

# REAL HOMES

FEBRUARY 2008  
£3.00

NEW YEAR...  
NEW REAL HOMES!

## KITCHENS

How to maximise a small space

## BATHROOMS

Easy ways to turn shabby into statement

## BEDROOMS

Clever ideas for dream dressing rooms



## EASY DECORATING The new-look neutrals

IT'S NOT MAGNOLIA!  
THINK METALLICS, TEXTURES  
AND SOFT GREYS INSTEAD

## BEST BARGAIN BUYS

From must-have mirrors to lampshades and kettles!

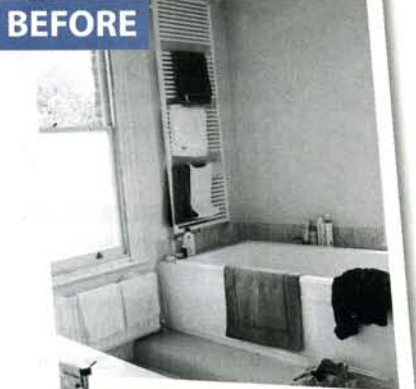


RENOVATE AND SELL: HOW TO SPEND A LITTLE AND MAKE A LOT!

Transformed!

# RESTFUL BATHROOM

The Pilchers mixed period-style fittings with contemporary finishing touches to create a beautifully calming sanctuary



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

**Above** The bathroom used to have a double basin topped with a layer of marble above moulded cupboard doors

**Above right** To keep things streamlined and make the room seem larger, the sink has been wall-mounted. Mosaic tiles define the walk-in shower area

## THE PROBLEM

The ensuite bathroom in Sarah and James Pilcher's Victorian townhouse was dated and bland. The bath was on a raised platform and like all the cupboards in the room, it was clad with moulded panelling. Even though there was carpet on the floor, it looked cold and uninviting.

## THE SOLUTION

Strip out all the old fixtures and fittings and remove the raised platform. Fit a lavish freestanding bath and take away an oversized double basin unit to create space for a generous, walk-in shower. Complete the look with stone-effect tiles and chrome finishing touches.

## HOW IT WAS DONE

'We moved into our house at the beginning of 2005 when I was pregnant with our daughter. Although it was a very busy time for us, settling into the new house and preparing for the arrival of our first child, we really wanted to update our ensuite as it was so dated and bland. The bath

was on a raised platform and there was a huge double basin with bulky cupboard doors and a marble top that looked ugly and took up too much space. The entire room was carpeted, which is a huge no-no for me, and we didn't have a shower either, which seemed like a real shame since there was plenty of room for one.

'It's a vast space, but it looked very cold and uninviting. We wanted the bathroom to look much more restful and welcoming, which meant installing a freestanding bath and walk-in shower. We also liked the idea of using natural stone-coloured tiles and I was keen to incorporate some niche shelving so I could keep a few toiletries close to hand while bathing.

'Although we more or less knew what we wanted, it was obvious that we wouldn't be able to manage the project on our own as we were so preoccupied with other things. To take the weight off our shoulders, we enlisted the help of Flow London, a company that specialises in bathroom design. It didn't take long for a design to emerge from our discussions. In fact, the most ►

Sarah and James chose this elegant roll-top bath as it fuses traditional and modern styles. Radiators can make a real design statement, like the cast-iron ones in here





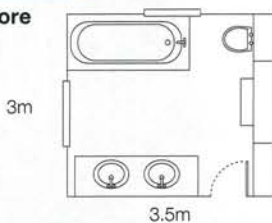
time-consuming aspect about the whole process was choosing the bath and radiators we wanted, as there are so many products out there, but, luckily for me, James was prepared to spend a long time weighing up all the options. Once we had finalised the details, work started and within six weeks our dream bathroom was complete and ready to use.

'The location of the windows and the original fireplace dictated the room's layout, so in that respect it's quite similar to our original ensuite. However, in every other way it's a world apart. The fixtures and fittings are a lovely mix of both contemporary and traditional styles, which really suit the look of our home and it's meant we've been able to update the room while maintaining the character of a period property. We absolutely love spending time in here now, just relaxing and unwinding. We can indulge ourselves with a long hot soak in the bath whenever we like – it's fantastic.'

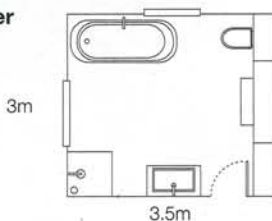


## PLANS

Before



After



## COSTS

Victoria and Albert Monaco **bath**, £1,375; Majestic Monaco **fixed shower panel**, £645, both West One Bathrooms. Panoramic wall-hung **WC**, £431.49; Isy fixed **showerhead** and arm, £133.62, both Viva Bathrooms. Floor-mounted **bath spout** by Vola, £645; Duravit Vero trough **basin**, £239; Cobra-Therm heated **towel rail**, £858, all CP Hart. Bespoke wall-hung **basin counter** in Crema Marfil, £560, LimeStone Gallery. Galaxy wall-mounted three-hole **basin mixer set**, £139; Galaxy wall-mounted

thermostatic **shower valves**, £31; Galaxy wall-mounted manual **bath valves**, £315, all Tapstore. Rex **radiators**, £592 each, with Hilton thermostatic **valves**, £107 each set (total, £1,398), Flow London. Gedy **mirror**, £78, Inspirations Bathrooms. Frosted mirror **light**, £67.50, Online Lighting. Tivoli Avorio **floor and wall tiles**, £50.84 per m<sup>2</sup> (total, £1,072); Tivoli Avorio **mosaic tiles** in wet shower area and recesses, £70.27 per m<sup>2</sup> (total, £427), all Reed Harris

**Above left** Sarah spent hours stripping back the original fireplace, which now makes a fantastic focal point

**Above** Wall-mounted taps make more of a statement than standard, basin-mounted ones

**TOTAL £8,699**

# Great ideas to take away

Give period elegance a modern twist with these finishing touches



**TOP TIP**  
Using neutral tiles on the floor and walls will make any size bathroom feel bigger. Try Wickes (0800 106068; [www.wickes.co.uk](http://www.wickes.co.uk)) for great-value stone ones

## 1. FIT THIS... COLUMN RADIATOR

Homeowners Sarah and James were keen to mix traditional and contemporary fittings in their bathroom, so chose period-style column Rex radiators (£592 each) from Flow Shop. For similar, try Homebase (0845 077 8888; [www.homebase.co.uk](http://www.homebase.co.uk)).



## 2. BUY THIS... HEATED TOWEL RAIL

If you like the idea of having a warm towel waiting for you when you step out of the bath or shower, install a heated towel rail. The aptly named Cobra Therm from CP Hart (020 7902 1000; [www.cphart.co.uk](http://www.cphart.co.uk)) covers the wall in a series of bends and even includes a decorative finial to hang a robe from.

## 3. BUILD THIS... SHOWER SHELF

Wall recesses are a good way to store toiletries as there's no shelf jutting out to get in your way and they look great too. Building a recess into a stud wall is difficult, as usually they aren't thick enough to get a good depth, but creating one in an external wall is easy because mostly they are constructed from two courses of brickwork.

## 3 OF THE BEST... HEATED TOWEL RAILS

Our three favourite ways to keep your towels toasty



Loop-bar heated towel rail, £199, Dwell (0870 241 8653; [www.dwell.co.uk](http://www.dwell.co.uk))



Disq2 heated towel rail, £239, B&Q (0845 609 6688; [www.diy.com](http://www.diy.com))



Coil heated towel rail, £373, MFI (0800 023 4457; [www.mfi.co.uk](http://www.mfi.co.uk))