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How to Pull off a Medley of Tile and Stone in the Bathroom

Pattern and color can transform a sterile space into a showpiece

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If you've ever seen a bathroom showcasing a medley of tile shapes, sizes and sometimes even colors, you've probably wondered how the designer pulled it off.

Not only is there an overwhelming variety of tile and stone to choose from in the marketplace, but creating a one-of-a-kind design requires skill and vision. Sometimes though, that extra effort is worth the energy because pattern or color in a bath can transform a sterile space into a showpiece.

"Mixing tile and stone in a bathroom is a wonderful way to add visual interest," said designer Emily LaMarque in Los Angeles. "By combining different textures, patterns, colors, sizes and scales, you can play up tile differences and create a bathroom that feels customized and unique."

If you're feeling inspired to mingle a mosaic with a border and a large format tile, heed these tips from three design pros.

Mingle Organic Shapes with Geometrics



“Strangely, it’s easier to incorporate a mix of stone or marble in a bathroom than say, a kitchen, because in a bathroom you can select a mosaic tile pattern that fuses a variety of colors and materials that can be used for different applications throughout the space. For example, you can bring in one of the stones in the mosaic and use it for the countertop material, and then use another for the threshold and bench in a shower.

“Start with a mosaic that uses more than one color or type of stone—it will give you more options—and make sure your patterns are the same scale. If you do a small mosaic on the floor, go larger with your pattern on the walls. Lastly, mix organic shapes with geometric or linear ones to avoid visual overwhelm and a look that feels too one-note.

“I love mixing a terracotta wall tile and a larger format stone for the floor with a smaller Zellige fishscale in the shower. This combination also pairs well with Calacatta marble stone tops. The mix hits all the right notes in terms of scale, palette and form.”

—Rebekah Zaveloff, co-founder and creative director at Imparfait Design Studio in Chicago