

NO.3 : WOODEN WONDER

Natural haven

LEO BEAR recounts how the design firm Barde vanVoltt turned this canal house attic room in Amsterdam into a modern wellness sanctuary with striking sculptural fittings from Agape

The couple that own this century-old canal house in Amsterdam did not want a traditional master bathroom. Their brief was for somewhere to ‘rest, stretch and recline’ – in other words, a wellness sanctuary. ‘When you walk into the space, you feel completely relaxed, almost in a meditative state,’ says Valérie Boerma, co-founder of Barde vanVoltt, the Netherlands-based interior design studio responsible for reimagining this attic.

Featuring a sauna, Jacuzzi and a space for yoga, it is indeed much more than a bathroom. ‘In order to properly reconnect with ourselves, we need to connect with the earth,’ explains Valérie. Hence, the focus on a variety of raw materials and natural light. Clay was used for the walls (to enhance breathability) and walnut timber for the sauna and storage boxes, while the daybed at one end is upholstered in flax-fibre stone-washed linen. The only exception is the practical polyurethane rubber flooring. The overall look is brutalist yet poetic.

To highlight the attic’s distinctive triangular shape, the original wooden beams were restored and careful attention was paid to lighting – aged brass spotlights by Koen van Guijze and ‘Trapeze’ geometrical wall lights by Apparatus.

Wanting something sculptural, modern and big enough for sharing, the freestanding ‘In-Out Marmo’ bathtub designed by Benedini Associati for Agape (which has been modified into a spa bath) was the owner’s choice. Installing the bath, which is carved from Bianco di Carrara marble and weighs over 800kg, presented quite a challenge – in the end, a crane was used to lift it into the house. The washbasin – ‘Bjhon 1’ by Angelo Mangiarotti for Agape – was less of a struggle and provided the perfect companion piece. All of the Agape items are available through West One Bathrooms in the UK.

The bespoke sauna was built on site, as was the daybed, which reclines fully, allowing the owners to relax and make the most of the canal views – and to experience what is known in Dutch as *gezellig*, ‘the joy of being cosy’, whatever the weather outside. barde-vanvoltt.com | westonebathrooms.com

THIS PAGE FROM TOP The glass screen allows natural light to stream into the sauna. Timber storage cupboards double as spots to perch. **OPPOSITE FROM TOP** Yellow ochre ‘Soap’ tiles by Sebastian Herkner for Kaufmann Keramik line the shower. The linen ‘Luna’ pillowcases from Soho Home complement the rustic wooden daybed

