



The Queen's *gambit*

NARI Minnesota – 2025 ROTY Awards

Project: The Queen's Gambit **Category:** Residential Interior Over \$500,000

This home was haunted by wasted potential. Its most striking architectural feature was a turret that stood hollow and unclaimed like a crown jewel with no purpose. Narrow hallways fractured the floor plan, cutting the primary suite into pieces and leaving the spaces around it feeling disjointed and unfinished.

Our client is an artist with an appetite for the unusual, a collector's soul, and a love of the wonderfully strange, and she wanted a home that reflected her own bold and unconventional spirit. She wanted to reclaim the turret and create a dramatic primary bath that felt immersive, moody, and a little disorienting, a bedroom that cocooned, and a closet that felt like a boutique. And we delivered in spades.

The Queen's Gambit is a darkly romantic, cinematic composition of contrast where color drenching, gleaming fixtures, and sculptural elements conspire to create a world entirely its own. What was once a disjointed footprint is now a masterclass in spatial storytelling.

The office became a cabinet of curiosities, a place where creativity could run wild and inspiration could strike from every corner. The hallways and landing were elevated from mere pass-throughs to narrative connectors, tying every space together.

It seduces, it stuns, it blurs the line between fantasy and function. You'll find that we're all a little mad here, but doesn't madness look fabulous in marble and metallics?



Client Requests

- Reclaim the turret and transform it into the dramatic heart of the primary suite, turning wasted square footage into a purposeful focal point.
- Remove narrow hallways and improve flow so the primary suite feels whole, not divided.
- Create a bathroom that supports both function and restoration — a space where daily routines can slow down and feel like self-care rituals.
- Incorporate bold, immersive design elements that reflect her artistic personality, including black-on-black finishes, marble checkerboard flooring, and metallic accents.
- Add a freestanding soaking tub where she can unwind and find spa-like comfort.
- Ensure physical comfort with radiant heated floors and intuitive, easy-to-navigate circulation.
- Luxury walk-in shower with slab walls, a featured niche, and fixtures that are easy to use and maintain.
- Design a bedroom that feels like a cocoon — private, layered, and supportive of rest and recovery.
- Turn the closet into a boutique-like experience that sparks joy and makes getting dressed feel like something to look forward to rather than rushed.
- Create an office that balances practicality with inspiration — organized enough to support productivity, but beautiful and imaginative enough to spark creativity during long work-from-home hours.
- Maximize outdoor views and take advantage of natural light.
- Bring beauty and atmosphere into the hallways and landing so that every space — even the transitional ones — feels deliberate and connected to the whole home.
- Deliver a home that reflects her love for the wonderfully strange, layering drama, whimsy, and comfort in a way that feels unapologetically personal.

Primary Bath

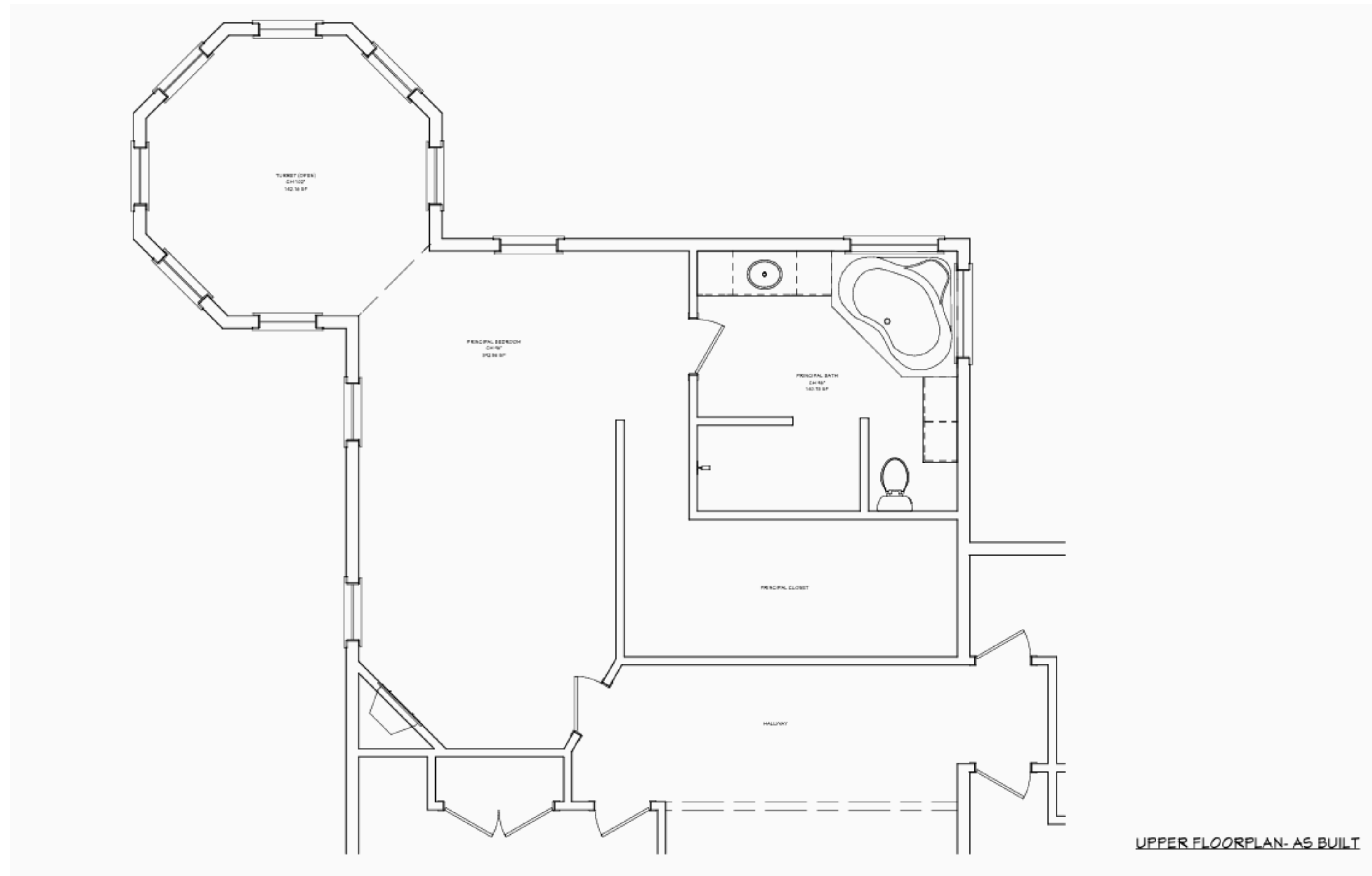
The original bath was the weakest link in the home: too small, broken up by a closet hallway, and cut off from the turret. Daily use was frustrating, with poor circulation, limited light, and no sense of retreat.

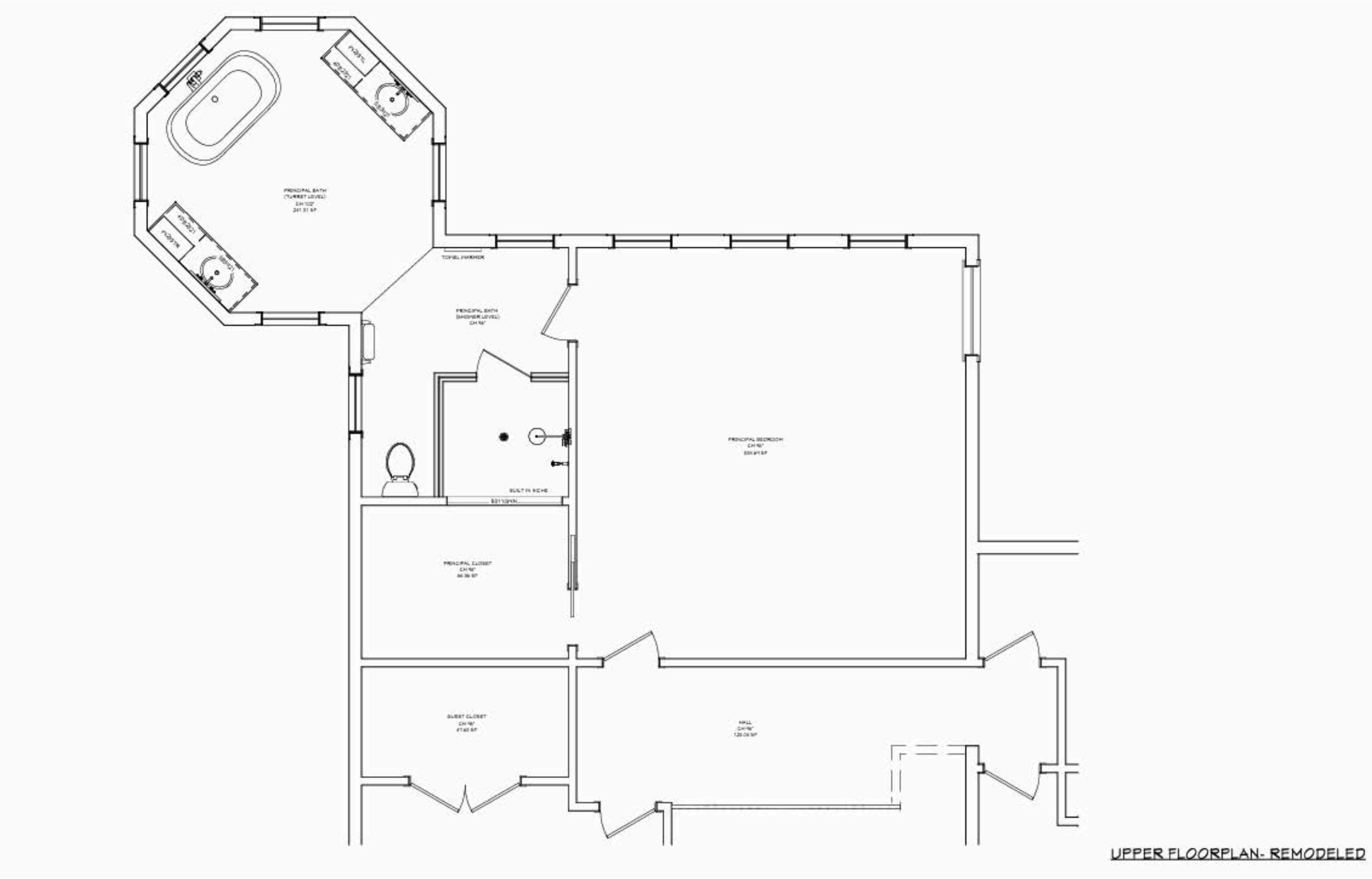
By removing the closet hallway, we were able to extend the bath into the turret and claim it as the centerpiece. A copper-lined double slipper tub is positioned to capture natural light and turn the turret into a moment of drama. This move changed the way she experiences her day, offering her a space to turn to for comfort and restoration while soaking in the sun and scenery.

