

Kbbreview Industry Awards 2007

CATEGORY: Designer Award for Bathrooms - project cost over £15k

FINALIST: Maren Hamre

Client Background

Nick Wells and Caron Melin were building a large extension to their 300-year-old cottage. They gave architects plans and asked me to design their five bathrooms with their master en-suite being the most 'important'. Being able to join their project at an early stage this gave me more flexibility in my design as the build had yet to start.

Nick and Caron wanted their en-suite to be inspired by their travels to Morocco and the orient, yet modern/contemporary. It also has to fit in with existing building, they asked for an uncomplicated design that wouldn't date, but it shouldn't be boring. It needed a wow factor! This room was to be their sanctuary, somewhere to relax with a glass of wine after a long day.

Nick and Caron had a clear view of what they wanted their bathroom to feel like, but as they weren't sure how to get there and create the feel they asked for my assistance.

Brief

They required a spacious and uncluttered master en-suite to feature the following:

- Large bath with room for two to relax
- Double walk in shower with no shower tray
- Separate steam room
- Wc (privacy important)
- Large double vanity unit
- Partly tiled walls
- The room was to make the most of the views
- Oriental spa feel

Nick and Caron didn't give me an initial budget however they did say that the budget was realistic but not extreme. As they had hired a project manager, we brought together the costings for all five bathrooms before they placed any orders and a few adjustments were made. With the en-suite being the room they would use themselves the most hardly any changes were made here.

Final design

As you enter from the master bedroom there is a walk-on wardrobe to the left and the en-suite bathroom is to your right.

As a relaxing atmosphere was required I didn't use many colours in this room, therefore getting

the right materials was crucial. So throughout I have used natural stone, chrome and glass. A dark warm grey natural stone was chosen as the tile to be used throughout. Being a natural product, no two tiles are the same, creating a soft patina to the surfaces. The tiles are honed which makes them smooth, almost soft to the touch. The floor is fully tiled, as is one wall. The rest of the bathroom has been painted in a chalk like colour. This is a nice contrast to the dark tiles and creates a muted atmosphere for relaxation. My choice of materials was inspired by images Nick and Caron had collected from travels and magazines and rather than doing a themed room I chose to draw inspiration for my materials from these pictures.

To maximise the view, the 1900mm x 1900mm double - ended bath was placed centrally under the window. By positioning it going into the room it not only breaks up the floor space, it also creates a focal point and works as a divide between the shower and vanity areas. The bath is tiled in and has a 150mm wide bath surround which houses the bath mixer and also gives room to place glasses and candles when Nick and Caron want to unwind.

The double shower has a large glass screen. I chose two exposed chrome showers with square heads. The clean lines echo the geometry of the tiles, bath and brassware. The wall behind the showers is the only wall that has been tiled. By stretching the 30cm x 60cm floor tiles up the back wall gives a shower proof surface and creates continuity in the material scheme.

It was decided to include an Aquavision television into the shower area. On a subsequent site I proposed a slight amendment to the plan, suggesting the wall featuring the tv was slightly angled to enable my customers to view it from the bath.

The shower has got a 5cm x 5cm mosaic tiled wet room floor that continues into the steam room. As this room has no natural light, I chose a light colour scheme. For the bespoke seating area I used a 2cm x 2cm mosaic tile mixing the warm grey and cream as well as introducing a lighter shade of grey stone.

This is a bathroom that is being used just as much for relaxing as for bathing, so I separated the wc from the rest of the room. This creates more of a spa-like feel.

There is a chrome ladder towel radiator between the wc and steam room. As it's accessible from all the wet areas (shower, steam room and bath) I decided this was the most suitable place for it to go. The bathroom is also heated by using under floor heating.

I chose a double vanity unit in grey glass. This sits in the recess created by the external wall and the entrance to the en-suite. As I chose not to tile this wall, I chose a more dramatic colour on the units, tying in with the natural stone floor. The vanity unit is 2250mm wide and has drawers for storing cosmetics. Larger items like towels will be kept in the adjacent wardrobe. A large mirror is fixed to the wall maximising natural light. I chose wall mounted basin mixers with long-sleek spouts on a rectangular base.

Final costs

The final cost, excluding installation, was £14,000. As Nick and Caron were remodelling the whole house, specifying the exact costs for installing this bathroom is difficult.

