

**L**uxury – it's hard to define yet easy to recognise. In no other room in the home has it been more in demand in recent years than the bathroom. However, creating a feeling of luxury in a contemporary scheme has often proven problematic – sleek lines and modern materials rarely lend themselves to our concept of indulgence. Which is where traditional features and timeless aesthetics come in – bringing with them a classic notion of luxury.

Some of the latest fixtures and fittings unite old and new, showcasing the beauty of natural stone and giving traditional elements, such as the rolltop bath, a fresh twist with acrylic or composite materials and fuss-free styling. Many fittings have also been updated to suit modern homes and lifestyles. As well as smaller bath sizes and units designed for compact rooms, you'll find practical and cost-effective faux marble surfaces, and traditional brassware and showerheads that are compatible with digital controls, blending timeless elegance with the latest technology. Efficient, easy to maintain and undeniably stylish, the modern classic bathroom is by far the best of both worlds.

While opting for a single style for your bathroom is straightforward, making timeless elements work in a modern design requires a more subtle approach. The trick is not to allow either style to dominate, bearing in mind that small details can often have a big impact. 'There are a number of ways to combine traditional and contemporary looks,' explains Georgina Spencer, head of marketing, Roca Group (01530 830 080; uk.roca.com). 'For example, matching a modern suite with classically styled brassware, or choosing a traditional washbasin or WC and wall-mounting it. Natural materials, such as stone and timber, combine well with high-gloss finishes for a contemporary twist. Colour is also an important consideration: neutral and pastel shades are popular in traditional bathrooms, so try on-trend hues, such as a grey or monochrome palette, instead.' →

#### → FLOOR SHOW

Mix and match patterned tiles to create an impressive and eye-catching effect, but if the rest of the room has plenty of features, be sure to restrict the tiles to one surface, such as the floor, and choose a neutral or pastel palette.

Tassel Crema glazed ceramic tiles (H20xW20cm), £41.42 per sqm, Tile Giant (01782 597 777; tilegiant.co.uk)

#### MUTED TONES

Opt for natural colours and subtle curves to soften the look of contemporary furniture and sanitaryware. Block console/washbasin in mineral marble (H8xW95xD36-51cm); mirror (H110xW55cm); two-door base unit (H50xW97xD36cm) in metal pearly lacquer; Eclisse glass shelves (W70xD13cm), all the Tiffany range by Artesi, £2,885, supplied by interiors agency London & Partners (07961 185 583)