To heighten the sense of immersion, the room was drenched in Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black — walls, trim, and ceiling — creating a cocoon-like atmosphere that feels both dramatic and calming. Checkerboard marble tiles in Nero Marquina and Casablanca Carrara add contrast and rhythm, leading the eye toward the tub like a game board.

The oversized walk-in shower was reimaged and wrapped in seamless black quartz slabs for a soft, shadowed effect. A metallic bronze mosaic niche, lit from within, glows like a jewel box in the darkness. Twin vanities topped in quartz feature copper cube mosaic backsplashes that add warmth and texture. Radiant floor heating keeps the marble warm year-round, adding physical comfort to the visual drama.







PRIMARY BATHROOM

MATERIALS & FINISHES



KEY	
A.	Brizo Invari Luxe Gold Widespread Lavatory Faucet with Column Spout
B.	Brizo Invari Luxe Gold with Black Crystal Knob Handles
C.	Signature Hardware 70" Thain Antique Black with Copper Interior Double Slipper Pedestal Tub
D.	Kohler Sartorial Herringbone Caxton Oval Undermount Black Bathroom Sink
E.	Brizo Luxe Gold Invari Thermostatic Valve Trim with Diverter
F.	Brizo Luxe Gold Invari Robe Hook
G.	Brizo Luxe Gold Invari Single-Handle Floor Mount Tub Filler
H.	Brizo Luxe Gold Invari Multi-Function Slide Bar Handshower
I.	Brizo Luxe Gold Universal Showering Classic Slide Bar Shower Arm
J.	Brizo Luxe Gold Invari Round Multi-Function Shower Head
K.	Brizo Luxe Gold Invari Single-Handle Floor Mount Tub Filler Lever Handle Kit
L.	Kohler Black Highline Comfort Height Two-piece Elongated Dual Flush Toilet
M.	Brizo Luxe Gold Invari Tissue Holder
N.	Brizo Luxe Gold Invari 24" Towel Bar

PRIMARY BATHROOM

MATERIALS & FINISHES



KEY

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| A. RIAD Casablanca Carrara 18x18 Tile | J. Ovolo Privacy Door Set in Oil Rubbed Bronze with Colored Fluted Crystal Glass Knobs |
| B. RIAD Nero Marquina 18x18 Tile | K. Signature Hardware Black Powder Coated Lucido Decorative Vanity Mirror |
| C. TEC Jet Black #950 Grout | L. Etsy Handle and Knob Rose Gold Brass Drawer Handles |
| D. Emporio Black Onyx Mosaic Tile | M. Hinkley Lighting Black Oxide Ana 25" Tall Wall Sconce |
| E. TEC Raven #941 Grout | N. Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black SW6258 Base/Case/Trim/ Cabinet Paint |
| F. Silestone Stellar Night Quartz Panels | |
| G. Ann Sacks Savoy Metallic Bronze Mosaic Tile | |
| H. TEC Bronze #923 Grout | |
| I. Porcelanosa Metal Bronze Mini 3D Cubes 12x12 Mosaic Tiles | |



Primary Bedroom

Once plain and visually disconnected, the bedroom now continues the moody narrative of the suite. Black crown and trim link it to the bathroom, while new windows flood it with daylight, balancing the dramatic palette. A crocodile-patterned wallcovering adds texture and depth, and layered lighting creates soft, calming ambiance at night.

Primary Bedroom Closet

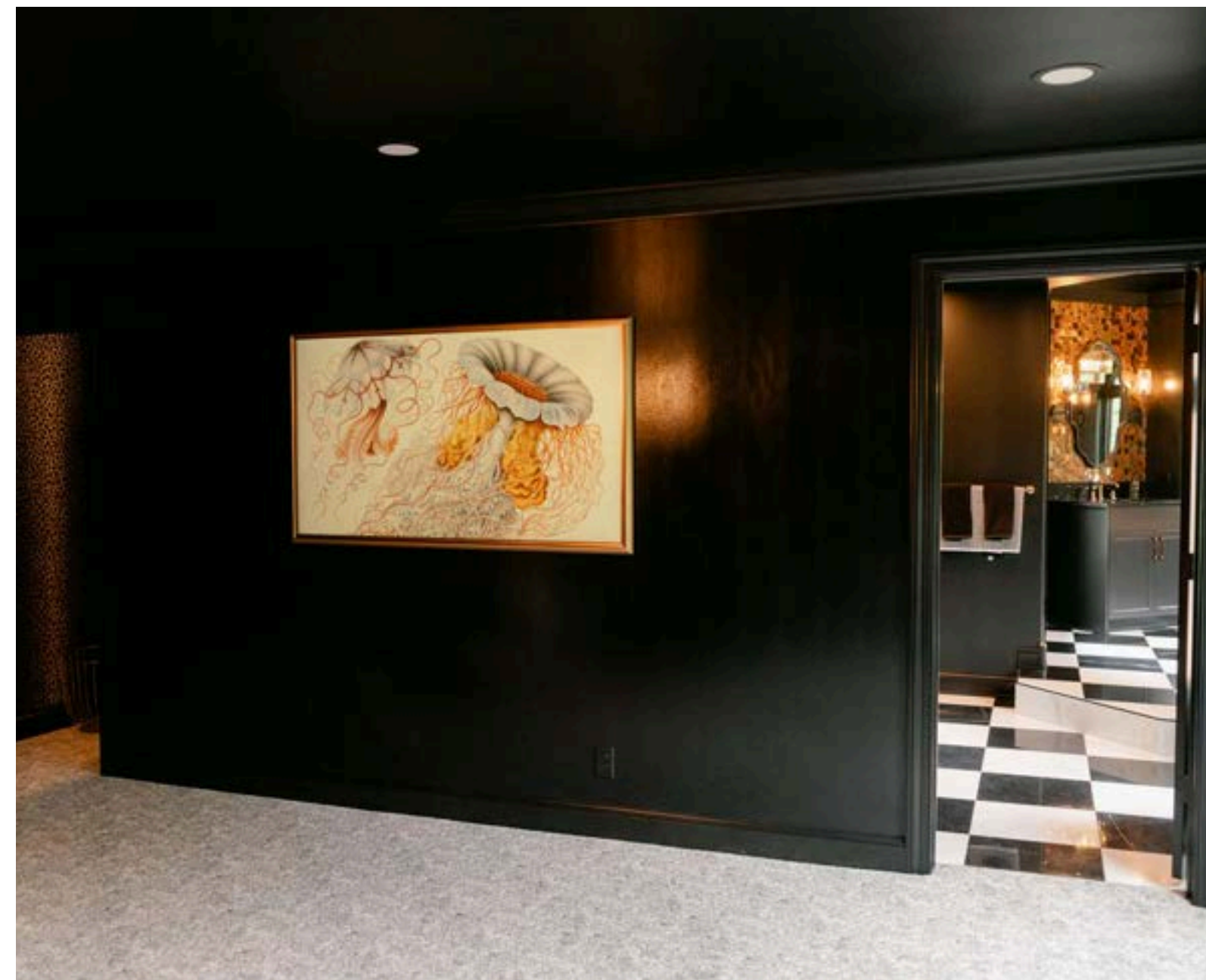
We reconfigured the closet to create a boutique-like experience with custom slate-finished closet systems, distinct storage zones, and integrated lighting. Textured, leopard-print wallpaper on the walls and gold crystalline wallpaper on the ceiling and reflective finishes add a sense of playfulness and discovery.

This space now encourages the client to slow down and begin each day in an environment that feels organized and uplifting.

Hallways & Upper Level Zones

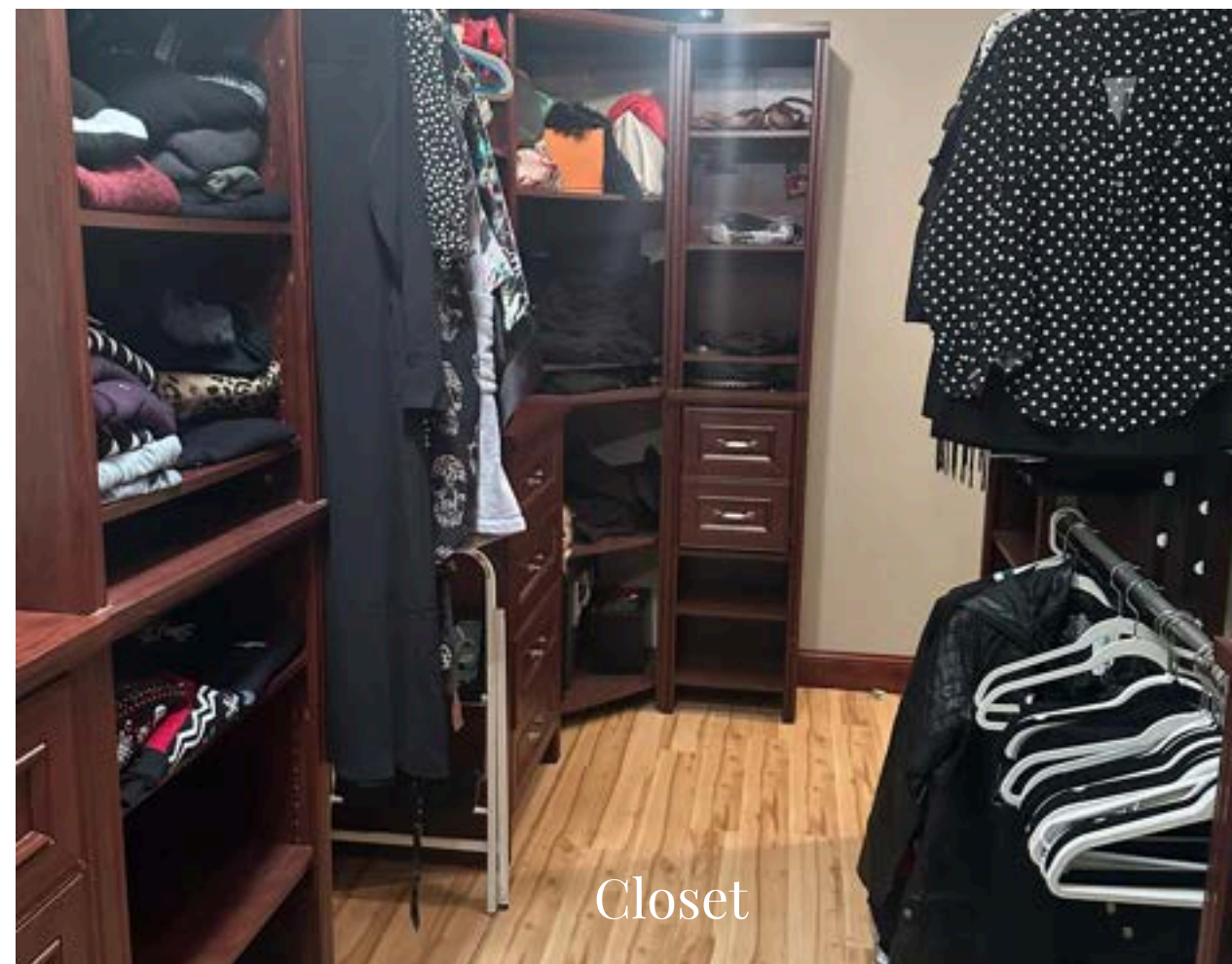
Previously overlooked, the hallways and landing were given a new sense of purpose with Kravet chinoiserie wallpaper, bold black doors with crystal knobs, and patterned carpet underfoot. New lighting creates rhythm and connects the spaces visually.

