



Grape expectations

Multi-talented architect Victoria Read turns a passion for her home region into a fruitful career.

There are many different roads that can lead us to specialising in specific project typologies – so many, in fact, that no two journeys to get there are ever identical. Perhaps your upbringing shaped a niche passion for a certain type of building or design style, or maybe you developed a vested interest in a particular kind of project because of dovetailing experiences or degrees, or you might have been fortunate enough to have someone else in the industry take you under their wing. In architect Victoria Read’s case, it was a culmination of all these things that has brought her to where she is in her career. Today, she is the founder and director of a leading Wairarapa architecture firm specialising in bespoke lifestyle projects, Aspect Architecture.

Following an earlier career in digital marketing and a Bachelor of Commerce degree in Tourism, Victoria began studying architecture when she was a young mother. “Being a parent as well as having to commute to Wellington from the Wairarapa meant that it was a challenging time. I had to work for myself right off the bat because there was no one operating in our area to give me a job!”

As Victoria gradually grew her practice, she realised that the experience she had gained along the way was invaluable for helping her reach the success she’s found now. Her firm specialises in wineries and tourism developments as well as new homes – something she believes is a direct reflection of her interest and background in tourism and marketing.

For those familiar with the stunning Wairarapa region, Victoria’s connection to her project specialties is immediately apparent. “Living in Martinborough, you can’t help but be involved in the wine industry in some way,” she says. “The town has transformed through the development of the industry and is now a thriving wine hub. My grandparents farmed next door to the first vineyard, and their farm has now been converted to vineyards.”

“Martinborough is also blessed with many talented women who work in the wine industry, making wine and running wine

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left: The award-winning elegant tasting room at Palliser Estate was designed by Aspect Architecture and features walls in Resene Half Baltic Sea and ceiling in Resene Half Wan White. It won a Resene Total Colour Neutrals Award. Build by Holmes Construction, www.holmes-construction.co.nz, image by Rebecca Kempton, www.rebeccakempton.com.

 Resene Half Wan White  Resene Half Baltic Sea





companies, and I am lucky enough to include a number of these women as close friends. My partner's family also owns a small vineyard, so I guess you could say I have all the angles covered!"

What Victoria says she loves most about designing wineries is how engaging the projects can be. "They're interesting! Every label has its own personality and I enjoy bringing this into the architecture. We collaborate closely with our clients to ensure that the architecture represents them and that their customers leave their cellar door with a stronger understanding of who they are. Our cellar door project at Palliser Estate won a Resene Total Colour Award. It was a very successful project and represented the 'characters of excellence' that sit at the heart of the Palliser brand."

"Resene curates their colours and finishes beautifully. It makes choosing and matching colours very easy."

Often Aspect Architecture's clients end up finding success more quickly than they bargained for, making future-proofing and scalability some of the most important considerations and challenges faced on their projects. "The industry has been so successful that it is sometimes hard to see what might be around the corner. Invariably, our clients will experience success that exceeds their expectations and then we find ourselves back there a few years later to extend the hospitality areas of the building or to build a new winery area. Most of our clients are working within a sustainability or organic framework so we like to bring these ideas to the table architecturally as well. This can add cost but makes for a more successful building for the long term."

Currently, the Aspect Architecture team are working on a new cellar door and office building for Nga Waka Wines. "This is a



Resene
Friar Greystone

Resene
Dune

Resene
Archive Grey

above: Poppies Martinborough runs a successful wedding and event business as well as a restaurant alongside their wine production business. Aspect Architecture had already worked with them on the design of the earlier event centre and restaurant, but as the business expanded, the firm was invited back to work on the next stage. Barrel room venue walls and ceiling in Resene Dune. Build by Holmes Construction, painting by Country Mile Painting, image by Sharisse Eberlein, www.sharisseeberlein.co.nz.

left: Victoria says her team has had a lot of success using the Resene Construction Systems range of Rockcote interior finishes. "Their finishes give extra texture, layers and interest to an interior and they have been very popular with our clients." Rockcote Velvetina Lime in Resene Archive Grey was used in the apartment at Poppies Martinborough with trims and door in Resene Enamacryl gloss waterborne enamel tinted to Resene Friar Greystone and timber ceiling in Resene Aquaclear. Build by Holmes Construction, painting by Country Mile Painting, plastering by Sean Boland Plastering, image by Sharisse Eberlein.

