



## MODERN SIMPLICITY



The brief for interior designer Joanne Claire was to completely overhaul the main ensuite in Henry Smith's five-bedroom Essex home, with the primary remit of creating a tranquil escape. "Henry and his wife wanted a light, airy space offering luxury and a retreat from their five teenage children," explains Joanne. "The family go abroad a lot and I wanted to bring the sense of relaxation drawn from their travels into their home. The stone slab effect works particularly well here. It is solid yet sleek and offers a freshness – a lovely welcome for the early mornings," she adds.

Like most natural stone, limestone is incredibly heavy, so Joanne's main challenge was to introduce a sense of physical lightness to the scheme. First, she turned to Stone Age to source an 'almost white' stone with very little graining, which they achieved with a beautiful limestone called Yasmine. She then designed

a striking cantilevered basin unit that juts directly out of the wall, seemingly without support, providing a wonderful floating, gravity-defying effect. Wall-mounted taps from Bathrooms International are fixed on the same horizontal line as the basin unit, with symmetrically positioned accessories enhancing the contemporary look. The internal wall had to be reinforced to bear the weight of the basin unit, but the effect is stunning.

Cladding the floor, walls and bath in the same limestone further enhances the sleek, modern feel, and the quality of finish was kept high throughout to recreate that authentic boutique hotel style. "Using really large tiles helps make the room appear more spacious," adds Joanne. And the white-painted New England window shutters have extra-deep slats to let in as much light as possible, making the room bright and cheery in the morning. In the evening, the shutters can be closed and candles lit to create a haven of tranquillity. ▶

## THE DETAILS

**DESIGNER** Joanne Claire of Joanne Claire Design, 01376 347593, joanneclairedesign.co.uk

**THE BRIEF** A luxurious retreat.

**THE RESULT** A minimalist sanctuary using solid stone to glamorous effect.

**BUDGET** £30,000.

**SOURCES** Limestone, Stone Age, 020 7384 9090, estone.co.uk

**Sanitaryware**, Empress Building Centre, 020 8346 6669, empressbathrooms.co.uk. **Shower cubicle**,

FA Firman, 01708 374534, firmanglass.com. **Brassware**, Bathrooms International, 020 8202 8288,

bathroomsint.com. **Cabinet**, custom-made, Bonhams of Edenbridge,

01342 835388. **Shutters**, The New England Shutter Company, 020 8675 1099, tnesco.co.uk. **Bathroom**

**accessories**, Kelly Hoppen at John Lewis, 08456 049049; johnlewis.com.