These once-transitional areas now feel like part of the home's story, drawing you toward each room and carrying the moody design language throughout the entire upper level.





Primary Bath



Closet



Primary Bath



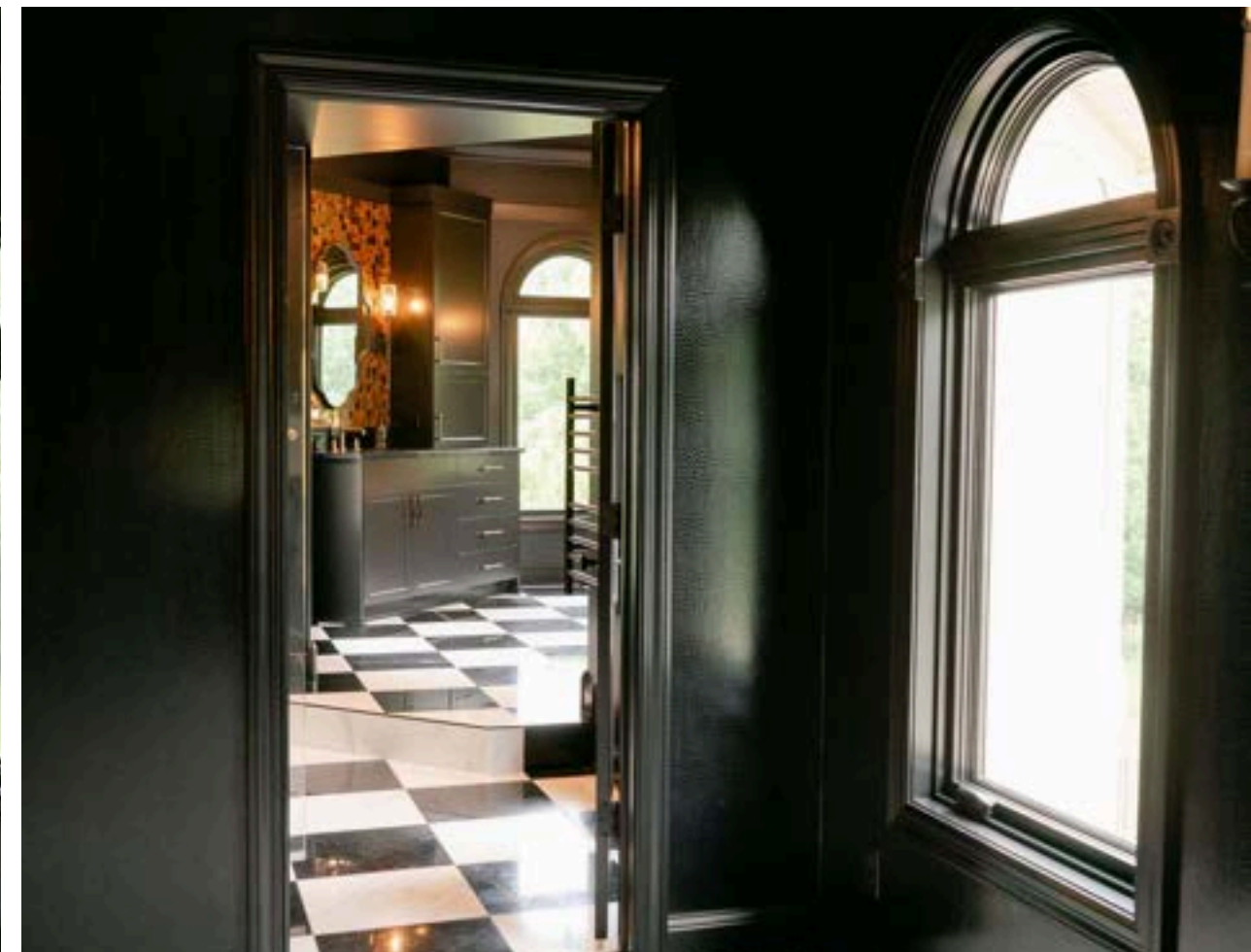
Turret



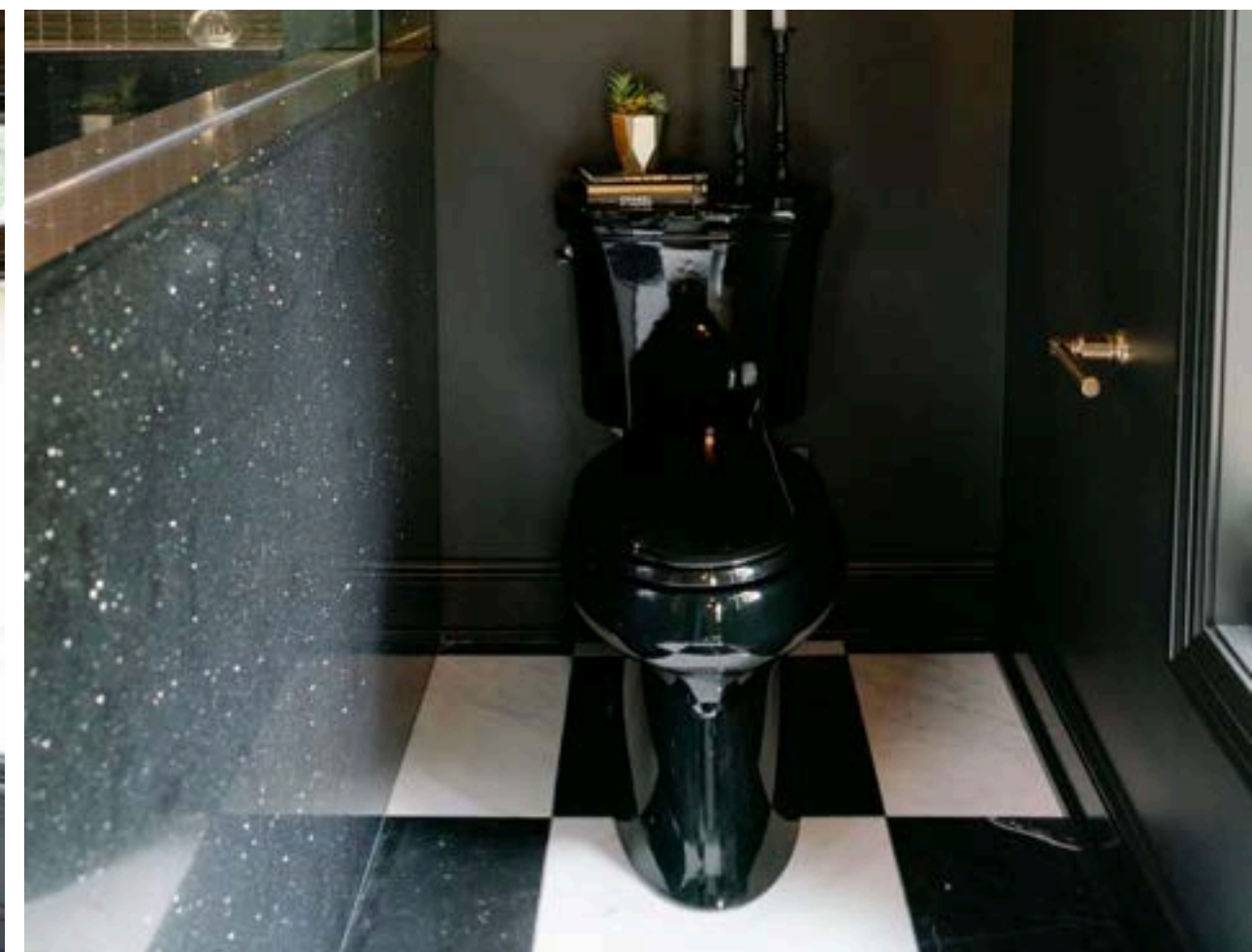
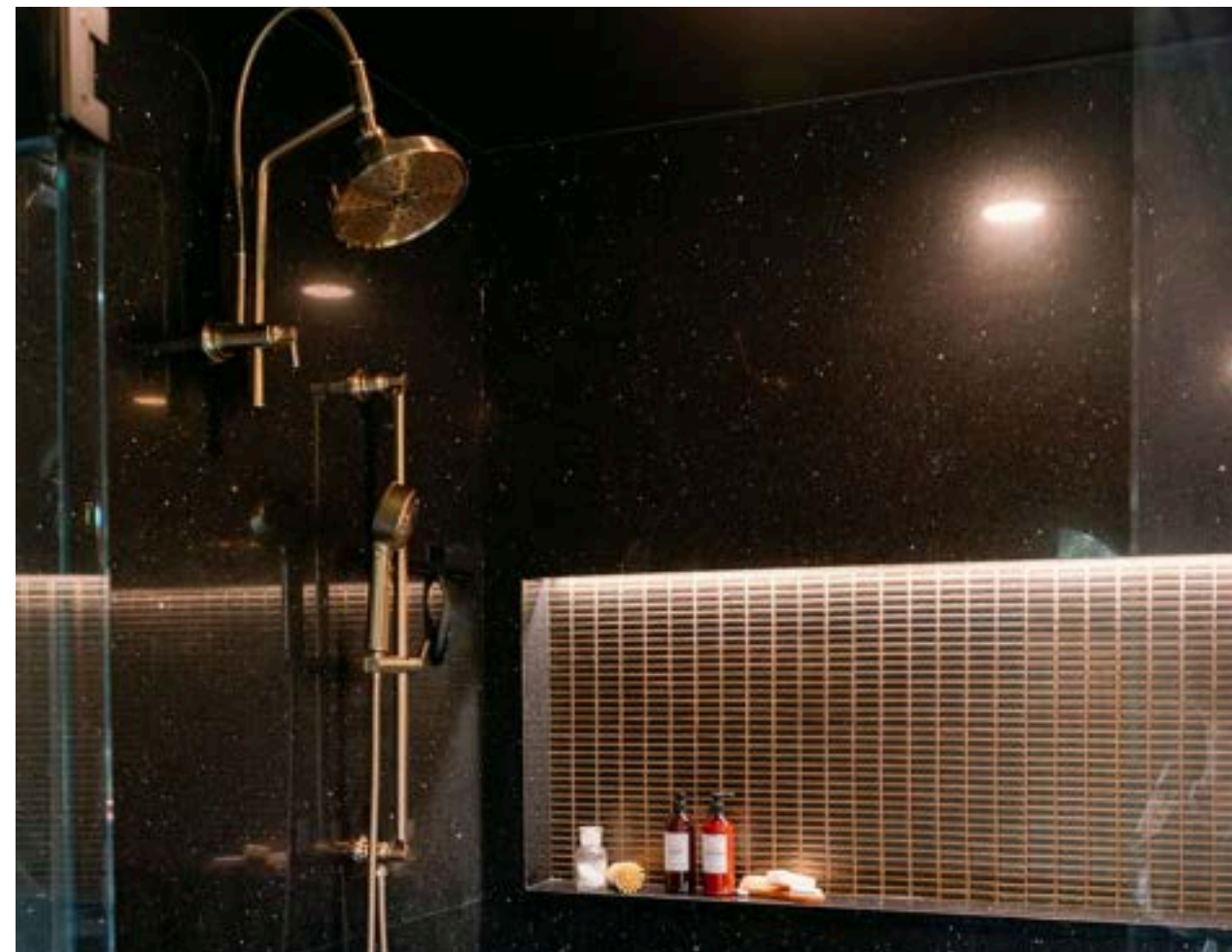
Turret

