

# More than Meets the Eye

By Christine Hanlon Photography: John Johnston & Doug Dealey



Creating this striking modern spa from an old divided bathroom involved more than meets the eye. All Canadian Renovations (ACR) performed the bulk of their work before installing a single fixture or tile. "When gutting the space, we found the walls had rotted," recalls ACR's Tony Chaput.

ACR started by laying ply-wood against existing stucco and building a parallel interior wall, then blowing foam insulation into the void. Because the house had recently been re-stuccoed, preserving the exterior was critical. The spacious shower replacing the former bathtub is built from treated plywood and painted with a rubber membrane from ceiling to floor. ACR then applied brilliant bevelled-edge subway tiles and a clever sloping seat to prevent water accumulation. "There is no possible way for moisture to penetrate behind the walls or tiles anymore," notes Michael Kerr of ACR.

In older houses, vapour barrier and condensation problems are common. "That's why it's so important to get qualified trades people with ample experience in character homes," Chaput points out. ACR always starts by inspecting existing plumbing and electrical. In this bathroom, plumbing was relocated from the interior wall separating the former toilet area. Brittle knob and tube electrical wires were replaced.

Older homes often have concrete between floors as well. When ACR broke out this floor, they discovered crumbling joists that needed replacing to prevent collapse of the kitchen ceiling below. In keeping with home's character, they then installed an elegant suspended vanity and Dura Ceram floor tiles. ACR also kept and reinstalled the original bathroom door and copied existing trim to maintain continuity.