Victoria's dream designer dinner date

"Definitely Leonardo da Vinci. I think his curiosity, intellect and powers of invention would make him an extraordinarily interesting dinner companion."

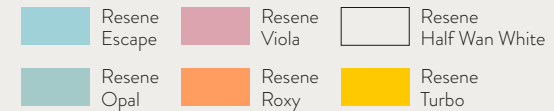




left: Aspect Architecture created the charming cellar door at Luna Estate by retrofitting a disused winery building. Walls, trims and doors in Resene Milk White welcome visitors while a statement wall in Resene Fuscous Grey draws them to the tasting area. Build and painting by Holmes Construction, image by Rebecca Kempton.



below: Resene Viola, Resene Turbo, Resene Opal, Resene Escape and Resene Roxy lend each stall in Luna Estate's bathroom a different colour theme. Main walls and ceiling in Resene Milk White. Build and painting by Holmes Construction, image by Rebecca Kempton.



project we are super excited about," says Victoria. "The vineyard owners are based in the USA and it has been an interesting process collaborating with them via video link this year."

"The name of the vineyard is taken from Nga Waka a Kupe – the canoes of Kupe. Legend has it that the hills were formed by the three canoes of the famed Polynesian explorer Kupe, which were carried inland by a huge earthquake and came to rest in the valley behind Martinborough. Our design is reflective of the parts of an oceangoing canoe – a large sail held up by soaring timber members over a beautifully formed vessel. I am very much looking forward to seeing this finished."

When she needs inspiration, Victoria draws from her rural farm upbringing and the small town she calls home. "I am inspired by our beautiful surroundings and the ad hoc nature of our built environment. I love materials that are honest and raw, and I am a big fan of sunlight! I think the combination of these things are really exciting and can lead to architecture that makes you feel good," she says.

"Wellness is very important to me and I like to create architecture that improves the lives of the people that use it – this is at the heart of every piece of work that comes out of our office."

Her favourite project to date has been the development of The Waihinga Centre, a large community centre and destination playground in Martinborough which Victoria supported through the pro-bono work that Aspect Architecture undertakes. "I didn't design the award-winning building, but I was heavily involved in the conception and delivery of this six-year-long project representing our local council, community board and the charitable trust that was set up to fund the project. It was immensely satisfying, and to see this centre now being used by the community – young and old – gives me great pleasure."

"I have really enjoyed being a part of the expansion of the Wairarapa into a successful tourism destination, and I think I bring an understanding of what is involved in enhancing the customer experience to the table. My Bachelor of Commerce degree has further given me a greater understanding of what is required financially to get some of these projects off the ground."

Victoria says she was also lucky to have found a great mentor in the construction industry early on in her architecture career who taught her how tricky items could be built. "He really gave up a lot of his time to help show me the ropes. The best advice he told me was right back in the 90s and that is to always flash a window. He told me that even though it wasn't required by the code, it would end in trouble if you didn't. I remembered this advice as the leaky building crisis unfolded and was very grateful I had listened! I think his advice – to always err on the side of caution – has stayed with me and has underpinned a lot of the detailing that we have produced." **BW**

To see more of Victoria's work and Aspect Architecture's impressive portfolio, visit www.aspectarch.nz.



Victoria's favourite colours

"Architects tend to love whites and my favourites are Resene Wan White and Resene Half White Pointer – I use both of these liberally! However, I also love greens of all kinds and I am just about to paint my home office Resene Japanese Laurel. I think it will work really well with a Resene Wan White ceiling."

