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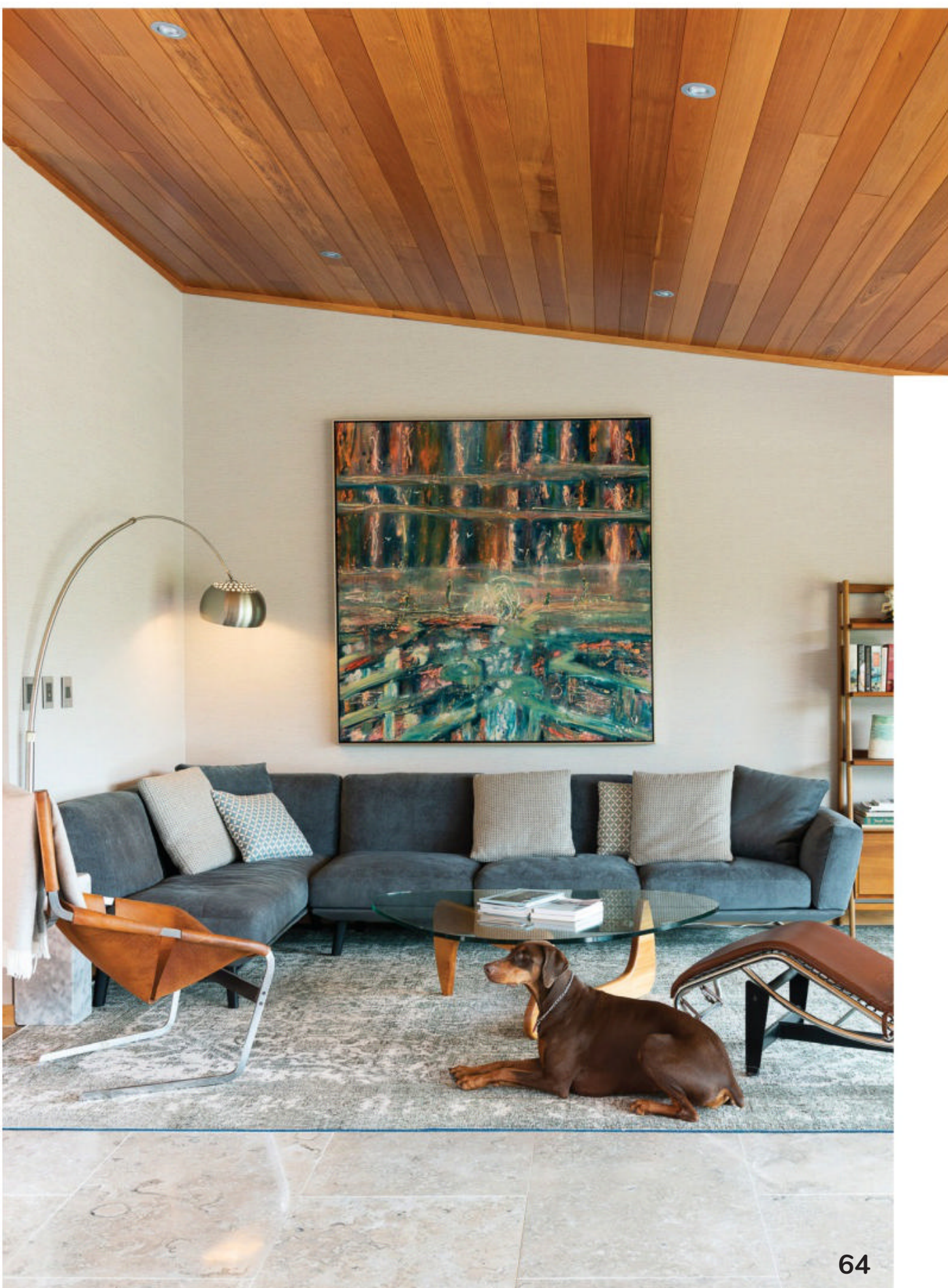


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*April* Celebrating homes with individuality



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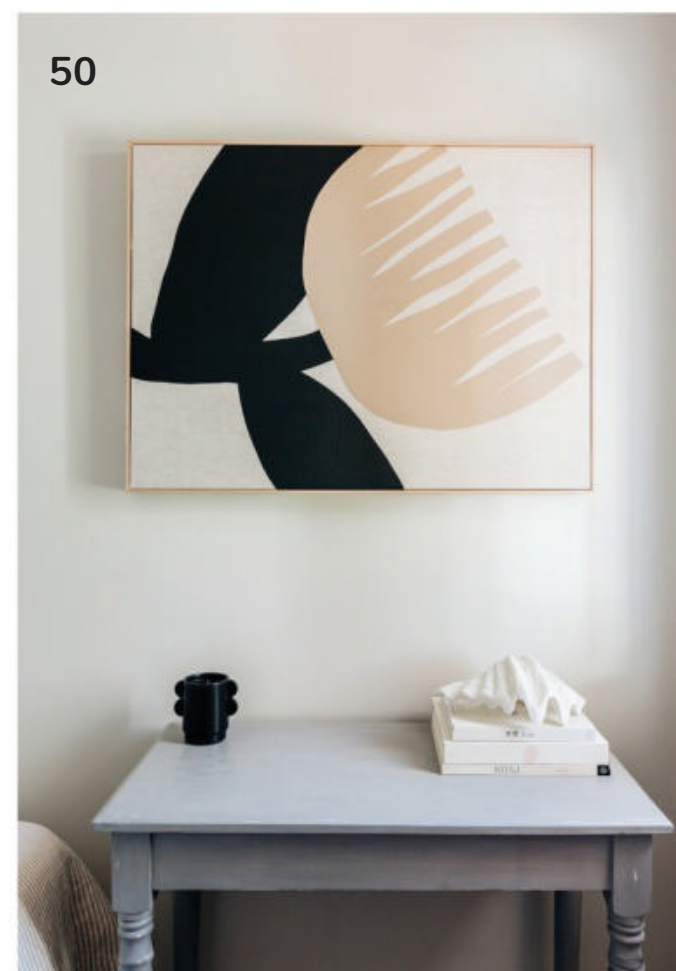
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**R**ecently, I scored a round retro dining table on Trade Me. Drama personified, it's carved from glossy black marble with a ridiculously heavy – yet utterly fabulous – white-veined pedestal base. Perhaps it was wishful thinking, but when I teamed it with a set of six new dining chairs, I had high hopes of hosting a dinner party or two. Yet despite my best intentions (and Covid), when guests do gather, it's mostly around our central island. Because kitchens are a little bit like that, aren't they? That place where everyone wants to congregate and generally all at the same time! This month we feature a stunning kitchen makeover in which the table takes pride of place (problem solved!), visit a stunning new build at Titirangi where the owners tend to cook on the barbecue more than in their inside oven, and peek inside a converted woolshed in rural Gisborne. And in case you're thinking of tackling a kitchen upgrade any time soon, we look at the best hues for the hub of your home, along with products, lighting, tips and reno checklists.

*Vanessa*

*I'm coveting*



Deadly Ponies' new collection is inspired by the historic Antarctic explorations of photographer Frank Hurley (and his pup Blizzard). Colder mornings and cooler nights definitely call for a mohair scarf like this to wrap up in.

[deadlyponies.com](http://deadlyponies.com)



This camo-inspired floral raincoat is the perfect winter investment. A blend of fashion and function, it's the result of an inspired design collab between sports lifestyle brand Puma and iconic London heritage label Liberty.

[nz.puma.com](http://nz.puma.com)



Speaking of an impending change in season, velvet introduces a cosy vibe to any interior and is my go-to home accessory as the mercury drops. I can't wait to snuggle on the couch with this deep-green beauty.

[wallacecotton.com](http://wallacecotton.com)



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# Home Comforts

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## *Behind the cover*



A downsizing couple took their time when planning a new home on a serene harbourside section in Auckland's west – even making some of the beautiful furniture by hand. See the stunning result of their patience and care on page 64.

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
HELEN BANKERS



# GREEN STYLE GUIDE *for your home*

☛ *Add greenery to your home to create a friendly and inviting living space. Living with greenery has a long term positive effect on our lives*

photography by thejoyofplants.co.uk

Gellert's  
The Joy of Plants









# EDIT

## Whakatika

*A newly minted Wellingtonian explores her vibrant Newtown neighbourhood, we seek out noteworthy new finds to sweeten up your home (and your Easter), our designer showcases daring homewares, and a Waikato artist finds inspiration close to home.*

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**GOOD AS NEWTOWN**  
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**NEW & NOTED**  
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**BOLD & BEAUTIFUL**  
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**WHERE THE ART IS**  
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## Newtown

# MY HAVEN



*A recent arrival to Wellington, communications consultant Jess Harkins loves getting to know her vibrant, multicultural suburb of Newtown.*

**Where do you call home?** A colourful rented cottage in Newtown, Wellington. We've lived here 14 months since moving from Queenstown for our jobs.

**Who do you live with?** My fiancé Mike McCann and our black cat Ringo.

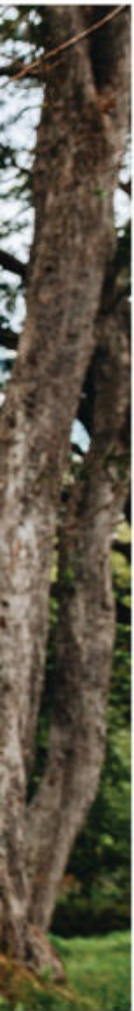
**What is your home like?** It's a two-bedroom circa-1910 cottage painted in some pretty eclectic colours. Once inside, it's a calming space. We're surrounded by native planting, so it's private and feels like an urban

oasis overlooking Newtown. Ringo loves the roof for sunbathing.

**Given that it's a rental, are you limited with the decor and things you can change?** Our landlords are great and this was their family home, so there isn't any of the awful grey carpet you see in many rentals. We've been able to hang art, grow things in the garden and treat the place like it's our own. We've worked with the original colour scheme throughout the house, which is generally quite neutral and suits us, →

**PHOTOGRAPHY** BONNY BEATTIE **TEXT** SHARON STEPHENSON











but then there's the pretty crazy feature wall in the second bedroom, which I've learned to embrace.

**What's your interiors style like?** I'm no minimalist! My things tend to dominate our decor. There are pieces from my travels around the world, ceramics I've started collecting and things that have drawn my attention over the years. I've always been interested in how things look, and my homes – whether a room in a flat in my 20s or the homes Mike and I have had together over the years – are an extension of myself and my personality. One area Mike and I can agree on is plants. We had some pretty epic house plants and a garden in Queenstown and now we have a few plants on the go. There are also piles of books everywhere in the bedrooms, as we're both voracious readers. I haven't gotten around to buying a large bookshelf – it's hard to find what I have in my mind.

The home is full of collections from Jess's life and travels, including a print by Kate Banazi in the boldly painted second bedroom, and a Vicky Fulton photograph and Wundaire ceramic pot in the dining area (facing page).



**Do you prefer shopping for vintage/second-hand finds, modern items or a bit of both?** Both. I'm firmly in Camp Mid-Century Design, but overall we're drawn to wood, warm tones and creating a cosy vibe. It's eclectic but overall there's cohesion.

**Where do you get your creative inspiration from?** From the world around me, nature, and of course Instagram. I don't follow trends but from time to time trends cross over with what I love, including mid-century design, colour blocking, chequerboard (it's everywhere and I'm here for that) and gardening, which should always be in vogue!

**Have you brought items from other houses or bought specific pieces for this space?** We owned our own house in Queenstown, so we moved most of our things →





Exploring new shops and eateries has become something of a hobby for Jess, including Black Coffee (above), Next Stop Earth (above right) and Mason (facing page).



with us, then added the dining suite. We've hung onto a lot of the furniture and decor from when we first moved in together seven years ago, when we were given items by Mike's family, including carpets his dad bought in Pakistan years ago.

**What's the most recent item you bought for your house?** I've just hung a Lauren Gudex painting in the living room. Her latest show at Kaukau was an exploration of colour and nostalgia. It brings a cooler element to our lounge.

**What do you love about your neighbourhood?** Before we moved, I had no idea just how good the location was. Newtown is a vibrant suburb, which means it's not exactly quiet, but we're tucked into a corner, surrounded by greenery and on the doorstep of the Town Belt and Southern Walkway. It's also close to the CBD, so I often walk to work. The weekend produce market also adds to the community vibe.

**Do you entertain at home or prefer to go out?** We have the odd dinner party with friends to give the







extendable dining table a workout but we definitely love to explore Wellington's dining scene. Finding new restaurants and discovering favourites was practically a hobby in the first few months.

