

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

Greater Houston Edition
themetropolitanbuilder.com

Dialogue with a Designer



BATHS
OF AMERICA
FINE BATH & KITCHEN GALLERY

Kimberly Degner

Renaissance Design and Construction, LLC



Dialogue with a Designer

Kimberly Degner

BATHS OF AMERICA opened its doors in January 2005 when brothers Ali and Zeeshan Sultanali decided to start selling plumbing and tiles to the Houston market. Baths of America focuses on customer service and partners only with brands offering quality products and customer service. In addition to plumbing, Baths of America now offers door and cabinet hardware, major appliances, cabinetry, and countertops. It has turned into a one-stop shop for designers, builders, and architects, offering the latest designs and trends in the market.

This month BATHS OF AMERICA speaks with Kimberly Degner, founding partner of Renaissance Design and Construction, LLC. And her partner Stephen Wells. Kimberly has spent most of her life in the design/construction industry. As a teenager, she started out designing window treatments and managing her workroom. After building 2 houses, and working on multiple construction and remodeling projects, it didn't take long before she evolved into residential construction full time. Designing living spaces for clients and helping them realize their dreams is one of her greatest joys.

Kimberly has owned her design firm for the last 22 years. She has designed and has been the project manager for

several new homes; however, her main focus has been designing and project managing multiple high-end home remodeling projects. Kitchens, bathrooms, whole house, space planning, and exterior structures are her specialty.

BATHS OF AMERICA: How can an experienced interior designer help a custom home builder or a remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?

Kimberly Degner: Anyone who has done a remodeling project knows that there are about a million decisions that a person will need to make to complete the project. Questions like: "Can that wall be moved," or "How can we open up the space," or even, "How can we make this kitchen more functional?" Most of those questions cannot be answered without some professional guidance. All too often a designer with no background in construction creates a beautiful plan which is not practical or is prohibitively expensive. Because Renaissance handles both design and construction, we can not only help the client realize their vision for their new living space but also ensure that the remodeling plan is both practical and affordable. Many times, the design elements we bring to the table are not even options the homeowners have considered. For many clients, visualizing the new space is difficult, particularly if moving walls is involved. We help clients see the space



before construction with drawings and design details.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *How do you begin the material selection process when working with clients?*

Kimberly Degner: We start the process with the space planning. Knowing how the space will be used is important in determining what materials will work best for the homeowner. In general, the selection process starts with the most limited choice, and that is with countertops. There are many choices of countertop material, but there are fewer options than most of the other materials, like tile, for example. The countertop sets the tone for the space and will be the focal point. Tile selection is generally next. We make sure that the tile not only coordinates (rather than competes) with the countertop but we also make sure that the style is complementary to the ultimate final design we are working to achieve. Lighting and cabinet hardware come next. Lighting, which is chosen any time during this process, is a particularly important element and is too frequently overlooked or its importance is minimized, which would be a mistake. Lighting can make or break a design and should be considered at virtually every step of the process. The last selection is the paint color. Paint color is the last item chosen because you literally have unlimited choices when deciding on color.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What are common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?*

Kimberly Degner: When a homeowner is considering a remodeling project, too many times they try to “save costs” in inefficient places. They give up some design details that really won’t add much to the project cost but could result in a tremendous loss when gaining efficiency and comfort if they aren’t included. There are smart ways to stay within a budget, and we actively help clients get the most out of the money they have budgeted for the project. We understand that remodeling is not inexpensive, but it is an investment in one of the biggest long-term investments people make –

in our homes. In the process of working within a budget, we believe in functionality, and we ensure that the space is as functional as possible, using organizational cabinetry and space planning for efficiency.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What fascinates you and how have you incorporated that into your designs.*

Kimberly Degner: I love functionality. I believe that our homes should not only fit our lifestyle but should be functional and efficient. Designing spaces that make sense for the family is our joy. For example, clients tell us that they didn’t realize how inefficient their kitchen was until they had it designed and remodeled by our company. Many times, we put up with our spaces because we haven’t considered any other options. I love to show clients how we can remodel their existing home so that it fits their lifestyle perfectly.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What would be your recommendation for “what to do first” in a remodeling*



project when working with the homeowners?

Kimberly Degner: The first step in any remodeling project is planning. We will walk our clients through from the very beginning with space planning, cabinet design, and then all selections, including countertop, tile, flooring, cabinetry, lighting, plumbing fixtures, accessories, and paint colors. The secret to a successful remodeling project is good planning and communication. We work hard on the front end of the project to make sure that the project will run smoothly, and we make sure that our clients are kept up to speed by giving them daily/weekly schedules. Especially in this environment, we want to make sure that all the materials we will be using will be available when we are ready to install them. Some project delays may be unavoidable, but we do our best through careful planning to ensure that delays are kept to a minimum and that we are communicating with our clients daily.

BATHS OF AMERICA: Any last thoughts or comments?

Kimberly Degner: We have a wide variety of clientele. We have some that want a great deal of design assistance, and we are more than happy to help. We have some that like to do the selections on their own, and we are happy to assist in helping them to put together a cohesive design that enhances their home. We also work with clients that have already hired a designer. We love those clients as well! We are happy to work with any designer to bring their vision to reality. We do this by creating a cohesive team. We have several designers that consider us their “preferred contractor.” We don’t get in the way of the designer, but rather, we help them by ensuring that creating their design is our ultimate goal. Again, we believe communication is key, and we are here to help the designer in any way possible.

***For more information contact:
Kimberly Degner, Founding Partner,
Renaissance Design and
Construction, LLC
Phone: 832-957-2289
Address: 1608 White Willow Lane,
Pearland, TX 77581
Website: www.rdccompany.com***



713.572.2284
bathsofamerica.com
APPLIANCES ■ PLUMBING
HARDWARE ■ CABINETS