

CALMING PRESENCE

CLEANING UP

Bathrooms are no longer simply functional spaces. From pared-back Scandi styles to opulent schemes, Angelina Villa-Clarke reveals the latest way to create the ultimate sanctuary

**LITTLE GREENE
BASSOON TILES**
from Bert & May



TONAL ZONES

Farrow & Ball on
bathroom colour:

For an urban sensibility choose a
moody grey, such as Plummett

.....
The blackest of greens – like
Studio Green – works well with
aged-brass fittings

.....
Use dark shades as accents on
elements like clawfoot baths,
vanity units or tongue and
groove details





With an increasing focus placed on our wellbeing, bathroom design offering a calm environment is the ultimate quest. Combining eastern style with western design, the 'Japandi' trend seeks to create a zen space in the home – and has been gaining momentum of late. Fusing Japanese functionality with Scandi simplicity, this look embraces clean lines, curves and natural materials.

With showrooms across the UK – including in Saffron Walden – bathroom specialist Ripples Bathrooms reports a demand for this minimalism. Designer Lucymai Looker says: “At Ripples, we’ve seen ‘Japandi’ styles taking centre stage. This aesthetic blends the zen simplicity of Japanese bathrooms with the design flair of Scandinavian bathrooms to create something simple yet stunning. Popular bathroom products to create this look include textural tiles, LED-lit mirrors and sculptural sanitary ware.”

For those not wanting to invest in a major overhaul, it’s easy to adapt a basic white bathroom to give a nod to the look.

Textural bathmats, stone soap dispensers and wooden trays like those from B&M Stores’ Natural Home range are quick fixes. The ‘Japandi’ style is all about uncluttered spaces to give a harmonious feel – so just clearing up your surfaces will start to make a difference.

Home design stylist at John Lewis, Alexandra Fryer, gives her advice: “There are lots of simple ways to style a bathroom to have a huge impact. Adding a small stool or ladder gives you space to stack plants and diffusers; bath trays are also a lovely way to keep essential items to hand.”

Simplifying window treatments by using a window film looks modern and streamlined. Joanna Baumard, co-founder of window film brand Purlfrost, explains: “Window films work brilliantly in a bathroom, they’re simple to apply and water-resistant, meaning they won’t easily peel when the windows get a little steamy. Making a great alternative to blinds, a window film gives you all the privacy without blocking out the light.”

On the other end of the scale is the rise in the statement bathroom. Inspired by luxury hotel bathrooms and five-star spas, the look is sheer opulence with glamorous tiling, glittering lighting and freestanding tubs central to the trend.

Known for its standout tiling, Bert & May has now introduced the new Staples collection, an entry-point range of encaustic, glazed and porcelain tiles that reflects the raw and refined aesthetic the brand is known for. The range is ➡

“The ‘Japandi’ style is all about uncluttered spaces to give a harmonious feel”



BACK TO BASICS
Nordic Life range, B&M Stores (above); Asanoha Japanese window film, Purlfrost (far left); Alalpardo tiles, Bert & May (left); Ripples bathroom design (right)





“Dark tiling will create a dramatic, opulent feel – wood tones will finish the look”

STATEMENT FINISH (Clockwise from top) Cathedral marble effect porcelain tiles lilac, The Stone & Ceramic Warehouse; Bilden Home bathware accessories; Shirley bathroom wall light, BHS; Heritage Holywell freestanding bath, Sanctuary Bathrooms



available at lower price points than its core handmade collections, meaning that homeowners can get a high-end look for less. Founder Lee Thornley says, “With the Staples Collection, we are pleased to deliver stylish and durable solutions at a price point accessible to all.”

For small bathrooms, Jo Oliver-Singh, director at Stone & Ceramic Warehouse, says her advice is to opt for large-format porcelain tiles, which immediately give a sleek look. “Using oversized porcelain slabs in a small room tricks the eye into thinking the space is much bigger than it really is,” she says. “Thanks to their large surface area and considerably fewer grout lines, large-format tiles also result in a continuous, uninterrupted finish.”

For wow factor, you really can’t beat a freestanding bathtub, such as the ergonomically shaped design at Sanctuary Bathrooms. While ribbed surfaces – think fluted art deco lights, ridged doors on vanity units and vertically grooved glass

on shower doors – add a level of detailing that oozes luxury.