**What are your favourite places to eat?** Mason, on our doorstep, is great for dinner with friends, if we can get a table. Cicio Cacio has excellent Italian and Urban Masala is my go-to Indian, though all three of the Indian joints in Newtown are pretty good.

**Best cocktail in town?** Beer is the drink of choice in

Newtown, so Bebemos is our go-to for a pint. Further afield, the city's Hanging Ditch has a great cocktail menu, and Kuikui Lane has an extensive New Zealand gin menu and does a great dirty Martini, which is my latest discovery.

**Where do you go for a local dose of nature?** Walk out the front gate, turn left and in about 50m we're on the Southern Walkway. There are lots of walking and bike trails. We both love the sea too, so a trip to Lyall Bay or Red Rocks for a walk during the weekend or on a summer evening is often on the cards. 📍





## Live closer to nature

New business Evoke creates architecturally designed transportable homes using locally sourced materials and fibres. New Zealand wool plays an especially critical role in its one and two-bedroom homes. Woollen rugs, insulation, bedding and mattresses can be selected throughout – a sustainable and ethical choice that supports hard-working Kiwi wool growers. Exteriors are local, traceable macrocarpa cladding, creating a sophisticated silhouette, and there's a wide range of interior finishes to choose from. [evokenz.co.nz](http://evokenz.co.nz)

## ONE SMALL STEP

Meet Space Step, otherwise known as the “ahhh” moment. This clever integrated plinth step provides ergonomic, safe and stylish access to higher spaces while adding an additional drawer into your base cabinet and taking storage to new levels! Time to stop begging your tall friend for help or constantly dragging a chair over.

[blum.com](http://blum.com)



# NOTEWORTHY

*Bright shiny things and stylish discoveries.*



### DOING IT IN STYLE

*In 2022, it's all about the collectives and collabs. One that's caught our eye is Further Doings Studio in Grey Lynn, Auckland, for fab ceramics, jewellery, blankets and other goodies.*

[furtherdoings.co.nz](http://furtherdoings.co.nz)



## DESIGNED FOR RELAXATION

For those cold and blustery days when you just want to stay home, discover luxurious lounging essentials from Wallace Cotton. Crafted from fine cotton knit with a hint of cashmere, the Cotton Cashmere collection includes a crew-neck sweater, lounge pants and matching socks in shades of deep-blue marle and soft natural.

[wallacecotton.com](http://wallacecotton.com)



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## A touch of glass

Splashbacks can be the wild child of your house, with funky patterns, bold colours or simply scenery that evokes memories. With intelligent lighting, Auckland company Graphic Glass creates modern effects with coloured glass to suit New Zealand homes. Although their designs are most often used in kitchens, they can be installed anywhere for a touch of sophistication and style.

[graphicglass.co.nz](http://graphicglass.co.nz)



**MIX IT UP** *The new Braun PowerBlend 9 jug blender takes food prep to a new level with 18 different settings. It can deal to tough root veges or chunks of ice, and even has a hot soup function that heats as it spins.*

[braunhousehold.com](http://braunhousehold.com)

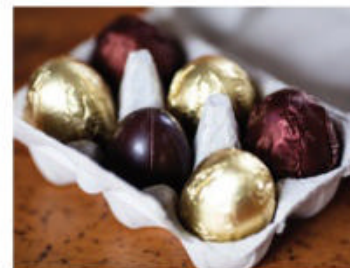
## BE IN TO WIN: LE CREUSET

The latest Le Creuset colour, bamboo, is a rich, organic shade that at once uplifts and soothes, shining its perennial beauty inside the kitchen and on the table. Purposefully crafted to be a true green, this restorative hue reflects current trends towards eco-sensibility. Available at Le Creuset Boutique in Westfield Newmarket, Auckland, (09) 303 3539.

We have a Le Creuset Cast Iron Signature Round Casserole 20cm in bamboo to give away, valued at \$510. To be in to win, go to [havenmagazine.co.nz/lecreuset](http://havenmagazine.co.nz/lecreuset). Terms and condition apply.



## Easter-Licious



### EGGCELLENCE

Allpress has teamed up with chocolatier Bennetts of Mangawhai to bring back their coffee-spiked chocolate Easter eggs. Each carton contains a mix of Flat White Eggs and Espresso Eggs. Available at Allpress stores and Farro Fresh.

[allpressespresso.com](http://allpressespresso.com)



### HOT CROSS COLLAB

Canny Kiwi company Pic's has combined forces with New World to launch a new hot cross bun flavour. The Goey Peanut Butter Choc Cross Bun was invented by the team at New World Kaikoura, and is now available nationwide.

[newworld.co.nz](http://newworld.co.nz)



### ETHICAL EGGS

Socially responsible chocolate company Tony's Choclonely has released an Easter egg carton with 12 fair-trade eggs in a mix of milk chocolate, dark chocolate, caramel sea salt, hazelnut, and almond sea salt. Available from Cook & Nelson and Farro Fresh.

[cookandnelson.com](http://cookandnelson.com)



A man with a beard, wearing a blue and white striped t-shirt and jeans, is smiling and holding a baby. The baby is wearing a Superman t-shirt. They are in a modern kitchen with dark, reflective cabinetry. An overhead cabinet is open, revealing shelves stocked with various baby supplies like bottles, jars, and boxes. On the countertop, there is a blender with orange juice, a container of baby food, and a small teddy bear. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

# moving ideas

**How does your dream kitchen become a reality?**

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**[blum.com/movingideas](https://blum.com/movingideas)**





# TREND ALERT

*Six bold looks that are adding style and drama to rooms right now.*

**PHOTOGRAPHY** MICHAEL MOORE **STYLING** SAVANNAH BETTI



## Design investment

Use size and colour to edge your interiors to the next level by scaling up artwork and lighting. Make a statement by adding one knockout piece that reflects your individuality. Think a tiled side table, rounded chair or oversized floor lamp.

**From left** Roly Poly Chair by Faye Toogood, POA from David Shaw. Qeeboo Giraffe in Love lamp, \$1595 from Smith and Caughey's. Wall painted in Resene Irresistible. Floor painted in Resene Half Solitaire.

**Facing page, from left** Mr Plinth, starts at \$440 from Skitty Studio. Pip Studio Blushing Birds candle holder, \$89 from Allium. Turquoise Queen print by Agate Rubene, \$499 (unframed) from Turua Gallery. Milk Crate & Bottles by Simon Lewis Wards, \$780 from Black Door Gallery. Wall painted in Resene Half Pale Rose. Floor painted in Resene Half Solitaire.







## Nature's formula

Organic surfaces and neutral textures ground and soothe a busy home. Seek out natural wood, classic sculptures, concrete accessories and handwoven floor coverings.

**From top** Panto 2 cement and wood pendant, \$169 from Lighting Plus. Acacia nibbles bowl, \$29.90 from Redcurrent. Elm Wood antique round stool, \$279 from Città. *Couple Looking Outwards* by Mariska de Jager, \$485 from Black Door Gallery. Jute herringbone doormat, \$73 from Leopold Hall. Wall painted in Resene Half Solitaire. Floor painted in Resene Kalgoorie Sands.







## Soft touch

“Restful and serene” is how we’d describe the soothing trend for delicate petal shapes that is popping up everywhere, from art and ceramics to snuggly chairs and circular rugs.

**From top** *Suspended Animation 2*, \$680 from Anna Church. *Chloe chair* in Warwick Ovis Ivory, \$4271 from Forma. *Ginger jar* by Dawn Clayden, \$335 from The Poi Room. *Classic Living Fara Coils round rug*, \$499.99 from Briscoes. *Deco vase* by Dawn Clayden, \$325 from The Poi Room. Wall and floor painted in Resene Half Solitaire.





## Modern florals

Bold tones and graphic prints are evolving our interior obsession for botanical detailing. Less chintz and more psychedelic, this fresh move to painterly florals adds the happy vibe we need right now.

**From left** Botanical cushion, starts at \$149 from Forma. Eden digital collage print by Tess Costil, \$1200 (unframed) from The Poi Room. Bouquet of flowers, \$120 from Greenpoint Florist. Anissa Kermiche Breast Friend vase, \$975 from Smith & Caughey's. Wall painted in Resene Half Pale Rose. Floor painted in Resene Half Solitaire.







## Cocoa solid

A colour cornerstone of 1970s design, chocolate brown is making a comeback in shades ranging from deep cognac to buttery caramel. Inject down-to-earth glamour to rugs and furniture for guilt-free indulgence.

**From left** Brazilian cowhide rug in brown and white, \$695 from Cuchi. Serengeti armchair, \$895 from Corcovado. Norton vase in cinnamon, \$44.90 from Forma. Wall painted in Resene Kalgoorie Sands. Floor painted in Resene Half Solitaire.





# *The art of life*

*For multitalented artist Rachel Kiddie McClure, home is where the art is – and her home town is where it's happening.*

**PHOTOGRAPHY** JAMIE WRIGHT **WRITTEN BY** MEGAN LYON





Rachel works on an embroidery commission in her home studio in Claudelands.



Far from being tucked away in some quiet shed, the studio of artist Rachel Kiddie McClure occupies the front room of her Hamilton character bungalow. This allows her to work at home around other commitments, melding together domestic and creative life. “Our home is very much a working space,” she says.

It’s a space she shares with husband and fellow artist Craig McClure, who hails from Scotland, their children Lochie and Isla, and Gizzy, their beloved ginger cat. It sits between a mosque and an Anglican church in the suburb of Claudelands, and reflects the diverse, eclectic community they enjoy being part of.

Rachel’s practice crosses over numerous mediums, including drawing, illustration, painting, sculpture, quilt-making, cross-stitch and crochet. She is interested in exploring and embracing themes of home life, motherhood, feminism, community, connection, craft, nostalgia and storytelling.

She has also long been fascinated by embroidery and keen to further its reputation as a contemporary art form, as demonstrated by an exhibition she’s devised, *It’s a Stitch Up!*, showing this month at Wintec’s Ramp Gallery. Best described as “embroidery, but not as your nana knows it”, →









For Rachel, work and home are interwoven, and her art explores ideas of domesticity, identity and environment. Vintage drawers in her studio (facing page) were inherited from an artist-run space, and various artists have left their mark. She plans to paint the waka ama paddle in a collaboration with local business Manaaki Made.



the exhibition showcases contemporary textile art by 10 national and international artists.

“It’s a treasure chest of amazing work, and I’m so excited to be working with such kind and fabulous artists, as well as Hollie Tawhiao, Ramp Gallery’s manager,” Rachel says.

Rachel’s own work in the exhibition speaks to the humour in everyday life as a mum and as a woman with fragments of sadness, rage and frustration lingering in the background of her work.

She has also just had work accepted for an upcoming group show at Spilt Milk Gallery in Edinburgh, Scotland. The gallery’s mission is to promote the work of artists who identify as mothers and empower them in the community.

Rachel and Craig, who met on a blind date, graduated from Wintec’s School of Media Arts a decade apart. They lived together in the bungalow before trying out Tauranga, then circled back. It felt to them like the art scene in Hamilton had grown up in the intervening years, providing them more creative opportunities. →





Rachel's artwork *A Fine Line between Coping and Collapse* graces a wall, while *Poop Cushion* (below left) is an irreverent nod to motherhood. A mural Rachel painted for the Boon Street Art Festival (facing page) reads as a love letter to the place she calls home, with the letter K paying homage to Kirikiriroa (Hamilton's Māori name), kindness, kotahitanga, kōwhai and kākūka.

---

**‘[It’s about] having unique things in our home that I like looking at, that bring me joy or that I feel a connection to.’**

---



After some debate about where and how they might live, they decided to stay put and renovate the bungalow, with colour playing a major role. Happily, this provided more wall area for the keen collectors to display their works and those of their favourite artists.

As artists connected to their community it’s the kaupapa of connectivity that drives them. For Rachel, collecting is about “having unique things in our home that I like looking at, that bring me joy or that I feel a connection to. It’s also important to expose our kids to good art, have it be a normal part of their everyday lives and for them to learn to talk about art and to love and appreciate it.”

Another creative outlet celebrated by the couple is street art. Craig is the director of the Boon Street Art Festival, and they’ve both contributed to the 60 murals now gracing Kirikiriroa. “I love walking through the city and seeing the murals,” Rachel says. “It makes the city come alive and makes you think about the ideas and stories each artist is telling.” **H**

***It’s a Stitch Up! is on until April 8 at Ramp Gallery, Wintec City Campus.***











# LIVE *To Oranga*

*A new generation takes up residence at a Hawke's Bay family farm, a suburban 1920s Wellington home is redecorated with easy elegance, and a modern build takes inspiration from its lush harbourside setting.*

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**FARM FRESH**  
*page 36*

**DIY DREAM**  
*page 50*

**TURN OF THE TIDE**  
*page 64*

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# Forever home

*A charming new build and a woolshed conversion bring two fresh generations to a 150-year-old family farm near Gisborne.*



PHOTOGRAPHY FLORENCE CHARVIN WRITTEN BY SUE HOFFART





The covered deck, accessed from the main bedroom and the living area, is well used year-round. The bird artwork (facing page) is one of the family's favourite things – it was made by a family friend as a wedding present.









