

PALM TREES, *a jetty, and* A COCONUT SHACK

Wanting a space that resembled a tropical paradise, Penny Bagnall-Smith's new bathroom is inspired by where she grew up >

Words: **Ifeoluwa Adedeji** Photography: **Tom St Aubyn**

The FACTS

Who? Penny Bagnall-Smith with her husband

What? A bathroom remodel as part of a full house renovation project

Where? London

Cost? £15,000

Time? Four months

The rainforest wallpaper was bought from a shop in Paris that Penny had her eye on years ago. **Bath**, Victoria + Albert Baths; **wallpaper**, Ananbo; **WC**, Duravit.

Sometimes what seems like the initial workings of a wild fantasy can be transformed into reality.

For instance,

Penny's bathroom design ambitions were leaning towards the truly fantastical. "I was brought up in the tropics and while I love living in London, you don't quite get the same views," smiles Penny. "I decided I wanted a space that would echo the feeling of being outside in a rainforest." So, after bringing on board Andrew Hodgkinson, of Hodgkinson Design, together they created a scheme which completely hit the exotic brief, while still being a functional bathroom. Here, Penny explains how the project came together...

What was the space like before?

The room had been divided in two, after originally being one when the property was built. It included a walk-in wardrobe at one side, which meant there wasn't enough floor area for a shower and a bath. My husband really wanted those two elements to be separate, so getting the clothes out of the bathroom was a key part of our brief. We were able to do this, and create our spacious new bathroom, because Andrew gained planning permission from our local authority for a two-storey rear extension, which became a dressing room on the first floor.

What was your inspiration?

My fondest memories are of growing up in Jamaica. I can remember learning to water-ski in a place called Blue Lagoon; it had palm trees and a jetty with a coconut shack. It was so untouched and magical. I couldn't recreate the view of a rainforest outside in our garden, so I decided to put the panorama on the wall in our bathroom instead. The finished design, however, started with the bath, which I'd already bought prior to commencing the works. Andrew saw the soft curves and created everything including the vanity unit around that.

What did you ask for?

I drew a picture of my bathroom, and, looking back, I laugh because it was essentially a tropical rainforest. When I initially

discussed my plans with Andrew, I wanted a fake tree with a shower coming out of it. He sat there and patiently listened to my ideas, and somehow managed to trim it back from peculiar to chic. Andrew suggested that the walnut panelling would help create a feeling of being in the forest without looking retro. When I have visited tropical destinations I've always enjoyed using an outdoor shower – they're fairly commonplace. When I spoke to Andrew about this, he suggested rounding off the walk-in enclosure as a nod to these. We decided to apply tadelakt here too; it is a water-proof lime plaster material which is commonly used in Moroccan bathrooms to craft basins, baths and finish off walls and ceilings.

Tell me about the configuration and why it was chosen?

Most people tend to site a freestanding tub in front of the window for the view. As I recreated my own rainforest on the wall, Andrew suggested placing the bath there. I initially decided that I wanted a large rainfall spout, but as those often get clogged up, I chose a wall-mounted tap that was smaller, but with a similar effect. The mixers aren't visible because I wanted to create the sense that it was a real rainfall, and they would have ruined the vision. They are very discreet, and you can't see them from the door, but I can just put my hand down and I can change the temperature when I'm in the bath.

What are the best practical features?

I have an incredible fan located above the shower, which Andrew suggested we install as you need to keep moisture away from the wallpaper.

What type of impact has it had?

It feels like we get to go on holiday every day. Every morning when I walk in it feels like I've entered a spa; like owning your very own escape room. Having grown up outdoors I've spent lots of time in water, and I find sitting in the bath to be very therapeutic – perhaps like meditation for others. ➤

Penny's WORDS OF WISDOM

- Think about what you'll see once the project is finished. I personally don't like seeing WCs when you enter the space and I wanted to make sure ours was as discreet as possible.
- Get into the bath in the showroom to feel how comfortable it is. I'm quite petite and had to make sure it was not going to be too big and make me feel like I'm being submerged.
- Have the electrician and plumber map out the blueprint for you to keep so you have them should you choose to make changes further down the line.
- We've installed underfloor heating and a towel rail. I don't have it under the window, but we have set it up so that if it fails we can easily install a radiator in that space.

The couple chose to install a porcelain floor, which is easier to maintain and more durable than marble. Basins, Laufen Kartell; taps, AX Citterio.

1



2



3



4



SHOP THE LOOK

1 Belize light grey matt porcelain tiles, £11.99, Tile Mountain. tilemountain.co.uk 2 Jace rectangular mirror, £399, Cult Furniture. cultfurniture.com 3 Melville wall sconce in mercurised glass, £95, Pooky. pooky.com 4 Jungle Escape mural, £100, I Love Wallpaper. ilovewallpaper.co.uk

Penny placed the bath away from the window to better enjoy the rainforest wallpaper. **Floor tiles.** Tiles and Baths Direct.



"I wanted a different lighting arrangement over the bath to the vanity space, with the idea being it looked like raindrops falling from the ceiling," says Penny. **Wall lights**, for similar, try Ontario.



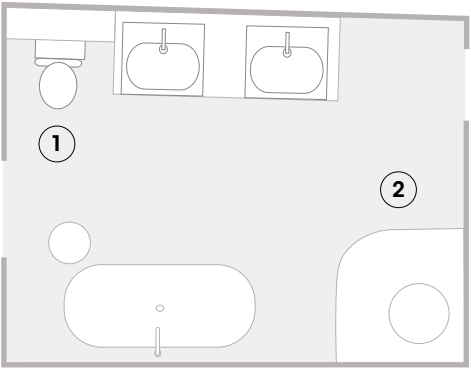
The builder applied the panelling piece by piece. **Mirror;** Vale Glass.



The PLANS

As part of a large renovation project, the bathroom – which also housed a walk-in wardrobe – has now been turned into a spa-like retreat.

1 WC This has been positioned so it is not the first thing you see when you walk into the room.
2 Shower The entrance to the enclosure has been designed with a curve to echo the outdoor showers Penny loves.



SOURCEBOOK

Designer Andrew Hodgkinson
hodgkinson-design.co.uk
Wallpaper Ananbo +33 142190827
ananbo.com
Taps Axor axor-design.com
WC Duravit 01 908 286680 duravit.co.uk
Floor tiles Tiles and Baths Direct 020 8202 2223
tilesandbathsdirect.co.uk
Bath Victoria + Albert Baths 01 952 221 100 vandabaths.com
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