Bilden Home & Hardware Market champions timeless and functional design classics that make use of contemporary materials. “We love The Poured Project’s range of concrete basins and bathtubs,” insists founder Max Clark. “The brand uses the iconic shape of a freestanding bateau bath, but produces it in poured concrete in a mix of organic and earthy finishes. A concrete bathtub makes a great statement piece in any setting.”

Darker and more dramatic hues are rising in popularity, and new technology means hardware and ceramics are available in a wider choice of bold colours. Black taps, showers and accessories have been in vogue for a while, and the noir shade looks set to morph into being used on walls and tiling for a cocooning effect.

“Dark tiling will create a dramatic, opulent feel in the bathroom and deep natural elements such as dark wood ➡



LIGHT-BULB MOMENTS

Julian Page, head of design at BHS, on bathroom lighting:

Choose cool-toned, bright and clear bulbs to aid daily tasks, such as shaving

Bathroom mirrors are best lit with matching wall lights on either side

Choose IP44-rated picture lights styled above the mirror, to shine downward for effective task lighting



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Bilden Home & Hardware Market

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Farrow & Ball

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Glasswells

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John Lewis

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Purlfrost

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Ripples Bathrooms

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Sanctuary Bathrooms

0113 244 4400

sanctuary-bathrooms.co.uk

The Stone & Ceramic Warehouse

020 8993 5545, sacw.co.uk



tone and texture Cathedral marble effect porcelain tiles verde, The Stone & Ceramic Warehouse (above); Meadow flowers stencil designed by Annie Sloan (below left); Kapok ceramic scallop light and cabinet ridged cup handle from Bilden Home (below middle)

“Black interiors in a bathroom can make a real statement”



tones and light-reflecting mirrors are great to finish the look, creating a luxury spa-like feel,” says Jo Oliver-Singh.

With shops dotted throughout East Anglia, Glasswells agrees that dark shades are a rising trend to be reckoned with: “We are noticing a more prominent demand for black bathroom accessories,” informs the brand. “Our Showerdrape Sonata range of accessories – with bamboo accents – gives a nod to this trend, but adds a more modern look.”

Max Clark adds: “Black interiors in a bathroom can make a real statement. I love accents such as dimming switches in black metal and cabinet knobs and pulls. You can also make a big statement with your basins. We have a poured concrete black sink in rectangular, round or cube shapes, adding a real talking point.”

Paint and colour expert Annie Sloan has the last word: “I’d say you can be pretty bold and experimental in a bathroom! Look to your wardrobe for colour inspiration and base your choices around that. We spend a lot of time looking at our reflections so choose a colour that suits you!” ●




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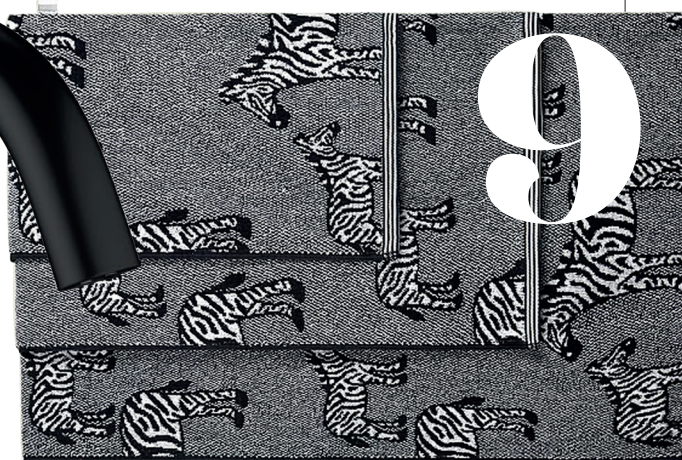
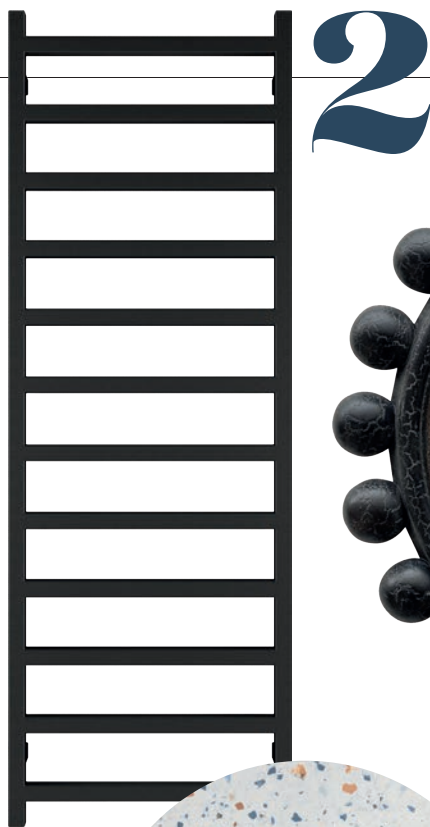
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EDITION LOVES