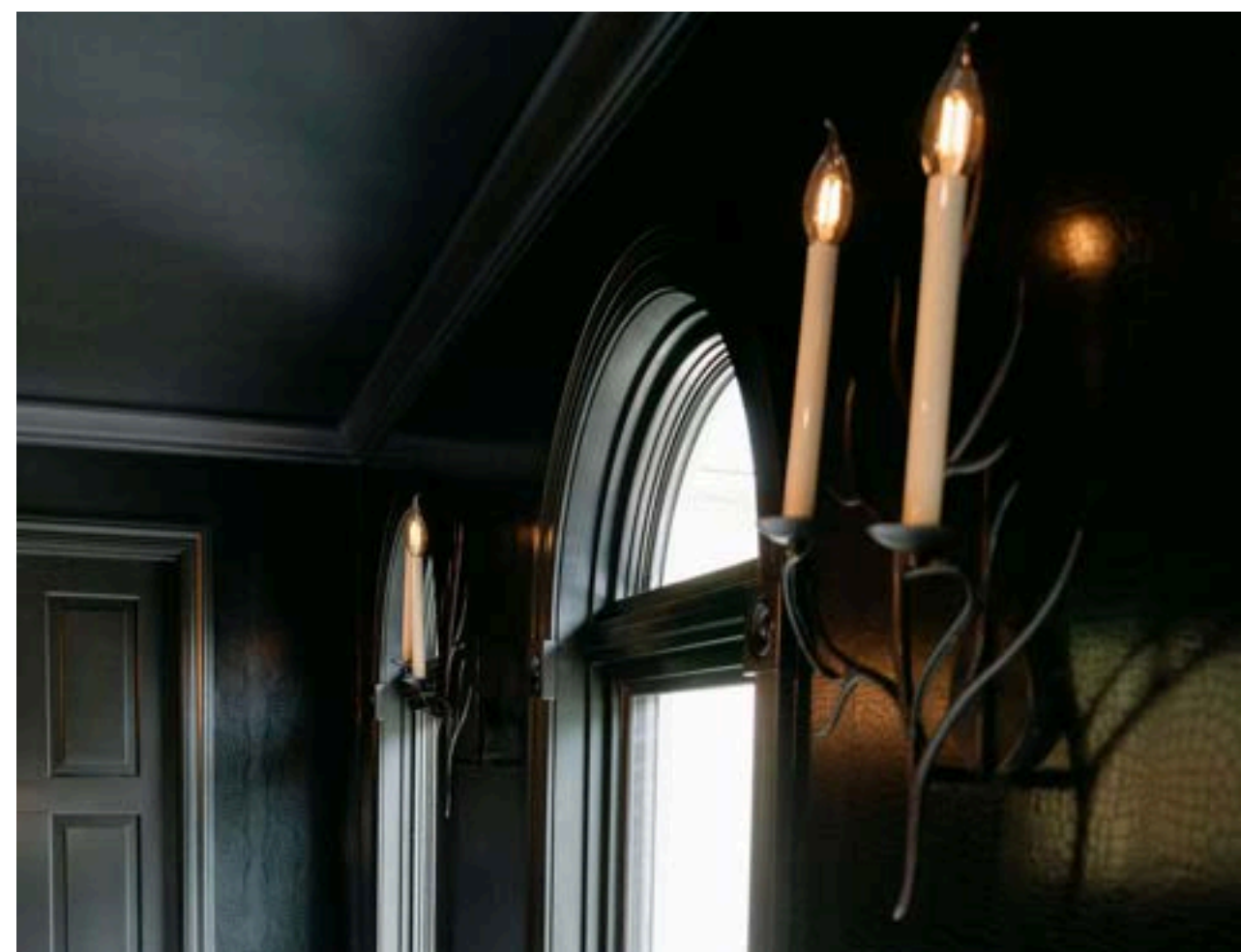
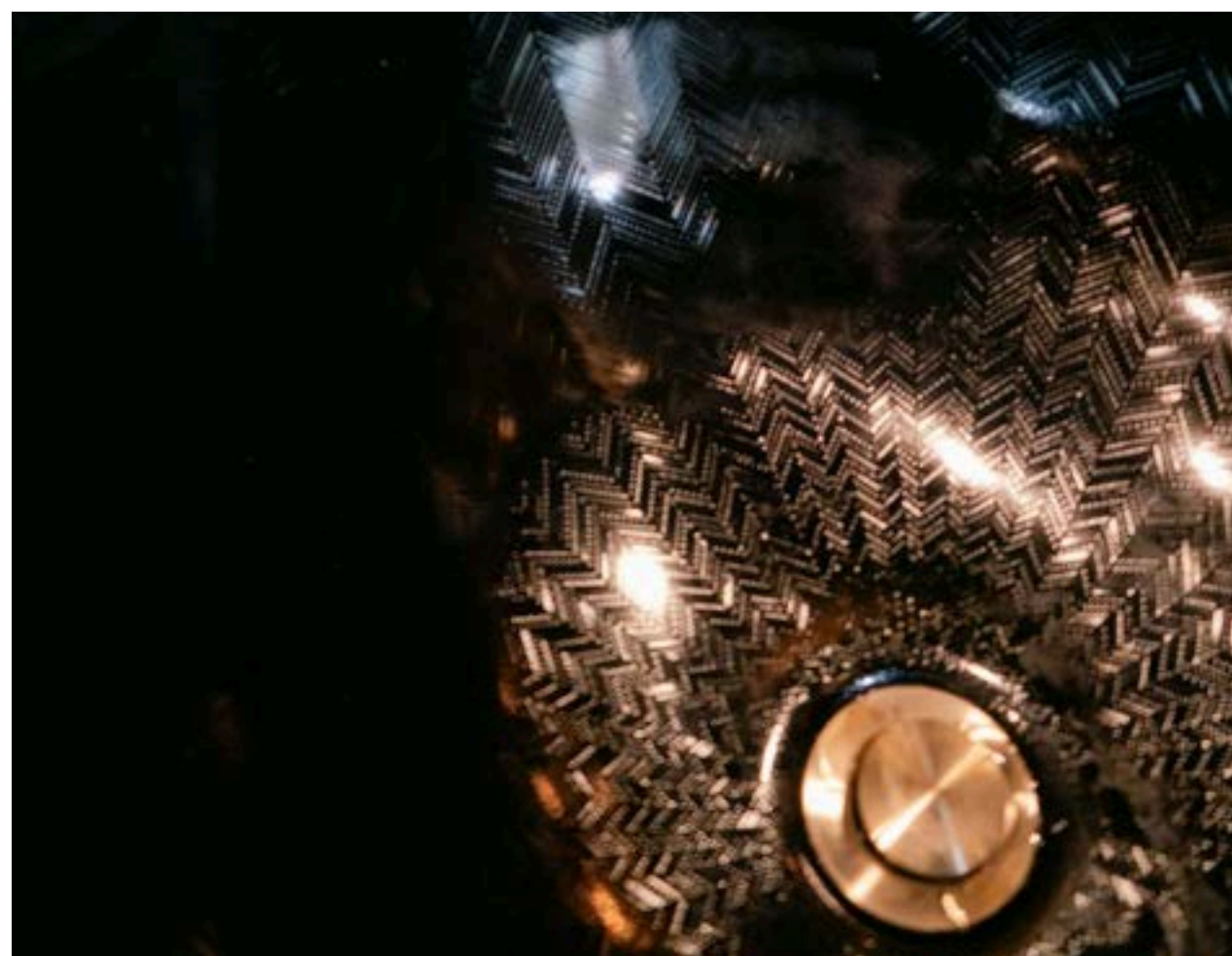
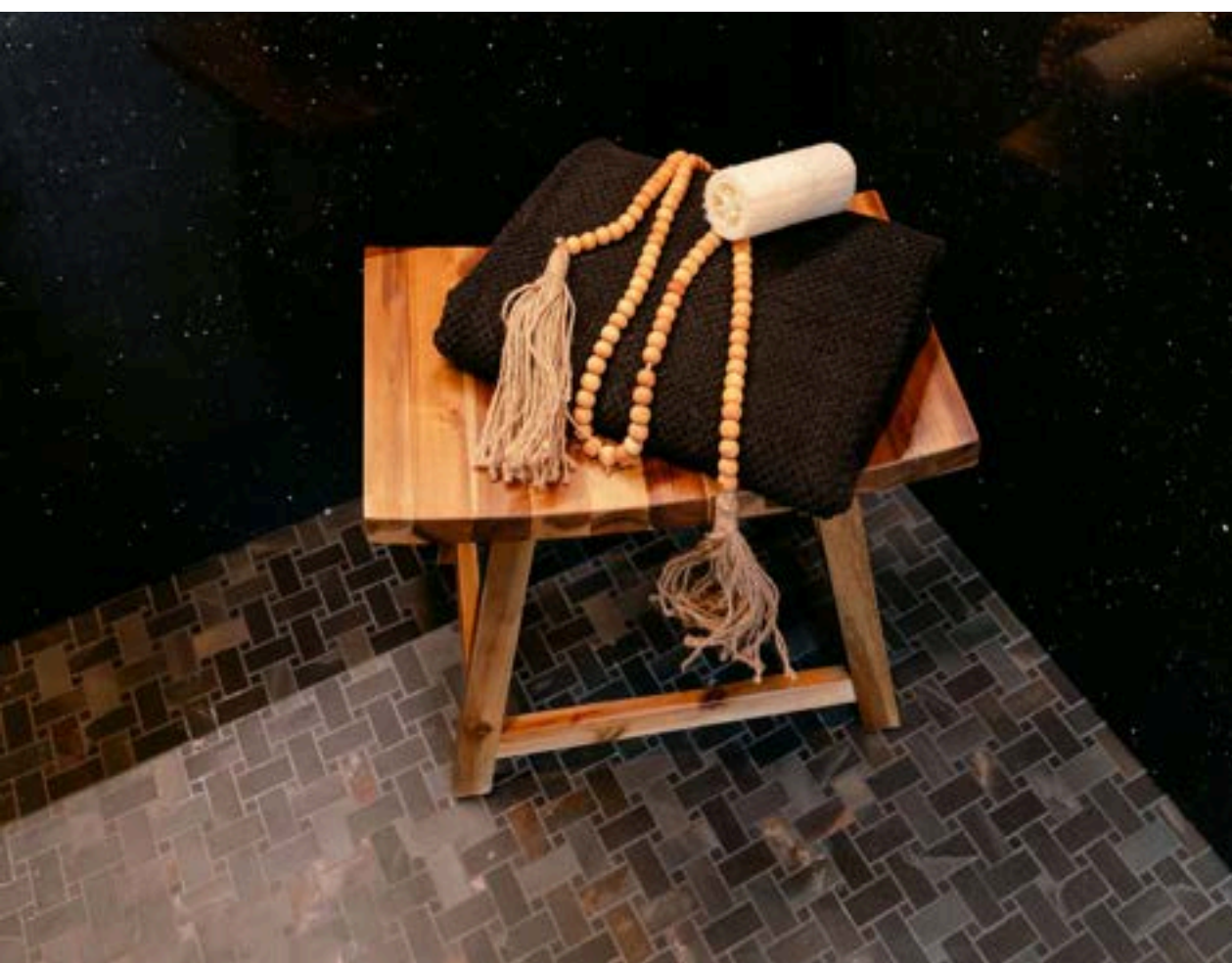
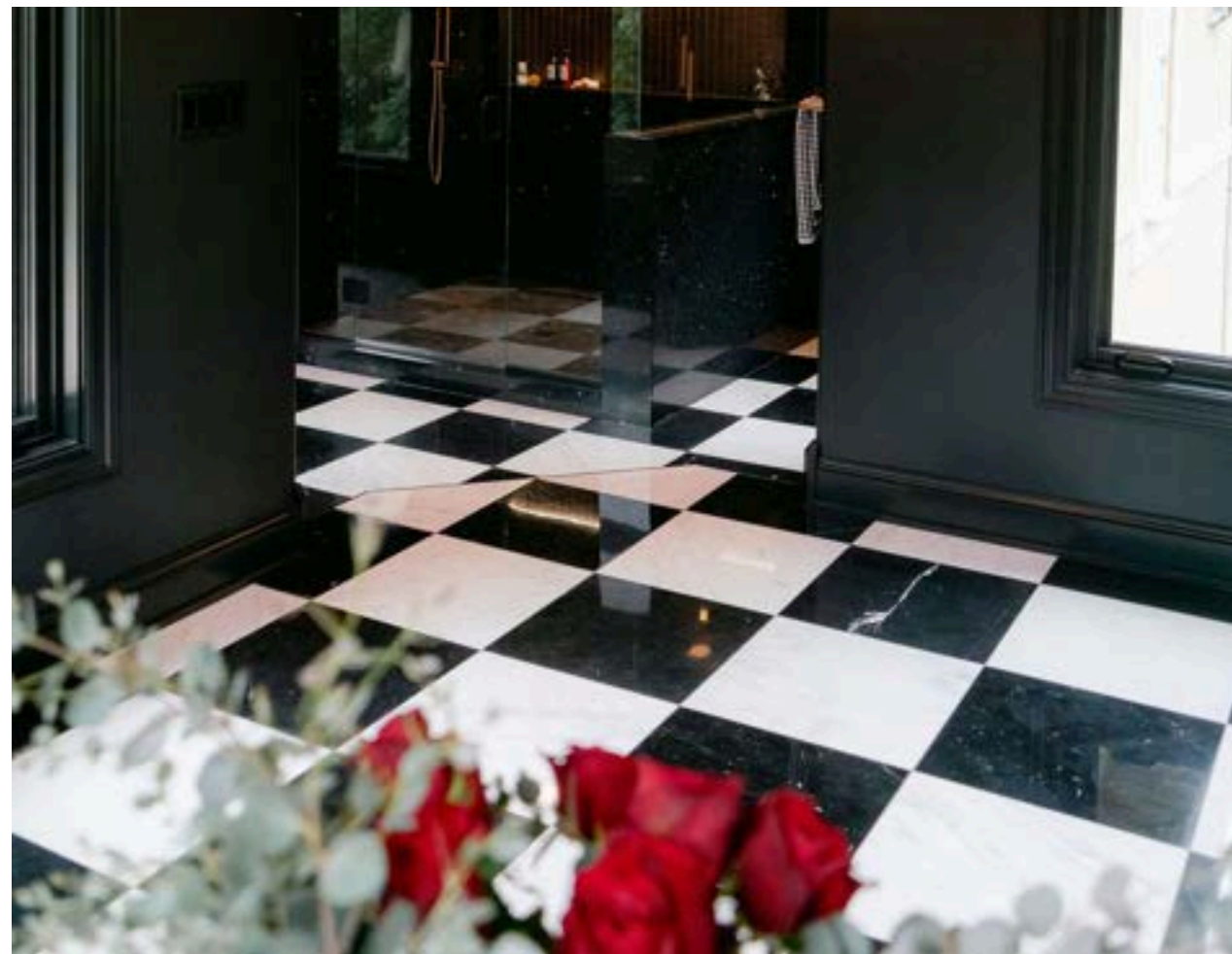


