

The ENGLISH HOME

Celebrating the essence of English style

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FABRIC FOCUS

Our edit of the most desirable new-season designs

Style inspiration

- Window dressings
- Art deco influences
- Natural flooring

Labours of love

From Tudor farmhouse
to Georgian townhouse

KITCHEN & BATHROOM STYLE

A special guide to the latest looks and innovations





DUAL PURPOSE

This soft paint tone is fresh without being cold, and will help energise activity for busy morning routines. Paint expert, Francesca Wezel, explains that using the same colour on the ceiling of the room is cosier, which is a desirable feeling for indulgent bathing. For a palatial atmosphere, we love this dreamy 'bath canopy', which looks perfectly in keeping with a classic bath, and is an encouraging reminder to take the time to unwind.

Salt Lake II paint in eco emulsion, matt and chalky emulsion, from £21.21 for one litre, Francesca's Paints; try Victorian Plumbing for a similar circular shower curtain

ROMANTIC DRAMA

A freestanding, roll-top bath is often utilised for relaxed bathing, but to evoke a sumptuous atmosphere the scene around the bath needs to be equally appealing. In a large room the space around the bath should not feel empty. In this example an imposing dresser provides a display area, grand height and storage. Observe how the bath and dresser are linked with a tonal hue – colour matching is a subliminal way to delineate a bathing area in a master or guest bedroom. The true allure of this room is the confident decoration of the fireplace area, enhanced with an evocative print and an occasional chair, which lifts the scene with a blush of colour.

Torridge bath with ball-and-claw feet in a hand-painted finish, £4150, available in a range of colours, Drummonds



ASSORTED MATERIALS

This bathroom has a similar layout to the one above, but it has a more relaxed style. Although it appears busy, patterns and textures mingle with a stretch of white throughout the room. Decorating a neutral bathroom with splashes of prints, or even a feature wall, moves it from pared back to relaxed informality. Take inspiration from the arrangement of contemporary vessels and vintage mirrors, which are precisely planned and strategically placed, as opposed to a chaotic accumulation.

Spoonback chair, £1,290; vintage mirrors, various prices, large storage ottoman, £195, French cupboard, £310, The Dormy House ■





SMOKE & MIRRORS

This inviting guest bathroom takes its cue from the handsome architectural features of a distinguished Grade I listed building

Designing a bathroom for occasional weekend visitors can be a particularly enjoyable project. Whilst practical requirements of space and functionality are as important as in any other bathroom, since this room will not normally be used on a daily basis, a little indulgence can be afforded, placing the emphasis on comfort and aesthetics rather than on everyday practicalities, such as storage and ease of cleaning. Asked to devise a scheme as part of the renovation of a large, seven-bedroom Victorian country house, interior designer Victoria Fairfax created an inviting retreat, whose scale and aesthetics work beautifully with the handsome proportions of the distinguished Grade I listed building.

The room was a former bedroom, and changing its function to create an en-suite to the adjoining guest bedroom involved some minor structural adjustments. "I worked very closely with the client, and also with the architect, Ian Adam-Smith," Fairfax explains. "It was very much a joint effort. We had to close off a doorway, however, we managed to design the space in such a way as to use the void created by the missing door to position the pipework."

Once the space had been planned and the sanitaryware sited, Fairfax turned her attention to the aesthetics, adding panelling below the level of the dado rail to add an architectural dimension to the space and give it character. "Apart from the existing fireplace, which was protected by the Grade I listing, there was no other

architectural detail in the room, so I took my cue from the building," she notes. "The panelling echoes the detail of the fireplace and encompasses the cistern, creating a tidy solution that wouldn't interfere with the interior architecture."

The room was sufficiently spacious to allow for a freestanding bath and a generous double handbasin. "I wanted it to feel like a room with a bath, where someone might want to spend time, rather than simply a 'bathroom'," she reflects.

The freestanding bath with its sumptuously-polished finish, positioned beneath the window, creates a dramatic focal point. "The other bathrooms have painted baths, but this one had real wow-factor, and this seemed the perfect bathroom to have it in," Fairfax notes.

A large rectangular double mirror, rather than a separate pair, adds a sense of intimacy and glass wall sconces inject a romantic, period feel. "Because they were IP rated, it was possible to use these lights in a bathroom context."

The smoky blue-grey veining of the Arabescato marble of the his-and-hers basin is echoed in the shower surround and reflected in the colour chosen for the walls, as well as in the full-length linen curtains which frame a beautiful leaded window. "It is what I call a fugitive colour," explains Fairfax. "Someone might call it grey, whilst another would say it was blue. It is actually somewhere in-between the two." The leaf motif in the curtain fabric leads the eye through the window to the leafy arboretum below, placing the room in the context of the building and its surroundings. ■

OPPOSITE The opulent, silvery surface of the freestanding bath is achieved by polishing the cast-iron to the highest grade before it is lacquered. *Clyde bath*, from £3,570 **TOP TO BOTTOM** Elongated spouts add elegance and practicality to classic taps. *Mull-head bath taps with nickel finish*, from £1,170 The smoky-veined Arabescato marble of the double washbasin gave a starting point for the blue-grey colour scheme echoed in the walls and tiny floral accents in the curtain fabric. *Double Lowther vanity basin*, from £6,540 Elegantly veined marble is continued for the shower enclosure to tie the scheme together. *Carron concealed shower with 300mm rose with nickel finish*, from £3,114, all Drummonds

FEATURE JILL SHEARER