Dark arts

Add a touch of drama with these statement bathroom accessories



1. Maize geometric storage basket £14.50, matalan.co.uk 2. Terma simple flat ladder heated towel rail £279.99, onlyradiators.co.uk
 3. Black bobbin convex mirror £29, rocketstgeorge.co.uk 4. Mars white terrazzo tiles £24.95 per m², wallsandfloors.co.uk
 5. Blomus pesa beauty box £58, naken.co.uk 6. Round tasselled bath mat £24.99 H&M
 7. MPRO basin monobloc tap £279, crosswater.co.uk 8. Roddy wall light £140, pooky.com
 9. Black & white zebra towel range from £5, direct.asda.com



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STORE
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Good design FOR EVERYONE

Interior design studio Strive for Design has a collaborative approach to reimagining clients' homes. Angelina Villa-Clarke talks to the founder

“Much like in the fashion industry, interior design trends can come and go, so it's important to take note – but not be too influenced by them,” says Leigh Hall, founder of Strive for Design.

Leigh grew her company as a stay-at-home mum, after studying for an interior design course and achieving a City and Guilds qualification. Strive for Design was then launched in 2016, with a studio opening in Newmarket. Fast forward seven years and there's now a satellite office in Cambridge, a design representative in Dorset, a team of three in-house designers and a selection of consultants who help out on various projects.

“There's not one thing that makes you successful,” Leigh muses. “It's a combination of industry experience, good relations with tradesmen and a vast supplier portfolio. You also need a keen interest and good eye for detail.”

Leigh begins each client's journey with a phone consultation to find out more about the project and their taste. That's followed by a visit, where the space is assessed and design ideas discussed.

“No two clients are the same,” she says. “We pride ourselves on our client-focused approach and recognise the importance

**REVAMP
AND RENEW**
Contemporary
local interiors
business Strive
for Design is
creating chic
looks for all
sorts of spaces

of satisfying each brief, while remaining sympathetic to the existing space and budget. Our style is all about achieving a contemporary, high-end finish, no matter the budget.”

Working across Cambridgeshire brings unique challenges, explains Leigh. “There is a diverse range of properties to work with – from modern apartments to period Victorian houses; grand Edwardian homes to cosy cottages. Having a varied portfolio of architectural styles can make unique and quite interesting design outcomes.

“What's more,” she adds, “each client meeting allows us to learn more about different corners of the city, which inspires new and innovative ideas.”

Whether a room or a whole house, Leigh says that every project is equally important to her and the team. “We really believe that designing one room is as important as renovating a whole house,” she explains. “Regardless of the project size, our attention to detail is of the utmost importance.”

Talking of which, Leigh notes that some of the latest advances in the industry, as well as your lifestyle, are worth thinking about at the start of a project. “Smart

technology – for heating or entertainment – is an important factor to bear in mind,” she explains. “More family-friendly, open-plan living spaces are at the top of everyone's list. While the environmental impact of our homes – whether it is the building materials used or reducing carbon footprints – is also a growing consideration.”

As well as designing interiors across the region, Leigh also offers a two-day Introduction to Interior Design course, where you can work closely with a qualified

teacher. “It's a good option for those thinking about doing this as a career, or those interested in renovating their home. You can quickly gain structured advice on the pitfalls and learn

“We pride ourselves on a client-focused approach”

plenty of insider tips.”

With Strive for Design boasting a showroom of its own, Leigh speaks of the advantage when it comes to design ideas. “We can show samples, products and help customers visualise their space. We offer different cost-effective price packages for services. It's all about making interior design affordable to the masses.” ●

strivefordesign.co.uk