**KITCHEN** With four children in the home, the scullery is a godsend. Roanna says the lights over the kitchen island were a real find – “I got them for a steal from So Vintage in Te Awanga.” Jack’s mother gifted the Turkish doors.

In the first two decades of her life, Roanna Jefferd moved house 17 times. Now, she and husband Jack are raising their children on rural Gisborne land imbued with almost 150 years of family history, and they expect to grow old there. In the meantime, five-year-old Frankie, preschooler Henry and twin toddlers Alfie and Posey have the run of a property where Jack’s great-great-grandfather once stood.

Their three-bedroom home, nestled amid a fledgling citrus orchard alongside the Waipaoa River, was built in 2016. A local architect friend, Shane Kingsbeer, designed it around a central deck area that opens onto the lounge, kitchen and main bedroom. “That deck is amazing, one of the best features of the house,” Rosanna says. “We use it all year round. In winter, on a sunny day, we have a table out there and hanging chairs, the barbecue, bean bags... The kids get the bikes and roam right around it, they paint out there.” →







**LIVING ROOM** The lounge feels “super cosy” but has plenty of room for the kids to play, Roanna says. The dried flower arrangement was made by Rhonda Haag from Flora Forms.

**DECK (facing page)** The outdoor table was made from an old door found in a woolshed, which Roanna painted and sanded. Jack made the legs from leftover framing timber.






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**‘I have this safe, happy home. I can plant a tree, put something in the house or do landscaping and know it’s for a really long time.’**

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The resourceful couple did most of the renovations themselves. “Jack helped the builders during the week and we spent six months of our lives working every weekend, just trying to save money on the build. I was teaching during the week – I’m a primary teacher – and I was pregnant with Frankie.”

Roanna estimates she painted and stained 60 percent of the house, though she only painted the areas she could reach without hauling her growing belly up a ladder.

The couple also economised on furniture, including upcycling pieces they already owned. “We were quite poor by the time we moved in – and outdoor furniture is so pricey. None of our furniture is expensive.

My linen couch I’ve had since I was at uni – I paid \$100 on Trade Me. It’s ripped a bit, so I put a linen table runner over it.”

After Roanna discovered she was expecting twins, the couple created more space by building a guest studio inside an adjacent, still-operational woolshed that has been processing Jefferd fleeces for a century. The woolshed room was a matter of necessity, completed on a tight budget as the house build had already stretched them financially.

“My father-in-law said, ‘Why don’t you put a room in the woolshed so you can still have guests?’” Roanna recalls. “I thought it was a terrible idea. Who the hell would want to stay in there where it’s old and dusty, →









**MAIN BEDROOM** Roanna loves that her bedroom is a calming space after a busy day. The round artwork is from Madisons in Napier, the bedding is from Foxtrot Home and the cushion is from Little and Fox in Napier.

with cobwebs, possibly with mice and rats and a whole lot of sheep poo? But every week it got bigger and better and more amazing. Everyone who's stayed in it just loves it, and time will make it even more beautiful. We're so proud of it. Sometimes we would just go over there and hang out on a couch, have a cup of tea... It's got such a lovely feel to it."

The woolshed project evolved from only a bedroom to a self-contained living space. It was completed almost entirely on the back of donated and repurposed items, Jack's carpentry skills (he's a builder by trade), and plenty of love and practical help from his parents, Sally and Andy. They paid nothing for the kitchen cabinetry, which was pulled out of another old house, the table dated back to the early years of Jack's parents' marriage and the vanity was created from a wooden cupboard found languishing in a farm shed.

The senior Jefferds have contributed to the main →









**KIDS' BEDROOMS** Many of the items in the children's rooms are from Jack and Roanna's travels – the rug and poof are from Morocco and the art on the walls is from all over the world, from China to New York.

**BATHROOMS** (facing page)  
The macrocarpa timber vanity was sourced locally, as were the bee boxes. The woven bag on the wall was a wedding present.












**THE WOOLSHED**  
Reclaimed rimu timber and rattan light shades from A&C Homestore helped transform the old woolshed into a quirky Airbnb, where it's listed as "The Wool-shed country escape".

house too, including panelled antique Turkish doors that were a wedding gift to the couple.

Much like these cherished possessions, the home is designed to last – and also to grow with their family. Building plans include a new wing that will add two bedrooms, as they can afford it. The future may also bring a garage, a pool and landscaping, but for now they are focusing on developing their commercial orchard, planted with oranges, lemons and mandarins.

Roanna is in no hurry for more. "I just feel so lucky. We've got a wonderful life here, a really simple life – we have two big vege gardens we live off, Jack comes in for lunch every day and takes the kids on the motorbike to run the dog, I have this safe, happy home. I can plant a tree, put something in the house or do landscaping and know it's for a really long time. It could've been a shed and I'd have been happy because it's our home. It's just the icing on the cake that it's a beautiful home." 







## Roanna's tips

- Have a clear vision of what you want to achieve with your holiday rental and do plenty of research on who your target market is.
- Use any materials you may already have when starting on the renovations.
- Start with a good plan and don't be afraid to seek help if you need it.
  - Know your budget and try to do as much work yourselves as you can. This will save you money and keep costs down. We were really lucky in that department.
- Add character by using second-hand finds and upscaled furniture. We used a lot of wood that we had lying around and were given heaps of second-hand pieces.
- Try to manage the whole business yourself but enlist cleaning help when you need it.

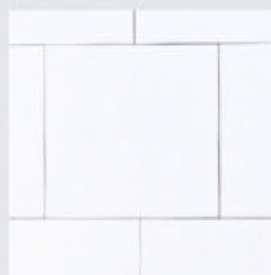
### OUTDOOR LIVING

Like many pieces in the home, the hanging chair from Ico Traders was a wedding present. Roanna says there's always a fight over who gets to sit in it.

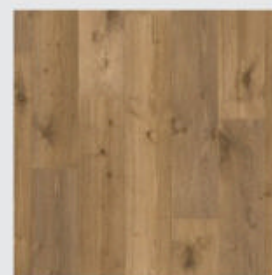
### FINISHING TOUCH



Resene Robin Egg Blue, from Resene ColorShop.



Mt Cook white gloss glazed ceramic tiles, from TileHaus.



Pergo Sensation Modern Plank laminate flooring, from Flooring Xtra.



Braided River wool carpet in Ashburton, from Bremworth.





*Swipe the style*

# FRESH & RUSTIC

*Get Roanna and Jack's light and natural country feel.*



An alcove by the front door accommodates a clever study nook that can be closed off via a recessed sliding door.



1 Seiko ship's clock, \$190 from The Heritage Merchant. 2 Modern tall jug, \$45 from Tony Sly. 3 Domani Toscana cushion, \$69.99 from Farmers. 4 Sonata bunk bed, \$399.95 from Mocka. 5 Wishbone dining chair, \$319 from Freedom. 6 Marrakesh basket, \$79 from Father Rabbit. 7 Elmwood peasant stool, \$299 from Indie Home Collective. 8 Senecio rowleyanus, \$19.99 from Kings Plant Barn. 9 Eve ottoman, \$985 from Bauhaus. 10 Fermob Alfred drinks trolley, \$620 from Jardin.



# CAPITAL



# FIND

*A couple of savvy serial DIYers bring subtle warmth and a touch of luxe into their stucco Wellington home.*

**PHOTOGRAPHY** BONNY BEATTIE **WRITTEN BY** SHARON STEPHENSON



It took months for the couple to find the right chairs for the American oak dining table. They eventually found these grey velvet West Elm chairs in Christchurch.





Most people have a laundry list of non-negotiables when buying a house: does it have three bedrooms, is it open-plan, is there a garage and more than one bathroom? But when Jen Barnett and her husband Dan Melbye started house-hunting, the Wellington couple had only two items on their wishlist: a flat section and a family-friendly driveway.

“Our previous house was hanging off a hillside, so there wasn’t much room for our four-year-old daughter Madeleine to play and no flat land for a trampoline,” says Jen.

And as for their need for a driveway, Jen wanted to be able to park close to the house – “unusual in Wellington” – and for Madeleine to be able to ride her bike on the driveway as Jen had growing up in Christchurch. →



**KITCHEN** Jen and Dan were fortunate that the more intensive renovations – such as the kitchen – had been done, leaving them to personalise the home to their taste. The Matisse prints (left) were bought at London’s Tate Gallery following an exhibition.













**LIVING AREA** The mid-century sideboard is from Wellington's Stacks Furniture, and Jen found the cushions at Città. The Samsung TV is designed to look like a picture frame when not in use. Jen found the pink curtains, which were made in Florida, on Etsy.

They found both at this 1920s stucco house, at the city end of Karori, New Zealand's largest suburb.

The couple, who founded digital marketing agency Social Studies 18 months ago, are no strangers to house buying. Jen met British-born Dan in London, where she lived for 15 years, and not counting an apartment in the English capital, this is the fifth house they've owned since moving to Wellington in 2012. "We're serial DIYers who like putting our stamp on a place and then moving on."

While Dan's background is in digital marketing, Jen comes from the bridal couture world. While in London, she worked for fashion and bridal designer →







Stewart Parvin, a long-standing dress designer for the Queen. Selling her London flat gave her the resources to set up her own bridal business, Paperswan Bride, which she ran for eight years, with shops in Wellington and Christchurch. But she and Dan had always wanted to work together, so she sold the business just before the March 2020 lockdown.

That lockdown also coincided with their move into this 105sqm house. “Lockdown was announced the day before we due to move, so the moving company cancelled on us,” Jen says. Luckily, I was able to find a truck and we moved ourselves.”

One of the big drawcards of this house was that all the hard yards – repiling, rewiring and

replumbing – had been done. The only structural feature they changed was adding an arch between the living room and study nook. “I love a good feature wall and always knew I was going to make an art deco-style statement with the living room wall,” Jen says. “But the former rectangular opening didn’t have the impact I wanted, so we had a builder add in the arch.”

She tracked down art deco-inspired wallpaper online, finally settling on a rose-gold design from British brand Divine Savages. It works nicely with a gold/mustard velvet sofa she found at Early Settler a few years ago. Jen, who counts an interior stylist among her clients, shares her client’s view that velvet soft furnishings are luxe but also easy to →




**MAIN BEDROOM**  
The cane chair was sourced from Boheme Home, a Mt Maunganui homewares store.

**STUDY (facing page)**  
A tinsel-style lightshade livens up the sunny study nook.







—

**‘We’re serial DIYers who like putting our stamp on a place and then moving on.’**

—

**BEDROOMS** The cushions in the guest bedroom are from Città and H&M Home. Jen sourced the wallpaper and curtains in Madeleine’s room (above right) from wNorth America. The pram is from Wellington store Tea Pea Home.





clean. It's why she added a grey velvet chair – and as expected, it “cleaned up beautifully” after her daughter got pen on it.

A gold lampshade adds another pop of colour, as does a tinsel-style lampshade in the adjacent study nook. “When the light is on, it's like a disco in here,” Jen says, laughing. A pink velvet daybed in the study came from Jen's former Wellington shop, fitting into the space perfectly.

Aside from the arch, the only major change the couple made was painting the interior, which was formerly a light grey. “That was fine but a bit flat so we repainted in Resene Truffle and Resene Rickshaw – shades from the beige end of the colour chart, which add depth and interest.”

One of the couple's clients is Wellington homeware store Stacks Furniture, and a number of their highly covetable items have found their way into

this house. That includes a sideboard in the living room, colourful artwork in the dining area and the dining table, crafted from American white oak.

Jen is also a huge fan of American homeware store West Elm, which she visited several times while on holiday in the United States, so she was thrilled to find that the Christchurch department store Ballantynes stocked their products. A white lamp on the sideboard is from West Elm, as are the grey dining chairs and a gold chandelier above the dining table.

Jen's love of feature walls – “I don't care if they're in fashion or not, I love them!” – continues in her daughter's room, with wallpaper featuring woodland animals, sourced from a Canadian manufacturer.

When it came to the main bedroom, the couple reached a compromise on decor. “I like the lush, luxe feel of boutique hotel rooms, but Dan is more →





eclectic and laid-back. So we compromised and went quite neutral.”