Primary Bedroom



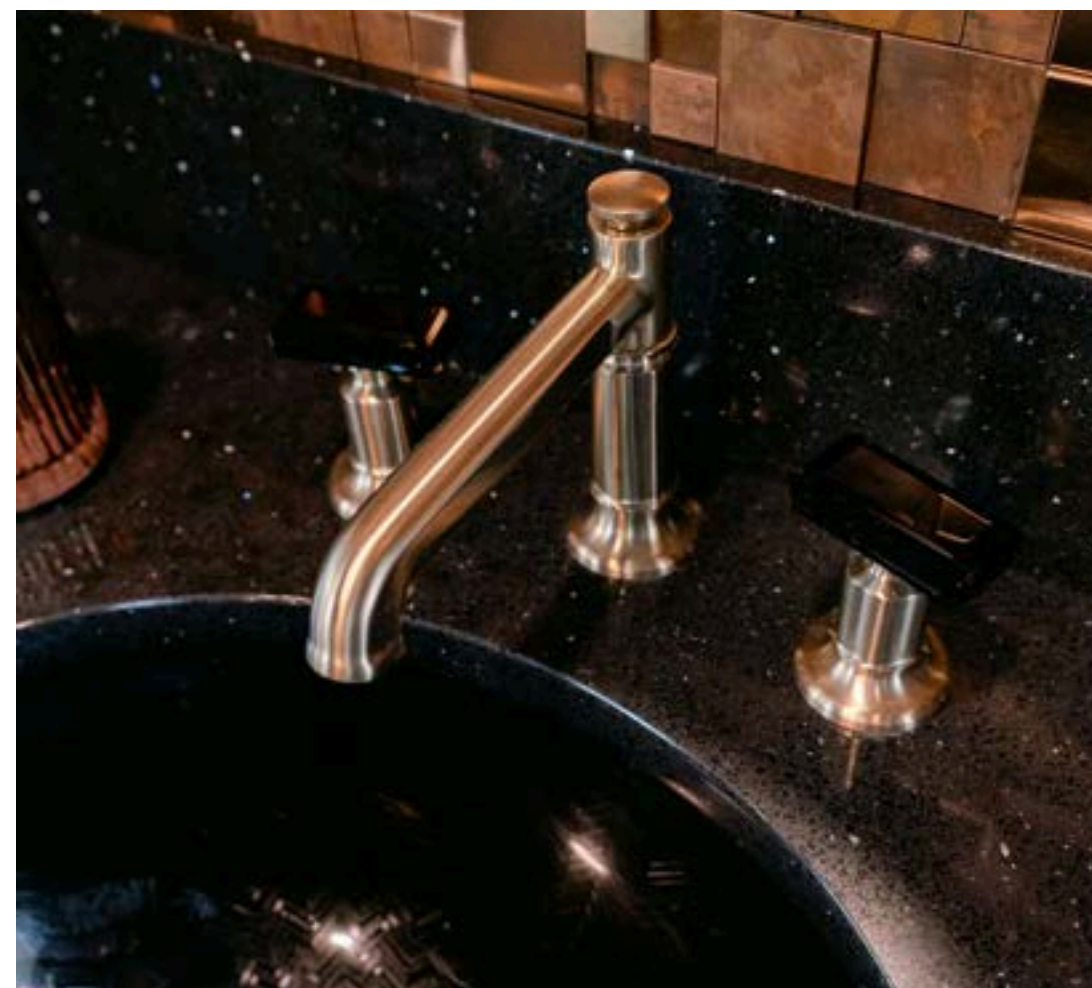
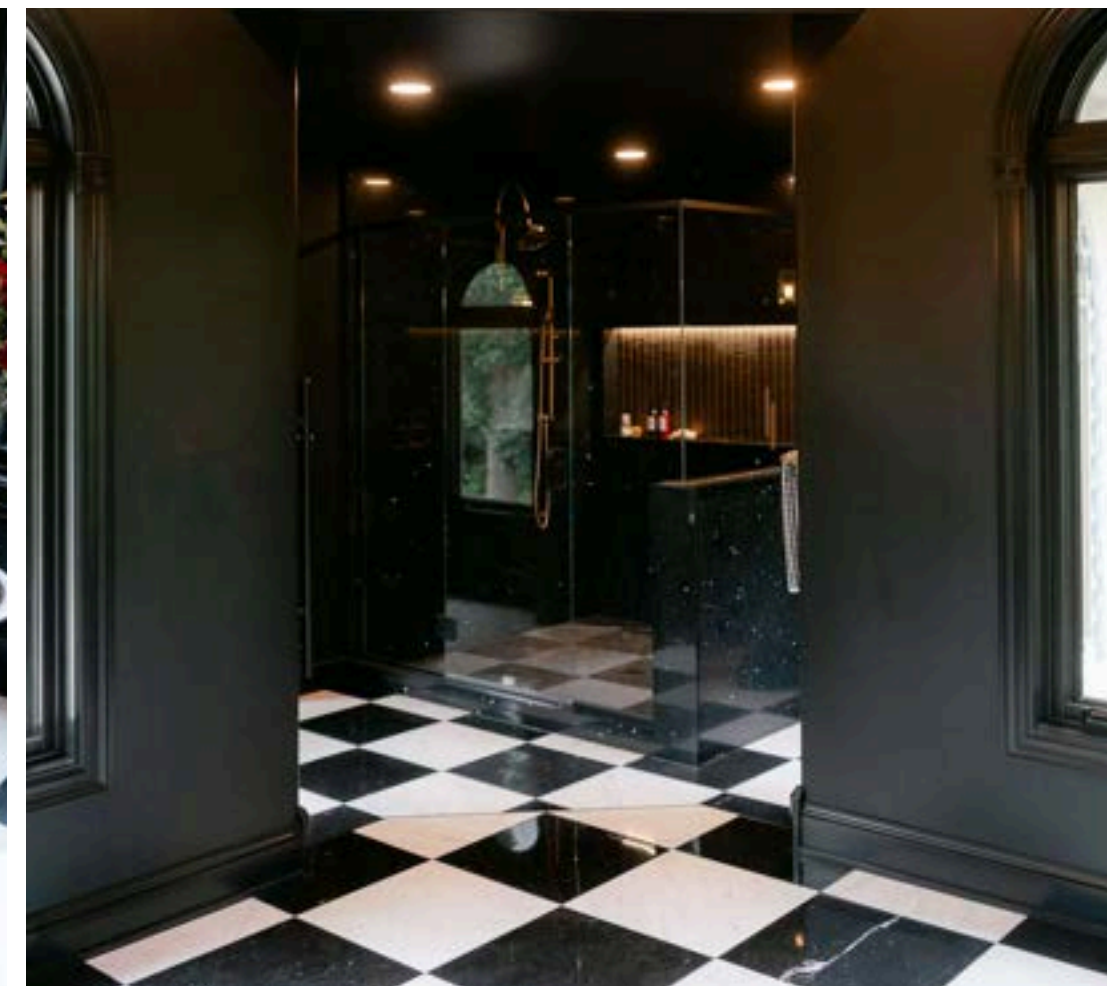






