

KAURI RETREAT

Magnificent play of light and unusual forms define this stunning bathroom

There's no doubt that homes designed and built a century or so ago are highly treasured. Adapting them to suit modern conditions and requirements is a delicate process.

The Herne Bay villa housing this prizewinning new bathroom (and adjoining main bedroom), for example, has been converted from a Victorian piece to a modern home, says architect Ken Crosson.

Crosson, with colleague Carolyn Gundy, has given the house a complete revamp. The bathroom and main bedroom have been tucked into a space created by extending the existing roofline to create a gable over the old valley.

Creating a room within the roof offered the chance to capitalise on the sun and some great views - without encroaching on the precious outdoor space.

The villa is in Auckland City's "Res 1" zone and had to comply with the historic planning controls. These constraints, combined with the fact the extension was a mere 40mm below maximum height at the ridgeline, posed a few challenges for the architects to make it all work.

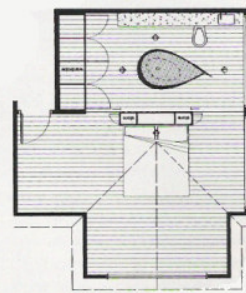
The architectural intention was to create a retreat for the parents, including a main bedroom, ensuite and wardrobe area. The areas were defined and organised for privacy with the strategic placement of the solid bedhead and shower unit.

The main feature in the bathroom is the dynamic shower - a bold teardrop-shaped sculpture whose top edge spirals up like part of a double helix. The plumbing is concealed within the double skin of the stainless steel.

A skylight above echoes the form of the shower, giving a sense of showering out in the open. The meranti plywood bedhead has glass doors on either side and fixed glass above, providing privacy without the sense that the space has been divided any more than necessary. The glass also means the wardrobe, which shares space with the bathroom, has plenty

Photography by John Pettitt.

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of natural light and all areas are made to feel bigger by "borrowing" the adjacent space.

Crosson and Gundy didn't want to have a walk-in wardrobe separate from the bathroom, because it would have meant too many divisions in the space.

Damp isn't a problem for clothes, though, because ample precautions have been taken: the skylight and louvre windows both open, and there's an extractor fan in the ceiling, as well as a very low-wattage heater in the wardrobe itself.

To match the rest of the house, the floor is kauri. To match the owners' environmental principles, it's demolition kauri. The white marble vanity top and white lacquered vanity are elegant and restrained, designed to avoid competition with the sculptural effect of the shower and bedhead.

DESIGNERS: Ken Crosson and Carolyn Gundy, Crosson Clarke Architects (tel 09 302 0222) CONTRACTOR: Marty van der Burg, GLASS: Glass Relate LOUVRES: LouvreTec JOINERY: Johannes Erren HANDLES: Drake and Wrigley SHOWER: Gaillan Sheetmetals WC: Duravit VANITY: Italian Stone - Branco Marble BASIN: Caroma HEATED TOWEL RAIL: Halliday and Baillie

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