Mushroom lamps on the bedside tables are from Città and prints on the wall were found in India. “We love India and have visited several times, including spending three months travelling there on the way back to New Zealand. We bought these prints in a market stall.”

Jen has an eye for interesting art, including a Japanese Hiroshige woodblock print that hangs in the spare room. Jen bought it for Dan’s birthday when they lived in London. “I used to haunt the art

department at Liberty, where I found this print. It was £200, which was quite a lot, especially back then, when we didn’t have much money.”

The couple next plan to knock through the bathroom wall into the outside laundry, not only to provide better access to the washing machine, but also to give them a bigger bathroom. They’d also like to convert the garage into a dedicated office space. After that, who knows?

“We love living here but realise we will eventually outgrow it. The plan is to one day move down to Arrowtown, which is really our happy place.” **H**





**OUTDOOR LIVING** The back garden is a suntrap where the little family spend as much time as they can.





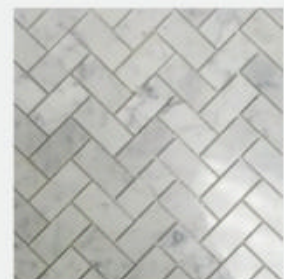


BACKYARD Jen's parents gifted the wooden swing to Madeleine last Christmas and had it engraved with her name.

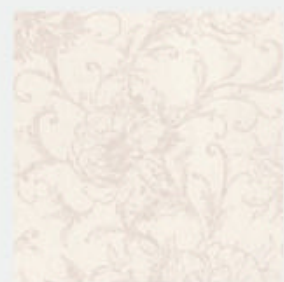
## FINISHING TOUCH



Resene Rickshaw, from Resene ColorShop.



Carrara white herringbone tiles, from Tile Space.



Resene Amiata Wallpaper Collection #296302, from Resene ColorShop.



Velluto wool carpet in cottage stone, from Bremworth.

## Jen's decorating tips

- Get inspired by trends but always follow your gut and go with items you love and that bring you joy.
- Create a mood board to make sure tones, textures and the overall colour palette work together.
- For wallpaper, always get a sample before you make a big purchase. I had one wallpaper disaster, which I had to paint over because the colours were so different in reality than online – in that case I didn't get a sample first.



1



## Swipe the style

# A TOUCH OF LUXE

*Invest in comfortable, understated glamour.*

2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



The sheepskin-covered chair was bought from an Auckland interior designer and once sat in Jen's former bridal store.



1 Brianna burnished brass pendant light, \$2518.50 from The Lighting Centre. 2 Two-slice toaster in pink, \$42 from Kmart. 3 Langham dining chair, \$359 from Freedom. 4 West Elm Trellis Shine rug in frost grey, \$999 from Ballantynes. 5 Marcello & Co Cleo sofa in gold, \$1999 from Farmers. 6 Arlec mushroom night light in grey, \$20 from Bunnings. 7 Paffoni Ringo kitchen sink mixer, \$635.73 from Mico. 8 Ethnicraft Bok dining table, \$1995 from Cuchi. 9 West Elm Classic linen cushion in adobe rose, \$89 from Ballantynes. 10 Moriyama sideboard in walnut, \$2695 from Stacks Furniture.







# SLOW HAND



*In a lush pocket of Auckland, two downsizers took their time to create a home inspired by its bushclad section, sea views and two unforgettable works of art.*

**PHOTOGRAPHY** HELEN BANKERS **WRITTEN BY** SHARON STEPHENSON





**B**uilding your dream house requires imagination, passion and patience. None of which was lacking when Auckland couple Kirsten van Kessel and James Jackson found their beachfront section in Titirangi.

It's easy to see the attraction: views that arc across Paturoa Bay and the Manukau Harbour, a quiet cul-de-sac and ample room to put their stamp on land that was once home to an old fishing cottage.

"The cottage was built in 1925 and was in such a bad way that it was condemned by the council as being unsafe and unsanitary," recalls James, a lawyer.

But the couple had been casting about for a section for two years and knew they didn't come up often in the area. So when the property came on the market in 2014, they jumped at the chance to buy it. (They weren't the only ones to appreciate its location – an episode

of *Shortland Street* was filmed there a year later.)

It helped that back then the couple lived 500m up the road in a house James had built in 1984. And that they were content to bide their time – they were in no hurry to demolish the cottage and start building.

"We're a blended family of four daughters and we promised the girls we wouldn't sell the family home until the last daughter left school," says Kirsten, a clinical psychologist. "That happened four years after we bought the cottage, which gave us ample time to really think about what we wanted in a house."

Their brief to architect Richard Priest, a friend of James's, was simple: two bedrooms, low maintenance and a design that maximised views and sun.

"Our previous home was on one acre, had six bedrooms and was 360sqm, which was too big for the two of us," Kirsten says. "We wanted to downsize to a 160sqm house." →





**LIVING ROOM** The wooden ceilings above the living room – and throughout the rest of the house – were chosen for their warmth and texture.

**DECK (facing page)** This is the best spot to catch spectacular sunsets.





They were also clear about the look and feel they wanted: simple, clean lines that reflected Kirsten's European heritage (she was born in Germany and raised in the Netherlands).

While the couple worked with Richard to refine their plans, they weren't idle – they planted hedging around the perimeter of the 1400sqm section and an orchard of fruit and citrus trees.

Demolition of the cottage began in late 2017, construction started six months later and the couple finally moved in just before Christmas 2019.

They opted for a combination of kauri (including the interior ceilings) and glazed grey bricks for the build – James even visited the brick maker in Australia to select the right bricks. Neutral Jura stone floor tiles, which contain fossilised remains, were laid throughout the top floor. The tiles originate from the south of Germany, close to where Kirsten was born. →





LIVING ROOM James and Kirsten with their Doberman sidekick, Bruna. The tan leather chair under the Arco floor lamp is an original 1960s Artifort design by Pierre Paulin, which Kirsten's parents brought out from Europe.











**OUTDOOR LIVING**  
The courtyard was on the couple's non-negotiable list and was designed to be sheltered from the prevailing winds. The tabletop is the same stone used for the kitchen benchtops, and James designed the wooden legs.







**MAIN BEDROOM** The couple love the bright colours of their kōwhai painting, by artist friend Dean Buchanan.

**BATHROOMS** The ensuite bathroom's grey basalt wall tiles were inspired by paving stones the couple saw in Sydney. They contrast with paler stone tiles used elsewhere in the house.



On the ground floor is the garage and James's extensive workshop, while the top floor sits under three pavilion roofs – one for the main bedroom, one for the guest bedroom, laundry and snug, and another for the kitchen/living area.

The latter is a light-filled open-plan space that faces the expansive sea views. The couple opted for a galley-style kitchen with access to an internal courtyard where James cooks dinner on the barbecue most nights.

"We added a pull-down awning so I can cook no matter what the weather," he says. "And depending on the season, we have three spaces where we can eat – the front deck, overlooking the water, the courtyard or the dining room."

Only a few pieces from their previous home made it into this space. A Scandi-style dining table is from Auckland furniture designer Terry Neale, while the →







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**Their brief to architect Richard Priest was simple: two bedrooms, low-maintenance and a design that maximised views and sun.**

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**EXTERIOR** The mid-century modern chairs and table on the deck are original Danske Mobler pieces from the early 1960s, which the couple found on Trade Me and reupholstered themselves. The front door is hewn from solid oak.

chairs were imported from Japan. “We were in Sydney and spotted the chairs in a shop,” recalls Kirsten. “James tracked down the furniture maker in Osaka and we bought directly from him.”

Ditto the bar stools, which were handcrafted by the same furniture maker.

James made a Noguchi-style coffee table using a kauri base and a glass top made by a glassmaker friend. Although inspired by the classic Japanese furniture, James made it almost twice as large.

They also started buying furniture and appliances on sale before the house was finished, storing them in a shed on the property. That included hallway lights that were also spotted on a trip to Australia.







“They’re made from old fishing traps, so are a nod to the origins of the old fishing cottage that once stood here,” says Kirsten.


Although they didn’t have much experience with interior design, they decided to tackle the task themselves. The colour palette was based on a piece of ceramic art they spotted at an exhibition at Titirangi’s Lopdell House in 2015. The soft grey, blue and sand shade of the ceramic, by artist Penny Ericson, inspired the finishes, including the textured vinyl wallpaper that runs throughout the house.

A large painting by artist Kate Williamson of Dunedin’s mudflats also inspired the colour scheme. “I was in Dunedin for work and spotted this piece,”

says Kirsten. “It looks exactly like the mudflats outside our window at low tide.”

Down the hallway is a snug, to which the couple retreat to watch TV. A wooden console here is by Terry Neale while a colourful artwork is one of several they own by artist Dean Buchanan, a friend of James’s.

In the main bedroom, the ensuite was designed so that the couple can sit in the bath and enjoy unimpeded views out to the water.

Having taken such care and time to get the details right – and the bigger picture – they’re now intent on enjoying their home. “We love living here and having our children and their partners over,” James says. “For now, it’s the perfect house for us.” 

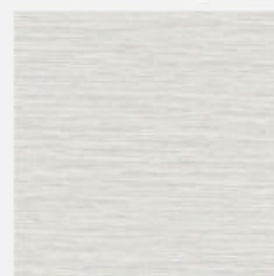




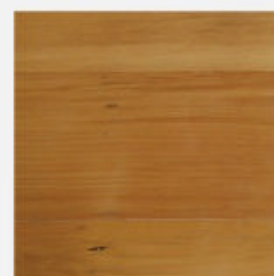
## Building tips

- Get a feel for the environment and landscape, including the sun and light at various times of the year. Understand the direction of the prevailing winds.
- Invest in a good builder and professional services where possible, such as an architect.
- Think about the overall look and feel you're after when considering the house design and your choice of interior finishes.

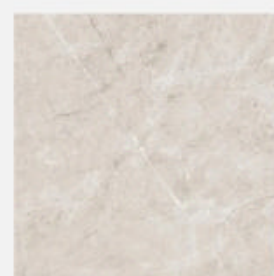
## FINISHING TOUCH



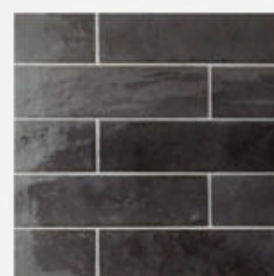
Resene Sanctuary wallpaper collection FJ40103, from Resene ColorShop.



Recycled kauri floorboards, from Kauri Warehouse.



Venice matt porcelain tile in beige, from The Tile Depot.



Glenbrook slim subway gloss tile in charcoal, from TileHaus.

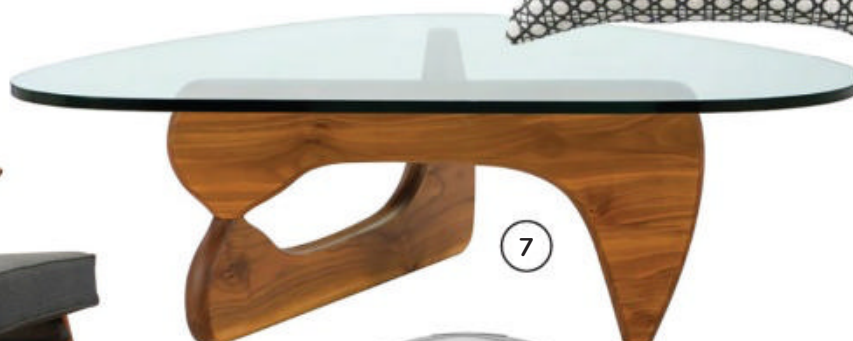
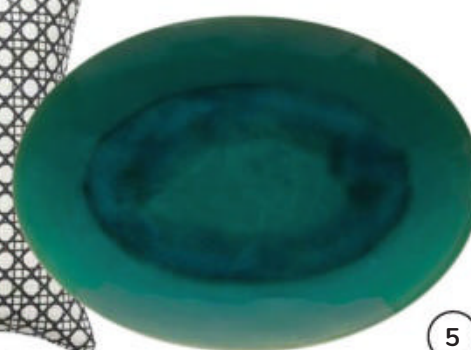




*Swipe the style*

# MODERN COASTAL

*Be inspired by Kiwi and international design classics.*



1 Kina light shade in bamboo, starts at \$526.70 from David Trubridge. 2 Pīwakawaka by Dean Buchanan, \$4800 from Black Door Gallery. 3 Artisan Mini stand mixer in matt black, \$599 from KitchenAid. 4 Warwick Rattan cushion in onyx, \$125 from Bolt of Cloth. 5 Riviera oval platter, \$120 from Bob & Friends. 6 Vintage Fler Rocket armchair, \$3450 for pair from Mr Bigglesworthy. 7 Replica Noguchi coffee table in walnut, \$1999 from Nood. 8 Weber Q2000 barbecue in black, \$569 from Mitre 10. 9 Seattle oak bedside table, \$583 from Oak Furniture Store & Sofas.