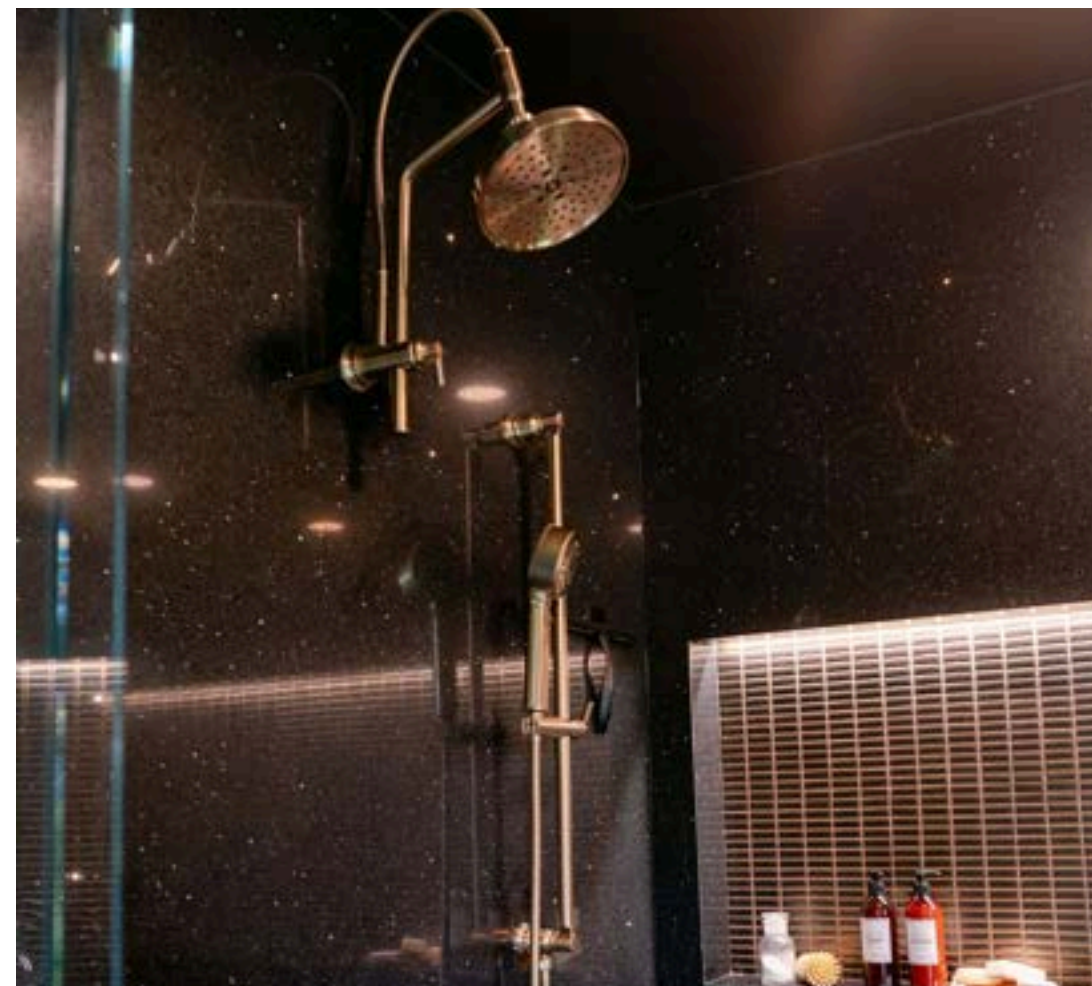
Primary Bath Features

- Copper-lined double slipper soaking tub centered in the turret transforms the home's most striking architectural feature into a dramatic, light-filled focal point.
- Dual-zone radiant floor heating allows independent control of the turret soaking area and the shower zone, giving the homeowner customized comfort.
- Heated towel bar ensures warm towels are always within reach, adding a layer of everyday luxury.
- Walls, trim, and ceiling painted Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black create a monochromatic, cocoon-like backdrop that highlights every finish and fixture.
- Checkerboard marble floor in Nero Marquina and Casablanca Carrara establishes graphic rhythm and dramatic contrast, tying to the project's Queen's Gambit inspiration.
- Walk-in shower wrapped in full-height Silestone Starry Night quartz slabs creates seamless surfaces that are both spa-like and easy to maintain.
- Precision mitered corners at slab seams deliver a crisp, tailored finish worthy of a high-end custom bath.
- Bronze metallic mosaic shower niche glows from within, doubling as storage and an intentional design feature.



Primary Bath Features Continued

- Black Kohler Highline toilet makes a striking statement and seamlessly ties into the black-on-black palette.
- Twin custom vanities offer generous storage, topped with quartz counters and finished with Porcelanosa bronze cube mosaic backsplashes for a warm, textural shimmer.
- Vanity uppers provide additional storage and keeps countertops clear.
- Brizo Invari fixtures in Luxe Gold with black crystal handles add glamour and visual contrast, like jewelry against a black dress.
- Luxe gold towel bars, robe hooks, and tissue holders coordinate with plumbing fixtures for a fully integrated palette.
- Starfire glass shower enclosure keeps sightlines open and allows the dramatic slab shower to take center stage.
- Layered lighting plan on dimmers with sconces, ceiling fixtures, and shower lights allows the space to shift from bright, functional light to soft, moody ambiance.



Other Features

Primary Bedroom

- Black-painted crown, base, and trim visually link the bedroom to the bath, giving the suite a cohesive look.
- Crocodile-patterned wallpaper adds depth and a sophisticated texture.
- New windows bring in natural light and balance the moody palette.
- Layered lighting plan with chandelier, wall sconces, bedside reading lights, and recessed cans.

Primary Closet

- Custom closet system creates distinct zones for clothing, shoes, and accessories.
- Playful leopard wallpapers on the walls and gold crystalline wallpaper on the ceiling adds personality.

Hallways and Other Areas

- Kravet chinoiserie wallpaper brings movement to the hallways, transforming them from pass-through zones into design moments.
- Black doors with crystal knobs carry the moody palette.
- Patterned stair carpet adds visual interest and softens acoustics.
- Custom-milled trim matches the profiles throughout the home, ensuring that new work blends seamlessly with original architecture.



Office

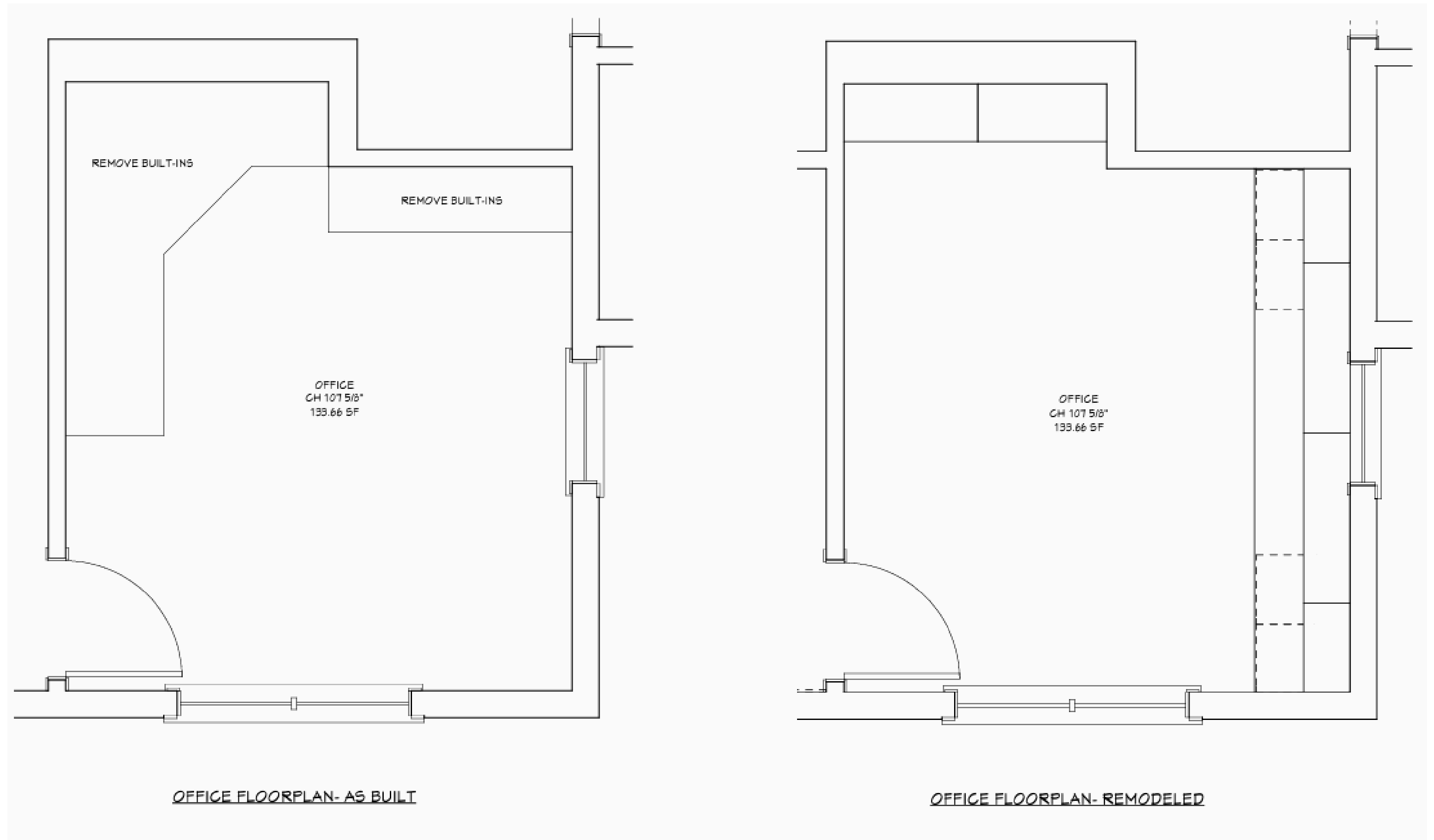
The office needed to do more than hold a desk. It had to become a place where focus and creativity could coexist. The original space felt plain, with no inspiration for a client who spends her days working from home.

