at left. If you've always wanted a column like this but thought it wasn't realistic, you're in for a surprise. The column runs on standard home water pressure and can be installed

with minimal plumbing skills. It also costs a lot less than you might think.

Our new shower column needed an equally stunning enclosure, which came in the form of this swing-out glass door. Priced around \$300, it can be installed in just a few hours. And it sure is a leg up on any curtain or sliding shower door system.

**Spa-like Setting** — The rest of this bathroom's fixtures and furnishings were selected with style and budget in mind. From the vanity to the paint color to the open, airy feel, they create an environment where you can kick back and relax, even in a small bathroom. Read on for all you'll need to transform your own bathroom this weekend! Then, check out page 62 for a complete buyer's guide for this bathroom.

### See How We Did It >>>

Turn the page for five ways to make your bathroom a relaxing retreat.



# Better Bath in 5 Easy Steps

## 1] Earthy Tones

A good spa invokes the soothing colors of nature, and we accomplished that with an earthy gray (walls) and beige (trim) from Benjamin Moore.

## 2] Open Vanity

This bathroom previously had a pedestal sink, but the revamped tub demanded something better. This elegant vanity, with its rich mahogany stain, wide basin sink, and ample storage solutions, fills the bill.

## 3] Clever Column

This Hamat Abbee aluminum shower column would look right at home in the finest of bathrooms — but its reasonable price and simple design make it easy to put in any bathroom.

## 4] Dressed-up Doors

The sleek style of this DreamLine Aqua shower door provides the perfect complement to the shower column.

## 5] A Touch of Nature

A wall mural adds a lot to a room, but custom painting one can get pricey. This one is a vinyl decal from Etsy.com that's easy to apply and looks painted.



The crowning touch in this new spa bathroom is the stunning six-jet shower column. You can install your own for less money and hassle than you think (*page 52*).



## Accessorize!

We used the paint, vanity, and wall decal to establish an open, airy, back-to-nature style in this spa bathroom. The right accessories, such as natural-weave baskets (Pottery Barn), glass apothecary jars (World Market), flowers, and earth-toned towels and washcloths, reinforce that feeling. The result is a bathroom that seems a lot bigger than its small footprint.

## Transform the Tub— Shower Column & Frosted Glass Door



This sleek-looking shower column, with its six jets of water and arched showerhead, may look high-end, but you can have one in your bathroom for a little over \$500.

Shower columns—shower fixtures with multiple jets and settings—used to be exclusively the domain of upscale construction and remodeling jobs. But their growing appeal has gradually increased the offerings.

### Shower Columns for Everyone

Today, you can purchase a shower column for as little as \$300. (Ours retails for a reasonable \$560.) Plus, you don't have to go undergo a full-scale bathroom teardown to put one in.

For DIYers with a bit of plumbing knowledge, installing your own shower column is a realistic possibility. Most come pre-plumbed, so all you really have to do is hook the water supply lines to your home's plumbing and mount it to the wall. Shower columns work on standard water pressure, so you shouldn't have to make any changes to your home's plumbing to get good pressure from your new column.

The one challenging part of installing the column is that most showers have a "mixer valve" behind the handle that mixes the hot and cold water. Shower columns have separate hot and cold water lines, so this mixer valve has to be cut out with a hacksaw or reciprocating saw. Then, compression fittings need to be added to the cut ends of the pipe to accept the hot and cold water supply lines from the column.

The column gets mounted with brackets and hardware that come with it. If you do this yourself, just make sure to use a masonry or ceramic tile bit when drilling holes to



avoid cracking the tile. If this sounds like a bit more work than you're comfortable with, you can always hire a qualified plumber to handle the installation process.

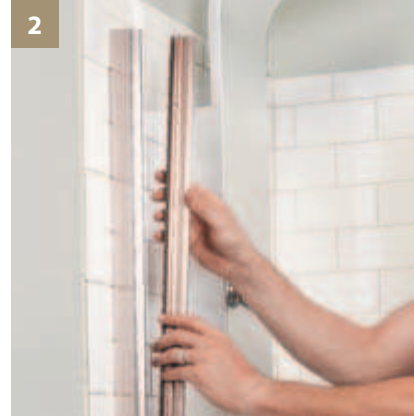
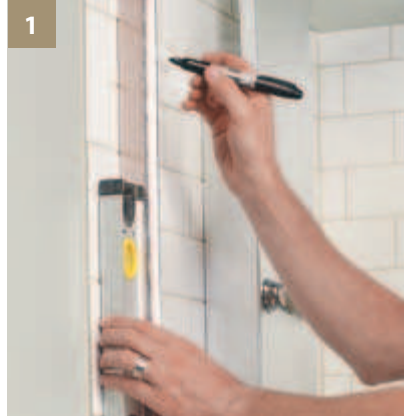
### Door Details

For most of us, tub doors bring to mind those plastic sliding doors that aren't too pleasant to look at and are even less pleasant to clean. In years past, the selection was so meager that a curtain often presented a better alternative for injecting a little style into the bathroom.

Thankfully, tub door design has come a long way. Many stylish options are available, but one in particular that we gravitated toward was this frosted



With frosted panes of glass, brushed nickel hardware, and a gracefully curved arch on the side, this stylish tub door immediately gives the bathroom a great new look. But the best part is how easy it is to install (see Figs. 1-6).



the sweeping, graceful arch on the edge of the door. If you're concerned about water leaking out behind this arch, don't worry. Only 8" of tub is left open at the end, so water doesn't splash out.

### DIY Door Installation

The other great thing about the door is how easy it is to install. Most homeowners could put it in themselves with relative ease.

The first thing you need to do is install a vertical track on the shower wall to hold the glass panel. The track consists of two parts: an L-shaped piece that gets mounted with wall anchors and screws, and an outer track cover that slides in place and captures the glass panel.

Start by holding the L-shaped piece against the wall. Get it in position, and make sure it's plumb. Then mark the hole locations with a marker (Fig. 1). Remove the piece, and carefully drill holes at these locations with a masonry

bit. Then install the L-shaped piece with wall anchors and screws.

The outer cover (Fig. 2) slides into place to capture the front edge of the glass panel (Fig. 3). This takes a bit of working back and forth by putting the cover on, sliding the glass panel in place, and securing the cover tightly against the panel, so you'll want to have a second set of hands around to help.

The next part to go in place is a support bar that stabilizes the glass panel. It gets attached to the wall with a screw driven into a wall anchor, and it has a glass support bracket that clamps down securely on the top edge of the glass panel (Fig. 4).

Now all that's left is mounting the door to the glass panel, which is easy thanks to pre-drilled holes and heavy-duty hinges (Fig. 5). Before you put it in place, though, make sure you slip the anti-water strip (Fig. 6) onto the bottom of the door.

glass Aqua Tub door from DreamLine (see Resources on page 62).

The door has a frameless design, which gives it a sleek look that contributes to the open, airy feel of this bathroom. The brushed nickel finish on the hardware complements our column perfectly. But the part we liked best was