# TRANSFORM

## Whakahuri

*It's all about the hub of the home this month. From a smart Wellington makeover to the latest in lighting and colour, we serve up the best in kitchen styles. Plus, our interior designer names her favourite Kiwi craftspeople.*

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**STARTING OVER**  
*page 80*

**LIGHT THE WAY**  
*page 88*

**COOK UP COLOUR**  
*page 90*

**KIWI HEROES**  
*page 94*

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**Kitchen special**



# KITCHEN MAKEOVER

**PHOTOGRAPHY** BONNY BEATTIE **TEXT** VANESSA MARSHALL



BEFORE



*A designer's touch transforms a dark, poky Wellington kitchen into a functional sanctuary of light and space.*

When interior designer Frances Fraser first cast her eye over the kitchen of the 1920s Miramar bungalow belonging to her clients Dervela and Stu, she knew she had her work cut out for her.

"It was dark and utilitarian with poor cabinetry and very little concealed storage," she says. "It looked cluttered no matter how tidy it was."

Fast forward two years, several lockdowns and countless weekends interrupted by the dust of building work, the room the couple once jokingly referred to as an ugly duckling is now a picture of style and elegance.

"The biggest challenges and wins can be summarised with two words: 'light' and 'layout'," says Frances, who runs Wellington firm Honour Creative. By adding skylights and flipping the orientation, she ensured the kitchen is now flooded with natural light and flows beautifully. The stunning results show how careful planning, perseverance and good communication between client and designer can achieve happy results.

"Dervela has a defined sense of style and design taste, which gave us the opportunity to hinge on the aesthetics of the space just as much as the functionality. The kitchen is now a special space for her family to be in and is a true fit for the home's character and charm." →





**NOTE  
TO SHELF**

Purposefully placed on the corner of a block of cabinetry, the tall, open shelving faces the dining area and has a softer appearance than a bank of high cabinets.



BEFORE



The brief was to fit a kitchen, laundry and dining area into the modest 21sqm space (above), while allowing for a comfortable flow with other parts of the home.



### Let there be light

Thanks to three fabulous skylights, natural light streams into a previously dark room. By removing one small window and reducing the sill height of another, Frances created a galley-style kitchen with a benchtop that extends along the length of the outer wall. The design comfortably fits a long workbench, storage cabinets, kitchen appliance staples and a concealed laundry unit, and no corner is wasted. The soft wall colour is fresh while also being calm and glare-free.

### Ground zero

Warm caramel and honey-coloured timber flooring was laid throughout the kitchen and living areas. Frances chose a lightly brushed European oak engineered timber plank with an extra-matt finish, which means it's easy to maintain and looks raw and natural. It's supplemented with a beautifully textured rug, which creates a defined, comfortable zone within the open space. →



## Hide & soak

The laundry-in-a-cupboard is easily accessed when in use but can be shut away at other times. The washing machine and dryer had previously been tucked into a small bathroom – Frances wanted to create space for them in the kitchen while ensuring the unit's design integrated with the rest of the cabinetry.





### FLASH FINISH

Meile appliances and Blum hardware add an air of quality without being flashy or gimmicky. Dervela and Stu were committed to finishing off the whole kitchen before running out of steam and budget.



This nifty cupboard fits a washing machine and ventless dryer, with plenty of room for two laundry baskets, an ironing board, mop and vacuum cleaner, and extra shelving.



### Light touch

A feature pendant hangs low over the dining table to help create an intimate space within the open-plan area. Recessed lights sit in a balanced way around the skylight openings. They are complemented by an under-cabinet LED strip for extra task lighting.

### Make a splash

The kitchen layout allowed for a streamlined rectangular splashback, which is made from scalloped marble tiles that are full of variation in colour and pattern. The benchtop is intentionally plain and neutral against the coloured cabinetry and feature tiles.

### Colour story

The overall colour and materials palette is refreshing and achieves a balance of pretty and smart. Simple sage and grey cabinetry is teamed with warm timber tones used on the floor, furniture and joinery details, and organic hues in the marble splashback tiles. **H**



# Renovation 101

## DESIGN & LAYOUT

- Stick to the rules of the classic triangular layout, with sink, fridge and oven making up the three points. Factor in space to move between them – and don't forget to leave room for the dishwasher!
- When choosing an island, remember: form follows function. Add a sink or dishwasher if space elsewhere is limited, but if you include a cooktop, allow enough space to eat comfortably.

## STORAGE & ORGANISATION

- Organise pantry staples in order of high rotation and within easy reach. If you have small children, consider adding a pull-out stool - Blum's Space Step is genius for cooking or baking with little ones.
- Include space for rubbish and recycling to make sorting easy. Consider cupboards for glass and plastic containers and an extra drawer for recycled paper.

## FINISHINGS

- Choose one standout feature – statement tiles, a marble splashback, coloured cabinetry – and keep the rest of the details neutral and calm.
- Equip splashbacks and islands with plenty of power points for small appliances, and consider adding additional USB ports.

## APPLIANCES

- Unless they are particularly good-looking, hide smaller appliances in a specially made cupboard to cut down on clutter and mess.
- Give cooking appliances a wide berth to allow space for cooking and meal prep. The rule of thumb is 40cm of space on each side of a cooktop and refrigerator.



### CURVE APPEAL

There's something welcoming about a round table – and here it softens a linear look.

## NEW KITCHEN CHECKLIST

- ☐ Natural light
- ☐ Task lighting
- ☐ Butler's pantry
- ☐ Island counter
- ☐ Rangehood
- ☐ Splashback
- ☐ Benchtops
- ☐ New cabinetry
- ☐ Doors and handles
- ☐ Double or single sink
- ☐ Drawers or pull-outs

## CASE STUDY SPECS

**Skylight** Velux. **Light fittings** Astro lighting from ECC. **Floor** Moda Portofino, from Forté Flooring. **Rug** Armadillo, from The Ivy House. **Open shelving** Custom designed by Honour Creative and made by Prestige Joinery. **Splashback** Carrara Fishscale Mosaic, from Tile Space. **Benchtop** Caesarstone Pure White. **Appliances** Meile. **Hardware** Blum. **Blinds** Russells.



# Kitchen wishlist

*From a quick kitchenware refresh to a major update, here’s our most-wanted list.*



**PRESSING MATTERS** Stelton French press coffee maker in white, \$149 from Father Rabbit. Douro coffee press in white porcelain, \$199.90 from Bodum. Barista & Co Corral coffee plunger, \$125 from Chef’s Complements. Cinemon Barista stainless steel coffee press in matt black, \$69.99 from Waiheke Bean.



**TOASTERS OF THE TOWN** Morphy Richards Verve toaster in white, \$79.99 from The Market. KitchenAid Design toaster in almond cream, \$218.99 from Briscoes. Dualit Classic toaster in eucalyptus, \$499 from Milly’s. Alessi Plisse toaster in black, \$289.99 from Askew.



**POTS OF GOLD** La Cuisine casserole pot in white, \$285 from Father Rabbit. Le Creuset Signature casserole pot in meringue, POA from Le Creuset Boutique. Classic Dutch oven in pink sand, \$359 from Crumble. Blacklock Dutch oven, \$439 from Lodge Cast Iron.



**COOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE** Fisher & Paykel freestanding dual-fuel cooker, \$7497 from Heathcotes. Smeg seven-burner dual-fuel freestanding oven, \$11,999 from Smeg. Parmco freestanding oven with gas cooktop, \$2049 from 100% Magnus Benrow. Miele Pureline pyrolytic Cleansteel oven, \$2999 from Miele.





## STATEMENT PENDANTS

Much like a striking piece of jewellery (they are called “pendants”, after all) or a beautiful work of art, pendant lights make an instant style statement and tend to get a lot of attention. For this reason alone it’s important to pick the right size, shape and position when hanging your light fittings. Oversized single lights add drama and warmth over a kitchen table, while clusters of three or more will give broader cover for an island counter, where good light is important when preparing and serving meals. Mix and match to work with your home’s design aesthetic.

# BRIGHT SPARK

*Lighting is a key yet often overlooked element in kitchen design. The right solutions can bring your space to life.*

Nigella Lawson once said “Glamour really has to do with good lighting, doesn’t it?” Considering the celebrated chef knows a thing or two about kitchens, the same could be said for what type of lighting to choose when considering a major kitchen renovation or a more straightforward upgrade. But with so many choices on offer, how do we decide between a downlight and a sconce? Are pendant lights as good as lineal? Is strip lighting tacky or sophisticated? No longer an afterthought, good lighting can elevate the mood of a space with the literal flick of a switch. Whether your home is modern and minimal or earthy and rustic, read on to find out all the ways you can illuminate the hard-working rooms where you cook and dine.



### TOP TIP

For a serene look, pair white cabinetry with white light fittings and bulbs – and then play with different colours via your decor.



## LINEAL LIGHTS

If pendant lights are the star performers in a dining room, lineals are the reliable supporting cast members of any well-designed kitchen. Sleek and polished, they enhance streamlined modern design with neat lines, and provide an even flow of light. A line of LED lights covers a wider expanse than a spotlight or pendant, making them the perfect choice for task lighting. As well as being easy to install and low maintenance, lineals can be used to highlight shelves and cabinets.

## STRIP LIGHTS

Functional and fun, LED strip lighting is all about mood and atmosphere. As they're discreetly tucked away under counters and shelves, most new kitchen builds include them. Whether you install them yourself or use a specialist lighting installer, consider adding colour options (often adjustable via remote control). Warm colours such as orange and red are said to be generally good for appetite; cool blues and greens make for a tranquil vibe. For everyday needs you can't go wrong with white.

*Get the look*



Mele squat pendant in ash wood and opal glass, \$339.90 from Lighting Direct.



Berlin brass pendant, \$269 from Mr Ralph.



Enzo LED lineal suspension lamp, starting at \$859 from Mr Ralph.



Mr Ted glass pendant, \$299 from Mr Ralph.



Larvik pendant in matt black, \$299 from Lighting Plus.



In this fresh space by Nobbs Radford Architects, Resene Quarter Rice Cake on the walls and ceiling in the living area contrasts dramatically with Resene Armadillo above the kitchen.

# Colour my kitchen

*Calming neutrals, rustic elegance or whisky-den noir – here's how to whip up the perfect palette for this busy space.*

The days are (blessedly) long gone when the cook was banished to a secluded room to prepare meals. Kitchens are a deserved focal point of the modern home, whether you're feeding the family or entertaining.

Enter the statement kitchen. Whether yours is farmhouse-cosy, city-slick or somewhere in between, creative use of colour and wood finishes can set the perfect tone for this hard-working hub. Here, we deconstruct the colourways of four showstoppers.





## Into the woods

This creamy, dreamy kitchen (below) achieves rustic elegance with its trio of pale shades. A warm palette of Resene Quarter Villa White on the ceiling and Resene Spanish White on the walls is enhanced by oak cabinetry finished with Resene Colorwood Whitewash. Unlike a stain, Resene Colorwood Whitewash isn't absorbed into timber but coats the top of it, lightening and enhancing the surface. **TOP TIP** • Remember the "sixth wall" – the floor. Rejuvenate the colour in wooden flooring with a wood stain or lighten it with whitewash or greywash.

Resene Armadillo



Resene Quarter Rice Cake



Resene Spanish White



## Neutral wonder

If you pair the right neutrals, not only will you create a soothing tone but your space will also have a strong presence. In this reno (above), the contrast of Resene Quarter Rice Cake on the living room walls and ceiling and Resene Armadillo on the kitchen ceiling draws attention to feature lines and subtly delineates the areas. **TOP TIP** • Play with light in a space by choosing neutrals in contrasting colours. Use pale colours to amplify natural light, then create depth and solidity with darker shades.



Lightness abounds in this kitchen by Stephen Cashmore, with cabinetry in Resene Colorwood Whitewash, walls in Resene Spanish White and the ceiling in Resene Quarter Villa White.



Painting one or two small areas in a bold shade is a fun way to embrace a colour you love.



## Top of the pops

The use of Resene Colorwood wood stain in Resene Rock Salt on the ply-lined cabinetry in this kitchen by Studio of Pacific Architecture allows the beauty of the grain to show through and creates the perfect blinding effect, while Resene Aquaclear urethane protects it from water damage. Pops of Resene Wasabi add punch. **TOP TIP** • Painting just one or two small areas in your kitchen in a bold shade is a fun way to embrace a colour you love without being overwhelmed by it, and can be easily and inexpensively updated when you're ready for a change.



