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Remodels pinch pennies here to splurge elsewhere

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CHICAGO — People sometimes do it with food, eating a salad at lunch so that they can eat a steak at dinner. They do it with wardrobe, too, pulling an old, simple dress out of the closet but pairing it with the latest designer boots. Home renovations frequently are approached in this same way: Save here in order to splurge there. Especially bathrooms, where luxury options abound, and homeowners hold out for that one-to-die-for showerhead or tile they cannot live without — no matter what the cost — while other materials they're happy to find cheap.

Here we dissect two stylish bathrooms that found success in the splurge-and-save approach.

SHOESTRINGS, SERENDIPITY

Were it not for some last-minute basement bargains, Amanda Love and husband Brian Fuller today may not have a bathtub in their master bath. "We were on such a shoestring budget," Love says. "It would have been a very different scene in here had not these cheapies popped up." Hundreds of dollars were saved when Love bought a floor sample instead of ordering new.

Of course, more dollars

could have been spared by forgoing such luxuries as an antique Parisian light fixture and a European bath console. But those are the features that sent Love's heart swooning. "I saw that light hanging in the window at Pavilion and I just stopped," Love says. "It really finishes the whole room."

NOTE: Prices are approximate.

Splurge: Duravit Vero washbasin with Duravit Walnut console and console support towel bars, \$2,200.

Splurge: Two Dornbracht LuLu faucets, chrome finish, \$2,459 total.

Splurge: Custom fabricated stone tub deck, \$600.

Splurge: 1960s antique French pendant light, \$1,700.

Save: Beveled mirror, free (Amanda, a bookbinder, printed the vendor's business cards in exchange for the mirror).

Save: Kohler Tea-for-Two bathtub, floor sample, \$500.

Save: To-be-discontinued green marble subway tile used on floor, tub exterior and walls, \$3 per square foot.

Save: Toilet salvaged from former bathroom, free.

'FINISHING TOUCHES'

"I can't put into words how much I enjoy this bathroom," Paul Zurowski says. Two big reasons for that unbridled passion: his shamelessly humon-

gous steam shower and whirlpool tub. "You could host a cocktail party in that shower," says interior designer Todd Haley of Todd M. Haley Inc.

By the time Zurowski and Bill Hiscott moved into their West Town Chicago loft in 2006, Haley had completed most of the home's major renovations. Having been given a carte-blanc budget from the previous owner, many of Haley's product and material selections were high-end. But there are thrifty ideas to be excavated in the form of Zurowski and Hiscott's clever "finishing touches," and a masculine-looking commercial sink. "I wanted to do something special with the sink," Haley says. "Had we done a sink like this custom, it would have been \$8,000. But I knew an \$8,000 sink wouldn't fly."

Splurge: Kohler Vintage whirlpool tub, \$5,700.

Splurge: Kohler Vintage tub faucet, \$1,030.

Splurge: Black Hones slate tile on floor and wall, \$15 per square foot.

Save: Granite slab C-shaped countertop, custom-made from remnant, \$350.

Save: Iron shelving from Container Store (\$35 each) with custom-cut glass shelf inserts (\$15 each).

Save: Elkay industrial trough sink, \$2,000 (vs. \$8,000 custom sink).