We designed custom navy built-ins to create order and anchor the room, pairing them with a warm walnut desktop that adds depth and balance. A rose-gold ceiling softly reflects light, while a checkerboard floor adds energy and ties the room back to the bold patterning in the primary bath.

Layered lighting and a large-scaled floral wallcovering make the space feel inviting and personal. Carefully styled shelves display her favorite books, art, and collected pieces — turning the office into a place that feels uniquely hers.

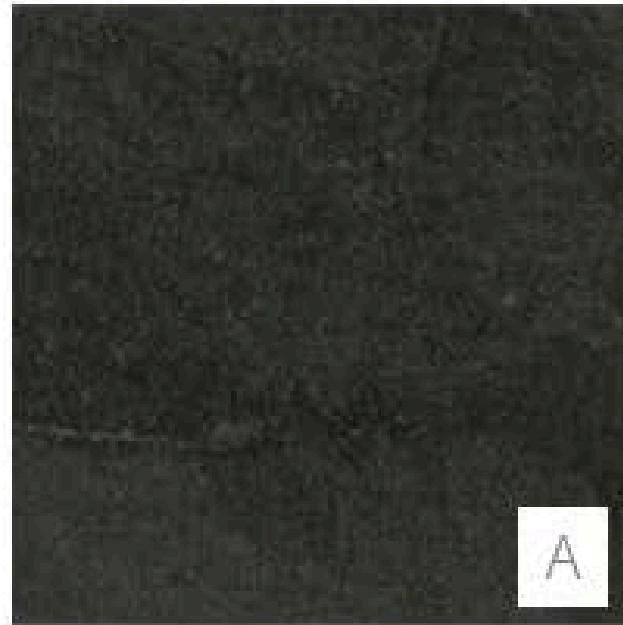
Now, it's a space she loves to spend time in — practical for work, but also inspiring enough to spark her creativity.



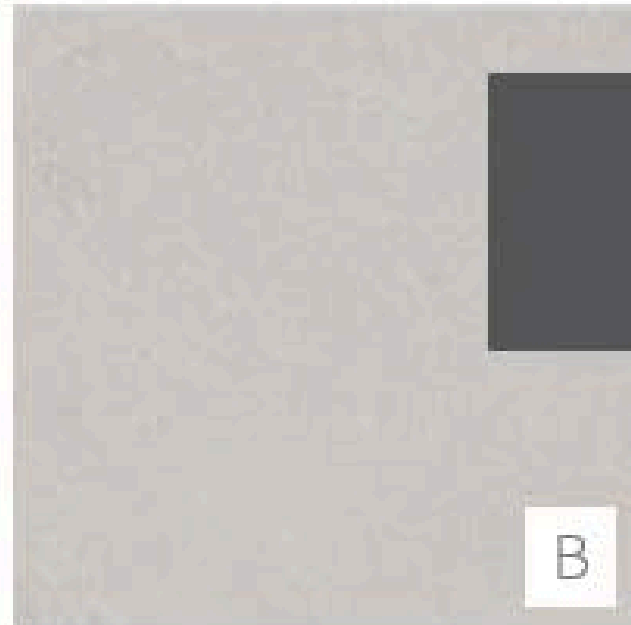


OFFICE

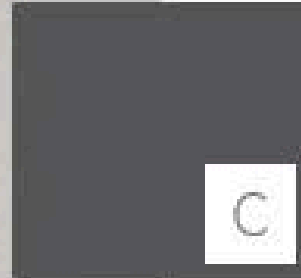
MATERIALS & FINISHES



A



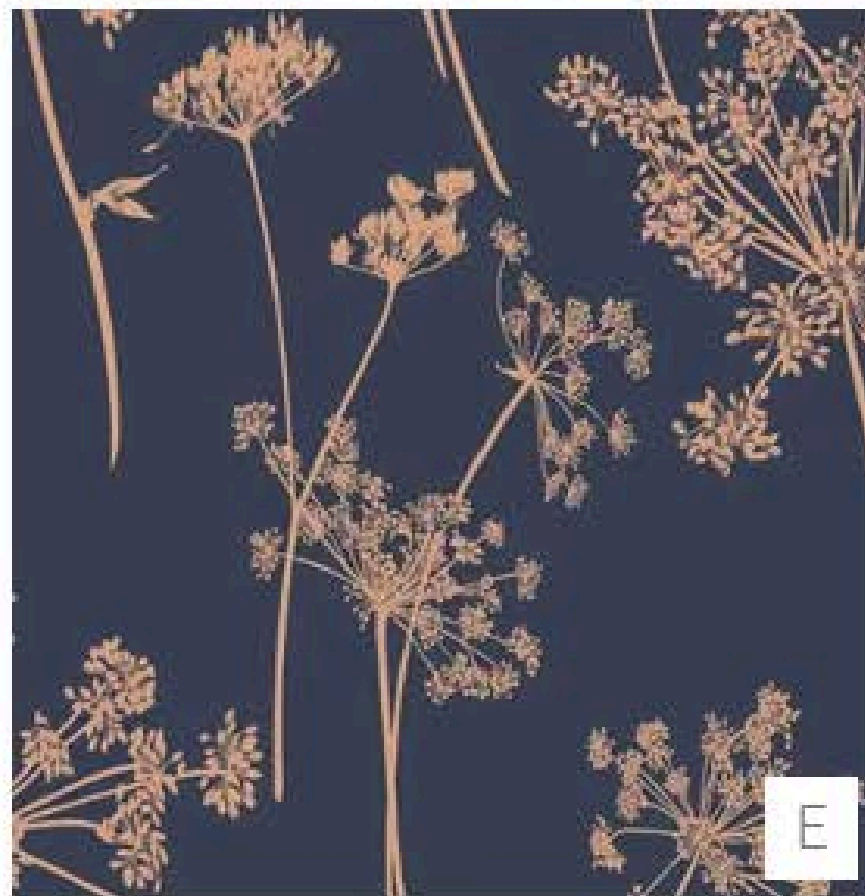
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C



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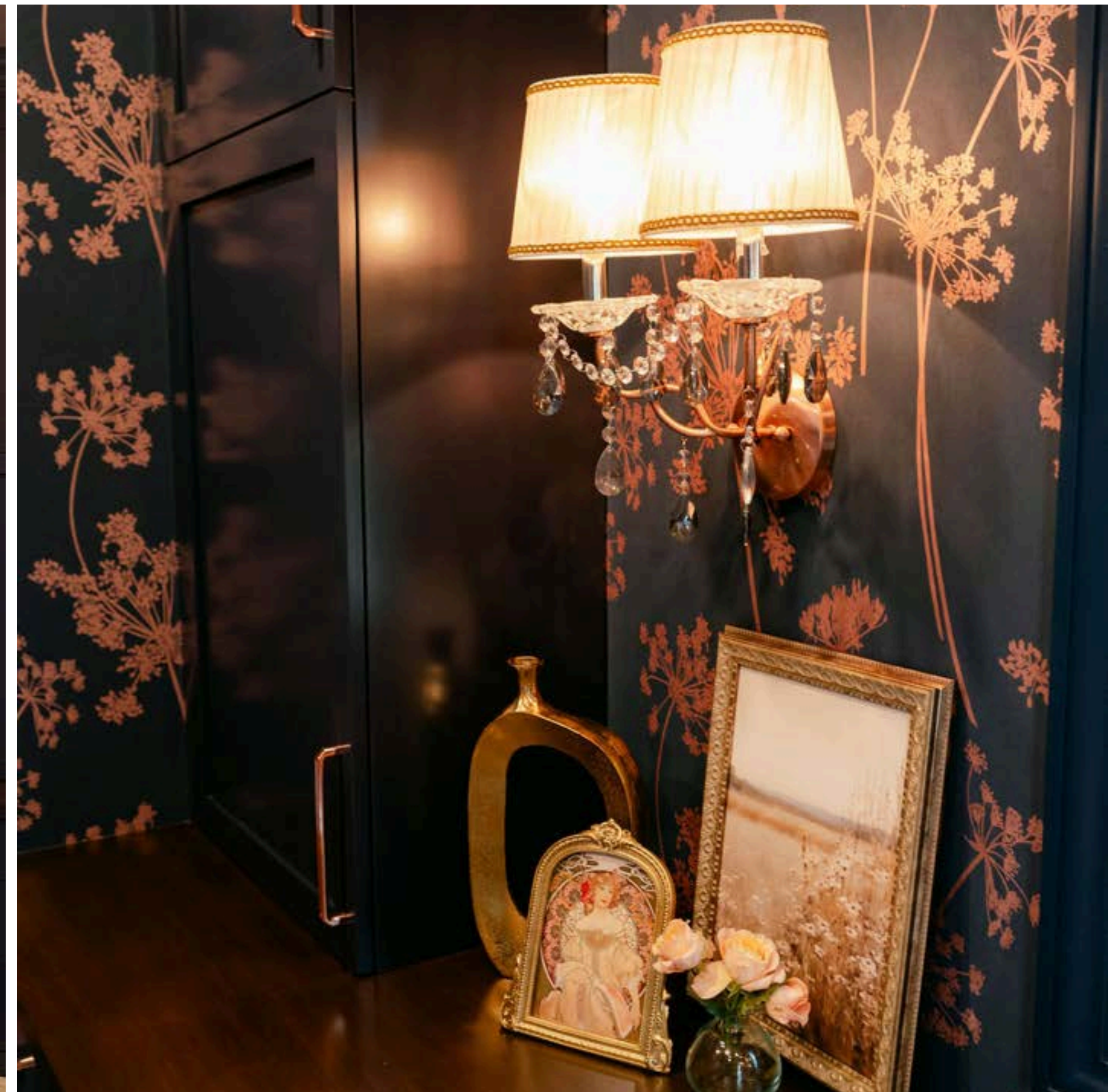
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KEY