PHOTOGRAPHY KATHERINE LU, JULIET NICHOLAS, TERRY HANN, JAMIE WRIGHT





In this stunner, a dramatic scene is set by Resene Jurassic on the cabinetry and Resene Element on the ceiling.



## Dark materials

Layered shadows and a cosy whisky den vibe inspired this moody look by Cambridge firm Designmarked. To make the ceiling appear to recede, it was painted in Resene Element. The kitchen then got an injection of noir glamour with dark oak features teamed with cupboards painted in sophisticated dark green Resene Jurassic. The cupboards were coated with Resene AquaLAQ, a waterborne coating designed especially for preparing MDF.

**TOP TIP** • When choosing cabinetry, be aware that acrylics and laminates come in limited colour ranges. If you instead get your cupboards painted or stained, you can have any shade your heart desires.

*For more colour ideas and inspiration visit your local Resene ColorShop or use the free Resene Ask a Colour Expert service, [resene.co.nz/colourexpert](https://resene.co.nz/colourexpert).*





*Mary-Ellen Hinton*

HELLO SATURDAY INTERIOR DESIGN

# *Designer's guide to* NZ-MADE

With the borders closed over the past couple of years, it's been amazing to see Kiwis embracing the special things we have right here in Aotearoa. Instead of heading offshore, New Zealanders have turned their attention inwards to explore all that's on offer in our own backyard – from taking advantage of our native bush or visiting the best beaches (and we have a few!) to appreciating the little things in our bigger cities.

This is also the case with New Zealand-made products. From the day I started Hello Saturday, I've wanted to support local businesses where possible. And with freight prices increasing astronomically, plus delivery delays to contend with, shopping close to home has never looked better.

Now more than ever, you need to consider where you purchase products from. I've always been a firm believer in buying quality over quantity. Most Kiwi brands offer original, bespoke pieces that are handmade and designed to last a lifetime. Yes, New Zealand-made might cost more, but isn't it better to save for the ideal piece that will last a lifetime, rather than buy something cheap that will become landfill in a few years? You'll never regret investing in quality.

Buying a New Zealand-made product also benefits everyone involved in making it. They say that every time you buy something from a New Zealand company the owner does a happy dance, and I think that's absolutely true! As a designer, I encourage my clients to think past the initial cost of items made in New Zealand and look at the overall satisfaction you'll get from the quality of the items, the story they tell, and the fact you're supporting a local business.

Custom-made dining table by Woodwrights







Quilty modular sofa by Forma

## FURNITURE

There are hundreds of furniture makers right across the country, with new ones popping up every month. The art of furniture-making is often passed down through generations, often within family businesses that have interesting stories and humble beginnings going back several generations. If you're looking for a new sofa, bed, sideboard, desk or occasional chair, why not find a New Zealand company that makes the products right here? Plus, when you buy locally made furniture, it's often customisable, so not only can you change the size, but you often have the opportunity to choose the fabric, the timber, the colour and the finish. Interior designers love custom-made, because it

means we can get exactly what we want for a project.

- If you're a regular reader of this column, you might have guessed that one of my favourite Kiwi furniture makers is Kovacs, a family-owned business whose tagline is "true artisan furniture made by hand and known by heart". Based in Christchurch, the company has been creating luxury furniture since 1958 and its pieces are super comfy and built to last.
- Another top pick is Woodwrights, based in Motueka, which creates beautiful handcrafted wooden furniture. It was established in 1997 by Adrian Trewavas, after he found the majority of furniture on offer in New Zealand was mass-produced, uninspiring and literally wouldn't hold up.
- Forma is a medium to high-end furniture manufacturer based in Auckland. Matt Smidt, Forma's creative director, believes what's on the inside is just as important as the aesthetics, so the company's ethos is to start with great construction. Forma says that with every product you buy, you're supporting 87 additional New Zealand businesses. →



Spyder chair by Kovacs





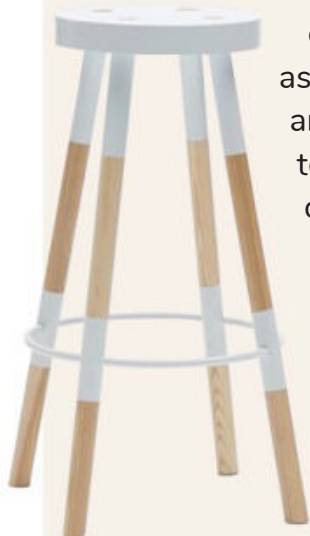
Petley Balanced Lamp by Monmouth

## GLASS

Like many traditional art forms, hand-blown glass is enjoying a well-deserved resurgence.

- Monmouth Glass Studio is a traditional glass manufacturer based in Tāmaki Makaurau. Their craftspeople produce a range of unique, hand-blown glass lighting and homeware that is well designed, well made and will stand the test of time. Their glass is hand-blown at their Grey Lynn studio in the traditional free-blown method, which uses no moulds. This makes each piece individual and gives a genuine handmade aesthetic. It also means they can easily customise a design to suit your space.

Y Stool by Tim Webber



## DESIGNERS

We're a country of clever creatives, and this is no different when it comes to making cool decor. New

Zealand has some truly exciting designers, such as Tim Webber, Snelling, and Simon James, to name a few. These designers have embraced the ethos of handcrafted and bespoke to create unique designs.

- One of my favourite local designers is Aucklander Tim

Webber. His furniture, lighting and homeware collection has a simplistic beauty to it, while maintaining a focus on functionality and carefully considered details.

- Formally known as Douglas and Bec, Snelling specialises in lighting, furniture and other objects. Established in 2007 as a father and daughter collaboration, Snelling makes gorgeous pieces that draw on the talents of skilled local craftspeople, using both traditional and contemporary manufacturing techniques.

## CERAMICS

New Zealand has a long history of great potters, and recent lockdowns have prompted a resurgence in the art form. Kiwis are taking a step back and taking the time to enjoy new creative hobbies. In fact, it's almost impossible to get into a pottery class these days!

- One boutique studio offering gorgeous contemporary ceramics is Claybird. It was founded by Yon Kavvas, who has a background in archaeology and a love for mud and the treasures that can be found within it.
- Susan Christie of Formantics creates playful ceramic works that are a celebration of colour, pattern and unique forms.



Beach Pools by Claybird



## BRASS

When it comes to working with metals, two Kiwi brands stand out to me.

- Joska & Sons is a furniture design company formed in 2013 by Joska Easterbrook. Inspired first by materials, he is a tactile designer, and his products often come from experimentation rather than drawings. In his own words, his approach is “a practical one that comes from a lifelong appreciation of things made well rather than any intellectual theory. I like making things for a purpose and I love the process of tinkering, refining and sourcing.”

- Led by Todd Stevenson, Powersurge creates bespoke metal works for homes and commercial spaces. They say their work “bridges engineering and art”. Designed and constructed at their studio and workshop in West Auckland, their pieces can be seen across the city.

Fall coffee table  
by Powersurge



Code Charlie Tango pendant light by Nightworks



## LIGHTING

Aotearoa has some fantastic New Zealand-made lighting, and I think we'll start to see more and more boutique lighting suppliers popping up around the country.

- Based in Christchurch, Kiwi lighting company Nightworks is the baby of husband and wife team Ben and Kiri Wahrlich. They started out in Sydney in 2008 with an award-winning studio called Anaesthetic and, after lighting up the world with their creations, returned to New Zealand in 2017 to create a brand that reflected the modern Kiwi lifestyle. Their beautifully designed boutique collection focuses on quality materials such as hand-blown glass and solid brass.

- Most New Zealanders know the name David Trubridge. He's not only one of the country's pre-eminent designers – a world-class auteur of lighting – but also a recognised leader in environmentally responsible design. Countless influential international publications have featured his iconic creations, which grace public spaces and homes throughout the country. His range of sculptural lighting is inspired by nature's patterns and formations – clouds, kina, snowflakes, the classic coral... The designs work equally well as a single attention-grabber in a room, and as harmonious clusters of shapes, sizes and colours. **H**

[hellosaturday.co.nz](http://hellosaturday.co.nz)



Tūi lights by David Trubridge



Resene  
Quarter Tea

26

Resene  
Black White



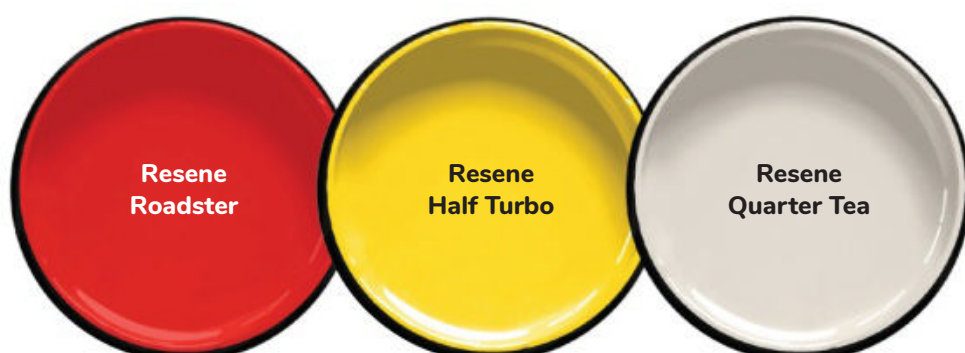


Resene  
Rice Cake



## A fiesta of colour

It was a holiday to Central America that inspired Wellingtonian Tracy Millar to transform the front porch of her Brooklyn villa. "During our trip to Mexico, we fell in love with all the beautiful painted churches and buildings and decided to paint the outside red," she says of her decision to choose bold Resene Roadster for the door. This love for Mexican design – think bright hues, vibrant flowers and striking patterns – didn't stop there. When it came to the inside, the previously green door was brought to life with a splash of sunny Resene Half Turbo. "After repainting the hall, we thought why not paint the inside yellow?" she says. "We were a bit dubious about having two different colours but now we love it. Whether we are coming or going, every day the colour makes us so happy." Viva la Mexico!



PHOTOGRAPHY PETA MAZEY



**Resene**

## MY COLOURFUL DOOR COMPETITION

*Do you know how to  
make an entrance?  
If you have a Resene-painted  
door that pops, enter  
our competition and be in  
to win a fab Resene prize.*

### WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

- Colourful interior or exterior doors
- Unique colour combinations
- Doors that stand out

### HOW TO ENTER

Email your photos and a short description of your door to [hello@havenmagazine.co.nz](mailto:hello@havenmagazine.co.nz) with "Resene My Colourful Door" in the subject line. Please include your name, home address, daytime phone number, the names of the Resene colours used, and details of when your door was painted and why you chose those colours. The winner will appear in a future issue of *Haven*, and will receive a \$500 Resene ColorShop voucher to spend on their choice of Resene quality paints, wood stains, primers/sealers or decorating accessories at their local Resene ColorShop, plus the latest Resene colour fandecks and a Resene Colour Expert to help them choose the right colour scheme to suit their home and lifestyle.

**Resene**

the paint the professionals use

**Terms and conditions** Instructions on how to enter are part of the conditions of entry. The competition is open to New Zealand residents, except employees of School Road Publishing, Resene and their immediate families and agencies. The winner will be notified by telephone and/or email.







# EAT *Kaingia*

*Stock the larder for the cooler months with Nici Wickes' favourite preserves – but don't despair, there's still enough sunshine left for a light picnic lunch with a duo of recipes by Julie Pointer Adams.*

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**BOTTLE IT UP**  
*page 102*

**PICNIC PAIRING**  
*page 110*

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PHOTOGRAPHY TODD EYRE, JULIE POINTER ADAMS







**Sweet chilli  
sauce**  
page 106

**Hot & sour  
cucumber**  
page 105





*Nici Wickes*

# IN A PICKLE!

*I'll tell you a secret... I never want to make preserves and sauces and such but, like with exercise, the rewards come later and they're totally worth it! Enjoying a crunchy pickle or a flavourful sauce that you've made yourself is ALWAYS worth it – so go for it!*

**Turmeric  
vegetable  
pickle**

page 105

**RECIPES & STYLING** NICI WICKES  
**PHOTOGRAPHY** TODD EYRE





#### NICI'S NOTE

A food processor can be used to chop the veges, but don't go too fine – it's meant to be a chunky pickle.



