

ESCAPE

Canon Cave's restored stone walls glow in the sleeping alcove, which has space for a luxurious super-king bed and bespoke shelving. [Bottom] The view from the peaceful patio



EDINBURGH

DEEPLY SATISFYING

This enchanting basement hideaway makes a great base for an Edinburgh city break

Photography Gavin Hill Words Miriam Methuen-Jones

Believe it or not, we have rugby to thank for this stylish new Edinburgh holiday rental – at least in part. Its owner, Dylan Mason, travelled the world playing the sport professionally, settling for a while in Canada where he spent his spare time honing his joinery skills.

Years later, and back in his native Scotland, he credits the Canadian carpenters he learned from for the meticulous work he now produces. His skill and attention to detail,





[Above] The thoughtful layout feels spacious, with room for a large Loaf sofa and kitchen island. [Below] The tempting rolltop bath is by London Encaustic. [Opposite, top] There's also a wet room, with a double shower and tiles from the nearby Edinburgh Tile Studio. [Opposite, bottom] This might be a basement flat but it still has a working woodburner – the owner installed the 26m-long flue himself!



and that of his crack team of builders, are on display in this apartment in Canonmills, a characterful district of the capital on the edge of the New Town and Stockbridge. They dubbed the basement property 'the cave', and the name stuck: it now goes by the whimsical title of Canon Cave.

And it certainly does have a subterranean feel. Once a storeroom (for gunpowder and candles!), the space has been rethought and remodelled to eke out every spare centimetre of its 45 square metres. It feels luxurious and utterly unique, with painstakingly restored 200-year-old stonework and original beams expertly lit to bring out their textured, sculptural beauty.

That hard work has certainly paid dividends. Despite the limited footprint, this place has everything two people could need. There's even a full-sized kitchen with a sociable island for entertaining. But you won't want to share Canon

Cave – it positively encourages romance. Just look at that dreamy copper bath by London Encaustic that's big enough for two. The super-king bed, meanwhile, is enclosed in a deliciously private nook. The surrounding timber shelving is bespoke, built into an old doorway on the left, with ample space to charge your electronics or to rest your champagne glass. Even the lighting can be controlled from the comfort of your snooze spot.

The laidback vibe continues out in the living area, where Loaf's generously proportioned Dixie sofa offers plenty of room for lounging. Its cheery orange isn't just fun, it also helps bring brightness to a space that's lacking much in the way of natural light. To counter this, the lighting scheme has been carefully worked out – the soundproofed ceiling, for instance, is illuminated by LED strips around the original beams.

With similar devotion to detail, Mason took the time to integrate the dressing area's geometric marble tiles into the living space's wooden flooring – proof there were no shortcuts in this renovation. The property was in fact purchased over two years ago, and the refurbishment has evolved patiently around the other commitments of Mason's construction company. As the work progressed, though, the space served as a convenient showroom for local clients – if they were unsure how a particular finish would look in their home, Mason could invite them to pop down to the Cave and check it out in situ.

The woodburner is a phenomenal addition, as is the wine fridge, the underfloor heating and the television on a swivel mount (bubblebath boxset, anyone?), but really it's the peaceful atmosphere that makes this place so attractive. There's no noise from overhead, and it's quiet enough to prop the patio door open and sit out with a glass of wine. For a city-break retreat, that's hard to beat.

From £xxx per night. www.ADDPLEASE.XXXXXX



IN THE AREA

Canon Cave is a ten-minute taxi ride from Waverley Station, or a 20-minute walk. Breakfast at **Di Giorgio** (just upstairs) is a must – the blueberry and banana French

toast is definitely a crowd-pleaser. The superb **Royal Botanic Garden** is on your doorstep (entry is free) or you could take a wander along the **Water of Leith walkway** towards the Forth at **Newhaven harbour**. While you're there, pick up a haddock supper from **The Fishmarket** to munch as you stroll. If you're heading into town, stop

off at **Pickles** in Broughton Street for a glass of wine and a platter of sensational Scottish cheeses, or stroll to the top of **Calton hill** for unbeatable views and some of the city's best dining at **The Look Out**. And if you're visiting between 19 November and 9 January, don't miss the **Castle of Light** festivities at Edinburgh Castle.