phoenix rises

An attic master bath comes back better than ever after a devastating house fire left its mark.

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Thanks to windows and a pair of new skylights in the tub dormer, natural light is the star of this attic bath. Walls and ceiling painted crisp white are a backdrop for the soothing tones of the ceramic tiles.

Room size 225 sq ft

Budget $19,425

Why we love it
Skylights take advantage of dreamy natural light.

it's so magical, Blythe Gatewood says of her remodeled 1925 bungalow attic master bath that she shares with husband Peter Brown in Portland, Oregon. Not long ago, it was covered in thick, smoldering dust.

A 2012 fire destroyed their kitchen, causing extensive smoke damage on the upper level. "The acid from the smoke was eating the walls," Blythe says.

Everything was removed down to the studs when architect Michael Howells of Howells Architecture + Design stepped in to help Blythe and Peter attain a fresh space. "Michael demonstrated vision; he was thinking out of the box of the old bathroom layout," Blythe says. He envisioned a brighter, simpler, more elegant and functional space. Which is exactly the kind of bathroom Blythe dreamed of having.

Howells' original design called for 4-inch-square ceramic tile in muted golden tones on all the walls, but to stay within budget, only the shower walls, vanity backsplash, and tub surround and backsplash were covered. Other budget-driven alterations included shortening the height of the glass shower doors and hanging mirrors instead of installing built-in medicine cabinets.

The original, single sink was located opposite of where the double vanity is now. By removing an awkward closet, Howells made enough room to relocate and upgrade the sink area. "A double vanity is always nice for a couple," Howells says. "I call it a marriage-saver."

White paint on the walls and ceiling, white floor tile in the bath's wet zones, and the white vanity with its speckled snowy countertop of recycled glass brighten the attic space by reflecting light from the new skylights.

"I love the bathroom in the evening as much as I do during the day," Blythe says. "It's absolutely beautiful in any light. At night, I turn on the three sconces and put them on their dimmest setting, enjoying the sliver of sky in the skylights. And during any time of the day, the light reflects off the vanity mirrors like water. It feels like my own peaceful spa." Believe in magic, because once the smoke cleared, a breathtaking master bathroom appeared.

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OPPOSITE: Three sconces eliminate shadows while getting ready for the day. **THIS PHOTO:** Homeowners Blythe Gatewood and Peter Brown have yet to fill the vanity. "We have so much space; Peter has nothing under his sink," Blythe says.

A minimum height of 80 inches is recommended in a shower or a bath with a showerhead to accommodate the average adult height.

budget

Cabinetry

Hardware	100
Vanity	4,000

Plumbing

Faucets	800
Shower valves and controls	495
Sinks	700
Toilet	400

Surfaces

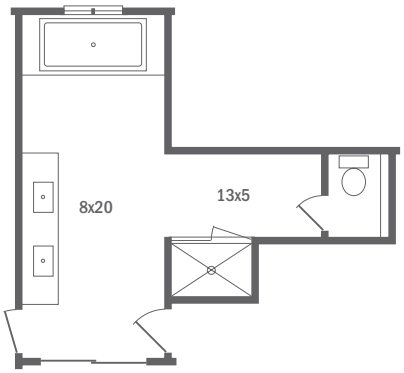
Countertop	2,500
Floor tile	170
Paint	200
Shower and wall tile	5,760
Shower door	2,000

Miscellaneous

Light fixtures	500
Mirrors	600
Skylights	1,200

Total **$19,425**

Costs do not include labor unless noted.



To save plumbing costs, the tub, shower, and toilet were left in their original spots. Only the vanity was relocated.

OPPOSITE: White ceramic 12×12-inch floor tiles keep the focus on the 4×4-inch tiles installed floor to ceiling in the shower area. Glass double doors visually stretch the size of the shower. ABOVE RIGHT: The simple brushed-nickel showerhead complements the other fixtures and hardware. ABOVE, FAR RIGHT: With raised horizontal lines across its frosted-glass shade, this midcentury-style sconce embraces a modern design in the bungalow bath. RIGHT: Incorporating multiple drawers with large pulls allows for easy access to linens and toiletries stored in the vanity. FAR RIGHT: Chosen for its minimalist style, the single-handle vanity faucet keeps the countertop easy to clean.