## Turmeric vegetable pickle

*This pickle is so versatile – you can make it using almost any veges you have surplus of. **Makes 4 medium jars***

6 cups chopped vegetables – can use cauliflower, courgette, broccoli, fennel, green beans  
2-3 green or red chillies, deseeded and diced  
3 medium onions, diced  
¼ cup salt  
4 tablespoons cooking oil  
2 heaped tablespoons mustard seeds  
2 tablespoons ground cumin  
2 tablespoons turmeric  
2 tablespoons English mustard powder  
4 tablespoons plain flour  
500ml white wine vinegar  
½ cup water  
2 apples, grated  
6 tablespoons sugar  
3 cloves garlic, crushed  
2 large bay leaves

**1** Put all the vegetables (including chillies and onions) in a bowl. Add the salt and enough water to cover. Leave in a cool place for about 1 hour.

**2** Heat oil in a large pot and fry the mustard seeds, cumin and turmeric until the seeds start popping. Reduce the heat and add the mustard powder, flour and a splash of the vinegar. Stir until you have a thick paste, then gradually add the remaining vinegar and the water, stirring to a smooth paste. Add the apples, sugar, garlic and bay leaves. Cook for 3-4 minutes.

**3** Drain the salted vegetables and add them to the sauce, stirring to coat. Cook on low to medium until the vegetables have just softened and started to release some juice – about 15 minutes.

**4** Spoon into sterilised jars and seal tightly with lids. Leave to cool and store in a dark cupboard.

**5** It's best to leave your pickle for at least 3 weeks for the full flavour to develop, then enjoy it with meats, toasted sandwiches, or cheese and crackers!



## Hot & sour cucumber

*Pickled cucumber is just the thing to cut through a deliciously rich dish such as pork belly.*

**Makes 3-5 jars**

3 telegraph or regular cucumbers  
2 small onions  
2 teaspoons salt  
2 red chillies, halved lengthwise and deseeded  
2 teaspoons mustard seeds  
½ teaspoon ground turmeric  
2 star anise pods  
½ cup caster sugar  
200ml apple cider vinegar

**1** Split cucumbers in half lengthways and cut into lengths to fit your jars. Using a sharp knife, mandoline or vegetable peeler, cut each half into thin strips. Peel and finely slice the onions. Place cucumbers and onions in a colander, sprinkle salt over top, and leave to sit for 1 hour. Drain and pack vegetables into sterilised jars along with chilli, mustard seeds, turmeric and star anise.

**2** Combine sugar and vinegar and bring to the boil. Stir until the sugar dissolves. Pour the liquid over the vegetables, dividing it evenly between jars. Top each jar up to overflowing with boiling water. Seal and leave for at least 24 hours.

**3** Store in a cool, dark cupboard.





## Sweet chilli sauce

*If you're a fan of store-bought sweet chilli sauce, you're going to love this homemade sauce! It's sweet, tangy and goes with everything.*

**Makes 2 x 200ml bottles**

250ml rice wine vinegar

250ml water

220g caster sugar

75g fresh red chillies (about 4-6),  
deseeded and chopped finely

4 garlic cloves, grated

3 teaspoons grated ginger

3 teaspoons soy sauce

6 teaspoons cornflour dissolved  
in 2 tablespoons water

**1** Place all ingredients except the cornflour in a saucepan and bring to a boil, stirring regularly. Reduce the heat and simmer for 3-5 minutes. Stir in the cornflour paste and keep stirring continually until thickened, about 1-2 minutes.

**2** Pour into sterilised bottles or jars, seal and allow to cool. Store in a cool, dark cupboard.

**3** Eat with noodles, stir-fried dishes or hot chips!











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**A few kilos of tomatoes made into pasta sauce now  
can see you through many a dark winter's night.**

---

### **Knockout pasta sauce**

*This recipe is for anyone who (a) has too many tomatoes in the garden, (b) loves the taste of summer in winter, or (c) adores pizza and/or pasta for dinner. So, pretty much everyone then! A few kilos of tomatoes made into pasta sauce now can see you through many a dark winter's night.*

**Makes about 5 cups**

A splash of olive oil  
2 medium onions, roughly chopped  
4 cloves garlic, crushed  
2-3kg ripe tomatoes, roughly chopped  
Small handful fresh herbs – basil, oregano, thyme  
Chopped courgette, capsicum and/or celery (optional)  
1-2 teaspoons sea salt  
½ teaspoon black pepper

**1** Heat a splash of olive oil in a large pan, pot or wok. Add all the ingredients and let it simmer for an hour, covered. Uncover, add another splash of olive oil and simmer until thickened (about 30-45 more minutes). If you like a smooth sauce, blend with a stick blender or use a food processor. I blend to a chunky sauce.

**2** Transfer to containers or ziplock bags and freeze.

**3** When ready to use, thaw, heat, add your favourite pasta shape, and eat!

**NICI'S NOTE** • I've learnt to freeze this in manageable portion sizes rather than large blocks that take ages to defrost.







# *Eating out*

*For a perfect picnicking duo, pair a nourishing frittata with a zingy salad.*

**RECIPES & PHOTOGRAPHY** JULIE POINTER ADAMS



## Rosemary, mushroom, and potato frittata

*A frittata is one of my go-to dishes for gatherings or a quick meal. It is easy to make and can be eaten at any time of day, and you can fill it with anything you wish! This one has been a favourite for years because of its heartiness and the mix of sweet and savoury flavours. I make a simple green salad to serve with it when I'm feeling fancy. Serves 4*

½ onion (sweet onion is best)  
225g small portabello or swiss brown mushrooms  
4 small golden potatoes, such as Agria  
4 large eggs (5-6 if they are smaller)  
Salt and pepper  
60ml milk (optional)  
Extra virgin olive oil  
Leaves from a couple of rosemary sprigs

**1** To prep your ingredients, thinly slice the onion and slice the mushrooms. Dice the potatoes into 6-13mm cubes.

**2** Whisk the eggs in a medium bowl and season with salt and pepper. For a fluffier frittata, add the milk (I often skip it).

**3** Heat a 23cm cast iron or other ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add a tablespoon or so of olive oil, then add the onions and slowly caramelize them.

**4** Once the onions are caramelised, add the mushrooms and sauté until tender. Season lightly with salt. Transfer the onion and mushroom mixture to a plate and set aside.

**5** Add a bit more olive oil to the pan, and once it is hot, add the potatoes. From here, you can add up to 120ml of water, a little at a time, and keep the pan covered until the potatoes are tender throughout. Uncover, then add the rosemary and some salt to taste and allow the potatoes to brown on at least one side.

**6** Preheat the broiler. Add the mushroom and onion mixture to the pan and stir to distribute everything evenly. Add your whisked eggs to the pan – do not stir. Cook, still over medium heat, for 5 minutes, or until the frittata is almost set. Finish your frittata under the broiler for a few minutes, until the top begins to lightly brown.

**7** Voilà! It's done. Let it cool a bit and cut into wedges to serve.



## Spring radicchio-citrus salad

*A bright and versatile salad, ideal for any outdoorsy gathering. Serves 4*

### DRESSING

60ml fresh grapefruit juice  
90ml extra virgin olive oil  
Salt and pepper

### SALAD

**1** head red radicchio or Treviso radicchio  
**3** tangerines, peeled and separated into segments  
**2** avocados, halved, pitted, and sliced into thick chunks  
**2** shallots, thinly sliced  
**110g** parmesan shavings (cut from a chunk of cheese with a vegetable peeler)  
**A large handful** of basil leaves, torn into small pieces

**1** To make the dressing, whisk together the grapefruit juice, olive oil, and salt and pepper (to taste) in a small bowl.

**2** To make the salad, cut or tear the radicchio crosswise into 3cm strips. Combine the radicchio, tangerines, avocado, shallots, parmesan shavings, and basil in a medium bowl and toss gently.

**3** To serve, drizzle the dressing over the salad and enjoy.



An edited excerpt from *Al Fresco: Inspired ideas for outdoor living* by Julie Pointer Adams (Artisan Books, distributed by Bookreps, \$79.99).







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# GROW

## Whakatipu

*Get in touch with your inner wild thing this month, with a spell in an endearing English garden that could be straight out of a magical children's tale, tips on how to let nature have its way in your backyard, and the pressing issue of preserving flowers and leaves.*

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**STORYBOOK APPEAL**  
*page 116*

**CALL OF THE REWILD**  
*page 122*

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**  
*page 126*

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# FINE ROMANCE

*A productive and pretty English garden creates an olde-worlde storybook charm.*





**PHOTOGRAPHY** DAN DUCHARS  
**WRITTEN BY** SARA BIRD

**H**aving evolved from its cottage garden origins, Nyla Abraham's collection of pretty corner patches blends her personal ideals into a truly enchanting suburban backyard.

Nyla's aim was to recreate the gardens of her childhood imagination in her suburban garden in the English city of Bath. The clever planting and styling ideas tell of her love of home-grown produce, upcycling and the romance of what might be around the next corner. It is a place of discovery and adventure for her family to enjoy.

The garden forms an L shape around Nyla's cottage, with a formal arrangement of espalier trees and trellises at the front to greet guests as they arrive. Through an arch, the main garden begins with a fine fern shrubbery established around a wall. Allowing the greenery to flow onto and blend in with the gravel has blurred the hard landscaping for a softer look.

Here, we are introduced to Nyla and her husband Paul's creative thinking. There is a handmade woodshed on the side, and around the corner a vintage miniature greenhouse and a collection of upcycled crates. Water butts are placed to collect rainwater and a bird table attracts wildlife. Reclaimed kitchen chairs and a table made from wooden pallets offer an immediate place to perch outside the house. Assorted pots are planted with herbs and succulents, →





For some things, practicality reigns over prettiness. One such area is the potting bench (left), which comprises an upcycled kitchen sink and drainer supported by a framework of recycled wooden pallets and railway sleepers and railroad ties. A compost bin is concealed between the shed and a leafy laurel tree.

FACING PAGE Nyla uses vintage pots and other containers to grow veges in the allotment, with supports made using wood prunings from a relative's garden. She recently decided to propagate most of her own plants, all of which are grown organically.

and there are built-in cupboards to house garden essentials. The handmade fencing was crafted by Paul using foraged wood. Beautiful borders adorn the lawn, but it's beyond the next archway that the real jewel of the garden can be found: the allotment.

This productive plot is the main hub of the garden, with various work stations and potting areas around the raised beds. Planting at various levels allows Nyla's young daughter to help care for the ground-loving herbs and salad leaves, as well as the climbing legumes on their willow wigwams. Deep-rooted vegetables thrive in old metal bathtubs and water tanks.

A renovated folly is used for growing on, with a

new large window to let in plenty of light. A shed to the side has had its felt roof covered with a roll of thatch screening. It houses a practical potting bench made from upcycled pallets and an old sink.

At the back of the allotment is a tiny sheltered terrace, just large enough to accommodate a vintage wicker sofa. An old chiminea is kept here for use on chillier days or evenings and feathery wisteria nods pleasantly in the breeze. Paul's tool shed can also be found here and is entered by another charming door.

The terrace looks out onto the allotment and also a dedicated outdoor dining space. Hedging and grass here are left long so that the greenery can add →









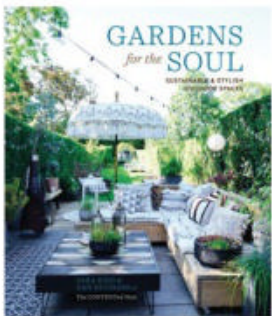
The garden is as free-spirited as its owners, and is allowed to grow as nature intended while producing food for the family.



softness, while fruit trees bring leafy cover to the area not covered by the dining table’s parasol. This rear section of the plot is a private space, a secret only shared by Nyla’s family.

Nature is everything to Nyla, and being outdoors allows her to connect with her surroundings. She especially enjoys the roofless experience of seeing the ground reach up to the sky. The garden is as free-spirited as its owners, and is allowed to grow as nature intended while producing food for the family. It represents a marriage of gardening leisure and pleasure, an opportunity to share made-in-heaven moments and priceless experiences. 

Many of the structures are the handiwork of Paul, who built the shelter (facing page) out of reclaimed wood and the shingles from an old fence panel. Painted with an eco-friendly stain, it will last for years. The wicker bench has been made snug with an old blanket and cushions.

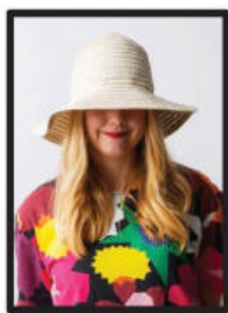


An edited extract from *Gardens for the Soul* by Sara Bird and Dan Duchars of The Contented Nest (Ryland Peters & Small, distributed by Bookreps, \$59.99).