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| A. High Ridge 12x12 Nightfall Black Tile | Rose Gold Brass Drawer Handles |
| B. High Ridge 12x12 Stardust White Tile | G. 3 Light Semi Flush Mount Historic Brass Majestic Collection |
| C. TEC Charcoal Gray #929 Grout | H. OK Lighting 2 Light Antique Brass Rosie Crystal Sconces |
| D. Command Cadiz Rose Gold Ceiling Wallpaper | I. Sherwin Williams Naval SW6244 |
| E. Graham and Brown Anthriscus Dusk Navy Wallpaper | |
| F. Etsy Handle and Knob | |









Office Features

- Custom matte navy built-ins anchor the space, providing closed storage to hide clutter and open shelves to display art, books, and collected objects.
- Built-ins are finished with clean-lined shaker doors and integrated hardware for a tailored, architectural presence.
- Warm walnut desktop creates a rich work surface that balances the deep navy cabinetry and feels inviting to sit at.
- Rose-gold glitter wallpaper on the ceiling adds a subtle sparkle that catches light and shifts throughout the day, infusing the space with energy.
- Black-and-white checkerboard flooring brings graphic drama, ties visually to the primary bath, and grounds the space with rhythm and movement.
- Moody floral wallcovering wraps the walls, creating a cocoon-like effect and reflecting the client's love for the unusual.
- Semi-flush chandelier offers central illumination, casting a warm glow over the entire room.
- Crystal wall sconces flank the built-ins, adding soft, flattering light and a touch of vintage glamour.
- Large windows flood the space with natural light, improving focus and counterbalancing the dark finishes.



Office Features Continued

- Layered lighting plan allows the space to shift from bright and focused during work hours to moody and atmospheric for creative brainstorming or evening use.
- Carefully styled shelves function as curated vignettes, displaying objects that inspire the client and making the room feel like a gallery as much as a workspace.
- Coordinated hardware and finish palette tie the office into the rest of the suite for a cohesive, whole-home design.
- Thoughtful space planning creates distinct zones for focused work, art projects, and display, giving the client flexibility throughout the day.
- An inviting area for lounging or to enjoy a creative brainstorming session with guests.
- Floor plan maximizes usable wall space for storage while keeping the center of the room open, making the space feel larger and more welcoming.



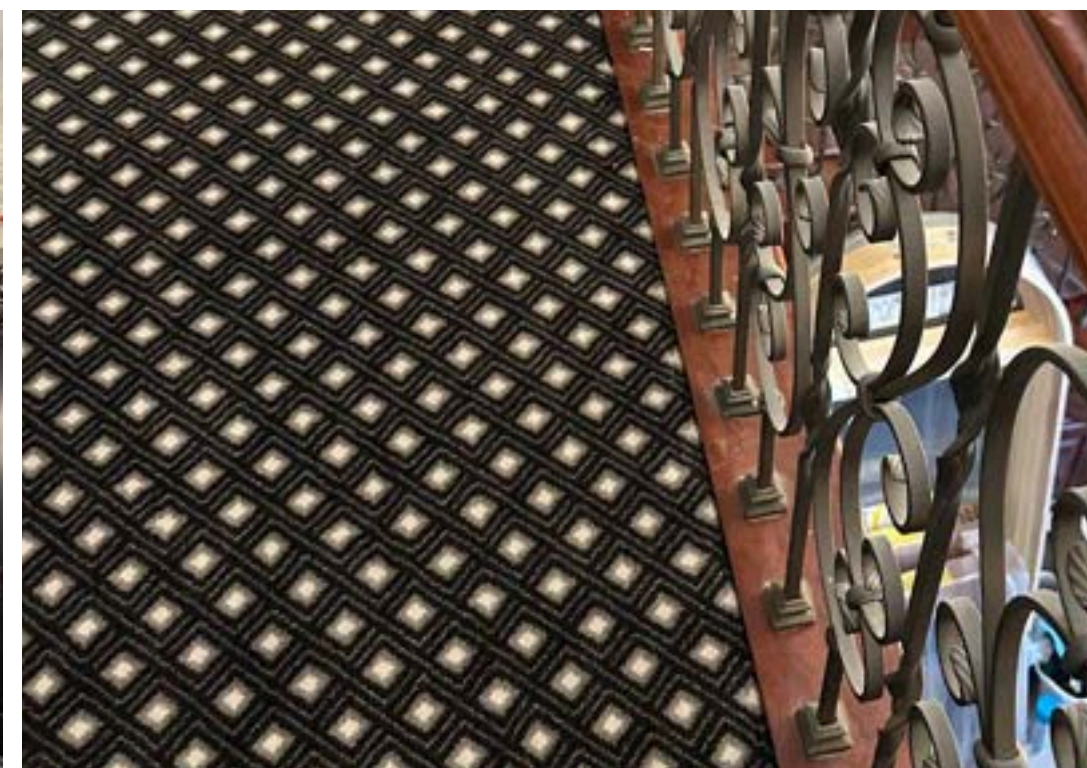
Project Challenges

Overall

- Installing full-height quartz slabs in a turreted walk-in shower on the second story, requiring precision mitered corners, flawless waterproofing, and careful coordination.
- Balancing a dark, dramatic palette required meticulous planning of window placement, lighting layers, shadows, and reflective finishes.
- Coordinating a bold mix of finishes — copper tub, bronze mosaics, checkerboard marble, luxe gold fixtures — to feel cohesive and sophisticated, not chaotic.

Primary Bathroom

- Leveling floors and adding dual-zone radiant heat for the soaking area and walk-in shower, with independent controls.
- Achieving perfect slab alignment and mitered corners in an angled turret space, requiring exact templating and expert installation.



Project Challenges

Office

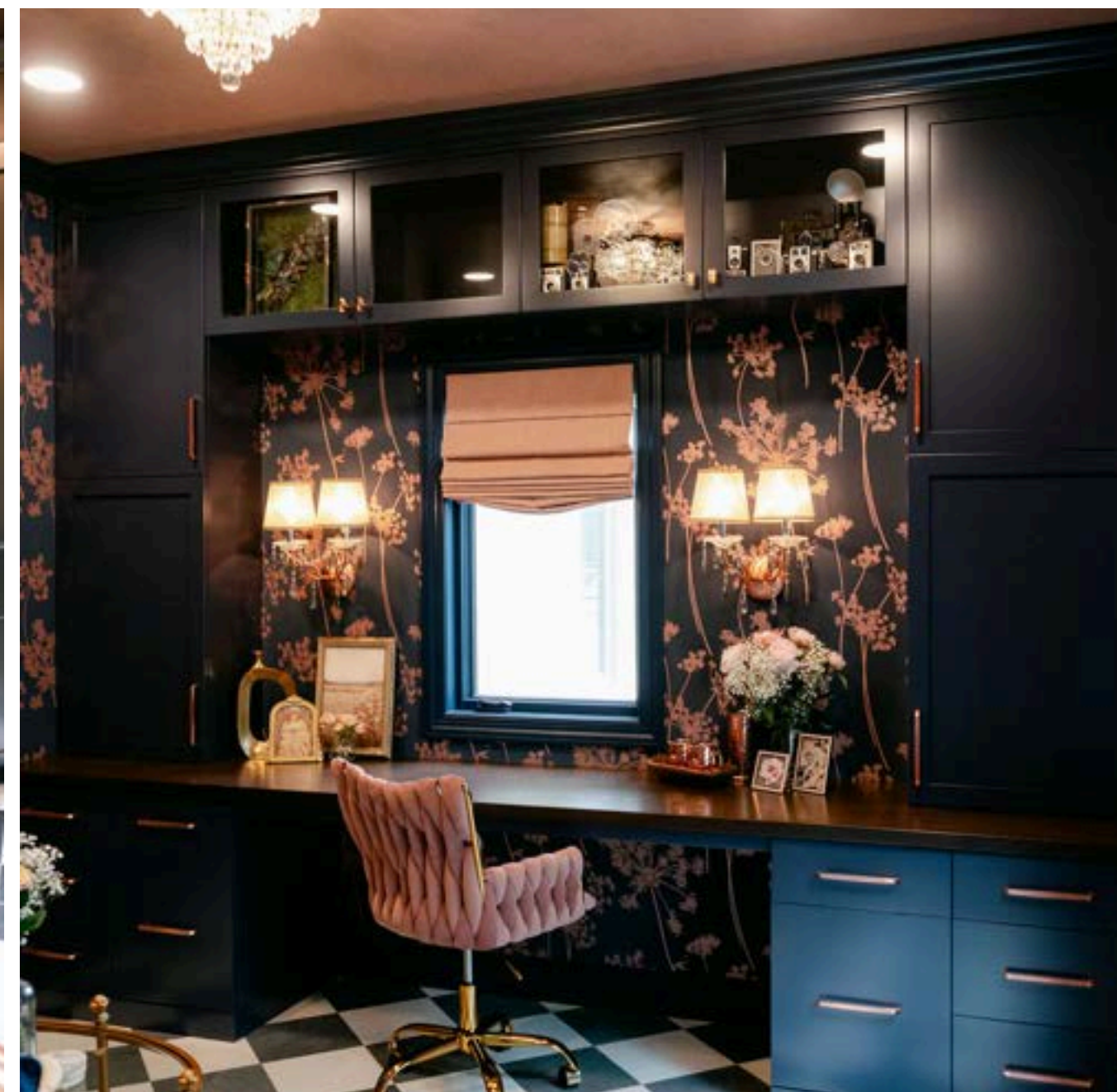
- Balancing bold finishes — navy cabinetry, checkerboard floors, moody wallpaper — with enough brightness to keep the space functional for work.
- Planning electrical for layered lighting (chandelier, sconces, task lighting) in a room with limited existing wiring.

Hallways & Upper Level

- Adding sconces and semi-flush fixtures in narrow hallways while concealing wiring and keeping clearances safe.
- Matching new trim and finishes to existing profiles so the additions blended seamlessly with the rest of the house.

Primary Bedroom & Closet

- Achieving a layered lighting plan that provided both brightness and softness, requiring coordination between electrical layout and decorative fixture placement.
- Designing a custom closet system that maximized storage in an irregular footprint while maintaining comfortable circulation.
- Coordinating lighting integration within cabinetry and ceiling so the space felt bright and boutique-like.





Overall

We have transformed the previously underutilized turret into the architectural centerpiece and emotional anchor of this moody space, dramatically framing a copper-lined soaking tub and layers of design details.

The primary ensuite and office were transformed into deeply personal retreats. They are layered with texture, color, and light, supporting rest, daily routines, and long work-from-home hours.

The entire upper level now flows intentionally: hallways carry the design narrative forward, finishes tie spaces together, and every detail works to turn daily life into an experience that is as restorative as it is beautiful.