*Rachel Clare*

# INTO THE WILD

*Tidy gardeners, put down your weed whackers and lock up your lawnmowers. It's time to let nature take over.*





Embracing a wild aesthetic means leaving leaf litter to rot on the ground and not tidying up too much, so birdlife such as the pīwakawaka (right) have a smorgasbord of insects to dine on.



**A**re you a tidy person? I have aspirations but struggle in certain areas – the never-ending pile of laundry, for one. Plus, when it comes to housework, I usually choose garden work instead. Don't think this means that I have a spick and span garden though. Clipped edges and freshly cut lawns are my partner's domain, and there are often robust "debates" over what constitutes a weed after he's pulled out some little flowering gem that's had the audacity to pop up in the driveway or on a path.

Gardens have always been at the intersection of nature and civilisation, and some of us like to impose more order over the natural world than others. But nature needs us to let go. "Rewilding" is a type of conservation that restores an area's ecology – take the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone Park in the US and beavers in the UK. The wolves thinned out overpopulated elk herds, allowing willow and aspen groves to flourish again, thus restoring habitat for birds. The beavers increase biodiversity because they build dams that create wetland habitats for wildlife.

A local rewilding success story is Wellington eco-sanctuary Zealandia. Since kākā were brought there in 2002, the population has flourished and locals now frequently spot wild kākā in their gardens.


When it comes to restoring biodiversity, our backyards are the perfect place to start.

### *Grow natives for our birds and bugs*

If you need a reason to go wild, consider that 40 percent of our indigenous plant species, 85 percent of our native lizards and 40 percent of our native bird species are endangered or at risk. Though you're not going to bump into a kākāpō rummaging around in your leaf litter any time soon, by planting natives you provide food for the locals. Try to eco-source plants, which means choosing species that have adapted to your area's unique conditions – your council can advise you – and check out the Forest and Bird and Department of Conservation websites for lists of what native plants are on the menu for endemic birds, depending on whether they eat nectar, seeds, fruit or insects or are flexitarians. Try to grow a selection of plants that provide food at different times of the year. If you have space and live in a frost-free region, pūriri provide fruit, seeds and nectar all year for tūi, korimako, silvereys and kēreru, and are the host plant of the pūriri moth. For smaller sections, flax and petite kōwhai varieties (such as 'Dragon's Gold') provide nectar for tūi, kēreru, kākā and korimako – and for an all-you-can-eat hedge, pittosporums serve up nectar, fruit and seeds. →







Build up your garden's ecosystem by growing a range of plants. Create a safe watering hole for bees (below right) and they'll add you to their list of gardens to visit. Spiders have set up house in a pile of stacked feijoa prunings (right).

### *Trap pests*

Predator control is key to nurturing our native animal species. You may think there are no rats or mice on your property but you're probably wrong! Rodents, particularly rats, are experts at going incognito, and there are usually one or two lurking about. When it comes to reducing rodent numbers, traps are the most humane option because they're instant. If you're squeamish like me, Goodnature's A24 self-resetting rat trap is a good choice because you don't have to reset it very often, plus the dead rats are often scavenged by other animals, so you might not need to deal with the remains. Predator Free NZ has helpful information on its website about backyard trapping, including possums – cute in Australia but an ecological nightmare here.

### *Make some mess*

Letting go of social conditioning about tidiness is essential for rewilding – and vindication for messy gardeners. Grow a dense thicket of trees and shrubs at different heights to create hunting, mating and nesting places for birds, and allow leaf litter to pile up on the ground. Insects and invertebrates such as beetles, wētā, slugs and worms thrive in decaying organic matter, including piles of leaves and rotting wood, and provide food for insect-eaters such as pīwakawaka and grey

warblers. Allowing even just a few corners of your garden to be messy will build up its ecosystem. And if you can't resist imposing a bit of order, build a bug hotel. Stack twigs, small branches, pine cones, bamboo and broken shards of terracotta – the more varied your materials, the more diverse your guests will be. Put it in a shady spot and see who moves in. Make a home for lizards by loosely stacking heat-generating materials such as stones, bricks and bits of corrugated iron in a sunny spot and add some native ground cover for good tangly hidey-holes. Leave plants to go to seed to provide food for finches and other seed-eating birds. A yellowhammer







has been visiting my garden daily to snack on seeds from a dried brown sunflower I haven't pulled out. Leave saucers of water in your garden so pollinators such as bees visit your garden regularly. Provide stones for them to stand on while drinking, as they can't swim.

### ***Lose the lawn***

The ultimate symbol of dominance over nature, lawns make up around 15-20 percent of the urban landscape but are monocultural deserts of one plant species – the opposite of a biodiverse ecosystem. That means fewer bees, butterflies, moths and invertebrates. A 2018 US study showed that lawns cut fortnightly instead of weekly or three-weekly had the most bees visiting them because dandelions and clover had time to grow and flower but were short enough that it was easy for the bees to access the flowers. So if you don't want to go full meadow chic, consider mowing less frequently or setting your lawnmower blades higher for a shaggier cut. Or mow pathways but leave areas of meadow either side. If you decide to dig up the lawn, consider replacing it with native trees and shrubs underplanted with ferns and ground covers, or grow food and flowers. Paths lined with bark or pebbles will allow you to journey through the space and also sprout surprise self-seeded plants.

### ***Ditch chemicals***

It seems like a no-brainer but if you want a diverse range of wildlife in your garden, don't use herbicides, pesticides or fungicides. As well as harming the life you're trying to nurture, including your soil biology, they're also not good for humans. Glyphosate is still widely used in New Zealand despite being banned or restricted in numerous countries and identified as a probable carcinogen by the World Health Organization. Our government is currently reviewing its use, so its days may be numbered. Also consider replacing synthetic fertilisers, which are detrimental to soil life, with natural fertilisers made from plants, animals or minerals, such as seaweed, manure, blood and bone and compost – and a dead rat or two! 🐹

## ***Tasks for April***



### **SPRING DREAMING**

Garden centres will be chocka with spring-flowering bulbs such as daffodils, hyacinths and freesias. Or choose from the massive selection offered online by specialist bulb retailers. Plant bulbs into free-draining soil at twice the depth of the height of the bulb, or pack them tightly into pots so they're almost touching but not quite. If possible, select firm bulbs that are free from mould.



### **GO FRUITY**

Autumn is a good time to plant fruit trees as they have time to establish their roots before they produce new growth in spring. Before choosing a fruit tree, check to see whether it is self-fertile or whether it needs a pollination partner, which is the same type of fruit species but a different variety. Choose a spot with free-draining soil in full sun. Dig a planting hole that is twice the size of the root ball, and prepare the hole with compost and sheep pellets before you plant. Be sure to plant the tree at the depth it was planted in the container, and stake it on either side.



### **HOT POTS**

The days may be getting chillier but you can still grow fast crops of edibles by potting them up and placing them on a sunny porch or against a north-facing wall. Most edibles can be grown in pots – just be sure to use a good-quality potting mix and keep your plants well watered. Try lettuces, mesclun mixes, carrots, spinach and dwarf peas, or bump up the temperature by turning plastic milk or juice bottles into mini greenhouses – cut off the base of the bottle, remove the lid and place the bottle over the seedlings. Or make a heat sink by placing a plastic bottle of water beside a frost-tender plant.



A photograph showing a person's hands, wearing a white lab coat, using a pair of silver scissors to trim a green fern frond. The frond is being held by the left hand, and the scissors are in the right hand. Several other fern fronds are laid out on a white surface, some already trimmed. The background is a plain white surface.

# *Press to impress*

*The classic art of flower pressing is enjoying a resurrection. Here's how to immortalise your greenery in a striking and thoroughly modern manner.*

**PHOTOGRAPHY** WARREN HEATH/BUREAUX **TEXT** VICKI SLEET/BUREAUX





## SHAPE OF THINGS

Modern pressed plants and leaf forms are as much about preserving their beauty as making a statement in your home. Look for graphic shapes to play with and group them in a random or orderly fashion – the effect of either can be striking. Here, a collection of pressed nasturtium leaves, ferns and a single, sculptural leaf marries beautifully with a lush gathering of fresh leaves and potted plants. →





Complementing pressed-plant displays with succulents and bulbs creates a three-dimensional, layered effect.



## HOW TO PRESS PLANTS AND FLOWERS

Any space is transformed with the addition of plants and flowers – and pressed botanicals help you preserve that sense of bringing nature in. Whether you gather leaves, sprigs or blooms from your garden or on a rural or neighbourhood walk, all you need is an appreciation of colour and form and you'll be good to go.

### YOU'LL NEED

Plant cuttings and/or flowers

Secateurs or scissors

Vessels for sorting and for standing stems in water

A small roller for flattening leaves and flowers

A craft knife for dissecting bigger flowers

A flower press (If you don't have a press, heavy books weighted down with a brick or two will work)

Cotton sheets, muslin or blotting paper

Thick card to use as stabilisers in your press

### METHOD

**1** Pick your plants and flowers. Harvest flowers first thing in the morning once the dew has evaporated and when they have just opened, not at midday when blooms are likely to be past their prime.

**2** Immediately after cutting, plunge the stems into cold water and recut them underwater and at an angle. Allow them to stand in the water to absorb as much water as possible.

**3** Remove any stamens, wipe the leaves clean, and dissect larger flowers into pressable segments.

**4** Carefully roll the flowers and leaves flat with the roller.

**5** Place plants in your press, laying cotton, muslin or blotting paper between layers. Thick card can help to stabilise your press.

**6** Leave the press in a cool, dry place and wait a week. Replace paper if necessary, then leave for a further 2-3 weeks. Your flowers and/or leaves should now be ready for framing and displaying.





## Pressing tips

- Bigger leaves, flowers and plants can take 2-3 weeks to dry properly.
- If you're short on time, you can use a microwave to dry small blooms for pressing in just a few minutes.
- Look for flowers with flat petals such as poppies – these are likely to give good results. Some other flowers that press well are tulips, cosmos, calla lilies, alstroemeria, narcissus, freesias and lisianthus. Roses are notoriously difficult to press, though individual petals will work. Larger flowers such as hibiscus can be dissected.
- Leaves that press well include those from monstera, ferns such as maidenhair or ponga, and certain philodendrons.
- Herbs and young vegetable leaves press well and look great as part of kitchen decor.
- Pressed flowers and leaves fade with time – displaying them out of direct sunlight will prolong their life.
- Glass is the obvious choice for frames but Perspex also works.



## PLANT ART

There are no hard and fast rules for decorating with pressed plants and flowers. Here, a mismatched collection is teamed with a sculptural hanging plant and placed in a spot where it becomes an attractive foil for the garden outside. Taller, sculptural plants and flowers can be used to great effect in interior settings – think toetoe, lilies and irises.

The way these particular cuttings are displayed – carefully sandwiched between sheets of glass – enhances their colour and allows light and glimpses of the garden to filter through. It's a contemporary approach to the classic art of plant pressing for posterity. To enhance the ethereal nature of plants pressed between glass, choose leaves and flowers that are thin enough to become translucent, and play around with colours (though be aware that they'll fade after a while). **H**





## Work mate

*Abandoned pup Cooper travelled the North Island to find his forever cottage.*

Life didn't begin well for Cooper. As a puppy, the Huntaway cross was dumped in a Northland forest. Fortunately, he somehow found his way to the Wellington SPCA, where he met journalists Mike White and Nikki Macdonald.

Cooper is now an integral part of the couple's lives. "This is Cooper's home and we exist around him," says Mike of their 100-year-old seaside cottage in Ōwhiro Bay on Wellington's south coast.

Mike and Nikki work from home, sharing a room at the front of the cottage, where the views stretch across Cook Strait to the South Island. "Cooper spends most of the day curled up between us while we're working," Mike says. "He's our constant companion and we structure our day around him, with days bookended by walks. When I look up from my desk and see him asleep, I can't help but smile."

Mike describes Cooper, now 12, as "a gentle soul and a grumpy old man – grumpy when it comes to courier drivers, posties or anyone who lingers outside our front gate too long, but gentle when it comes to having his tummy tickled. He's a good dog and a happy dog".

Words and canines are the fuel the award-winning writer runs on. Mike grew up with dogs and has written about our four-legged friends in two books, *How to Walk a Dog* and the newly released *Dogs in Early New Zealand Photographs*. "It's been a joy to write about dogs, the people who love them and the community they've built around that."

Mike and Nikki bought their home 16 years ago, after renting in the area. "We were desperate to stay in the bay, and luckily this cottage came up for sale. It was in a bad way – a health hazard, really – but we cleaned it up and painted it and it's been home ever since." 



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(the bathroom and the bedroom)



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