

“It’s fun seeing visitors’ jaws drop when they see the renovation for the first time.”

- Resene Anemone Green
- Resene Sanguine Brown
- Resene Quarter Parchment



words Sharon Stephenson pictures Nicola Edmonds

breaking the colour mould

No white kitchen for these homeowners. It’s colour all the way.

Ask Sue and Bevan de Berry to describe themselves and they’ll probably say conservative. Which is why the new kitchen/dining space of their Wellington villa comes as such a surprise.

“It’s fun seeing visitors’ jaws drop when they see the renovation for the first time,” laughs Sue. “They’re struck by this colourful and innovative space that’s quite ‘out of the box’ for people like us, because we’d normally go for a plain, white kitchen.”

Which is exactly what Sue and her dentist husband had in mind when they first started casting about for ideas. “We’ve owned the house for 34 years and although we did things like repiling, replumbing and landscaping the garden, for a long time we made do with a pokey kitchen that had very little light and horrible chipboard cupboards.”

Located along the southern side of their Kelburn home, the kitchen was also draughty, had no outlook and was separated from the dining and living spaces by a clumsy arrangement of internal walls.

Yet it wasn’t until the couple’s two children had left home – one now lives in England, the other in Canada – that Sue finally decided it was time for a change.

Enter Wellington architect John Mills who says he “pushed the couple’s creative boundaries further than they ever thought possible”.

“They were the perfect clients in that they gave us a lot of creative licence and were willing to take on such a strong, bold look. It’s contemporary, but still maintains the classic ambience of a 1914 villa,” says John.

The 60m² footprint of the downstairs area hasn’t been increased, but reconfiguring the space has created a light-filled, open-plan area which looks out onto the garden.

The central focus is the 5m-long kitchen island, which is a favourite spot for guests to perch while Sue whips up one of her legendary meals. Designed by artist John Calvert, the benchtop is made

from Tasmanian Ash and inserted with aluminium strips.

"This ties it in with the stainless steel bench opposite which is used for food preparation," says Sue.

The zinc-fronted island is similarly industrial and was, initially, meant to be plain. "But the cabinet maker decided it looked too stark, so set his guys to it with an orbital sander, which gives the whole thing some texture."

The couple was so happy with their John Calvert benchtop, they recently bought one of his coffee tables for the open-plan living space.

At the far end of the kitchen, the old laundry was demolished to make way for a sun-room, painted in Resene Smalt Blue from the Karen Walker range, which is now a favoured breakfast spot. The laundry and pantry are now tucked discreetly away behind doors in the kitchen.

John has also borrowed space from an adjoining coat cupboard to create an alcove to store keys, mail and the telephone. Upper shelves were originally intended to hold Sue's large cookbook collection, but ended up being too high so various collectibles and object d'art now live here, while the cookbooks were relegated to the kitchen.

Across from the island is the Italian dining table and custom-made bar, which is well stocked for cocktail parties. It's overlooked by a large painting by Wellington artist Debra Britten, which serves as the perfect foil to a feature wall painted in Resene Sanguine Brown from the Karen Walker range.

Another beloved artwork on the adjoining wall looks as though it was specially bought to match the green, Resene Anemone Green, also from the Karen Walker Range. It was, however, acquired years ago and, in one of those serendipitous twists of interior fate, just happened to match. >



Below Some objects are displayed; some hidden away.

Above The central focus is the 5m-long island bench, with a top designed by artist John Calvert, made from Tasmanian Ash and inserted with aluminium strips.

Below right Red lino on the floors adds yet another colour element.

Opposite Feature walls in Resene Sanguine Brown and Resene Anemone Green, both from the Karen Walker range, are an integral part of the new kitchen area.

Did you know? Avoid fly spots on ceilings with Resene Fly Deterrent. Designed to discourage flies from landing on the painted surface, it reduces the appearance of unwanted fly spots.



The remaining walls and ceiling are painted Resene Quarter Parchment, while the pantry door is Resene Tana.

According to Sue, it's the surprisingly harmonious splashes of colour that are the real stars of this renovation.












Feature wall colours aside, there's the red lino in the kitchen ("which adds a lot of warmth," says John Mills), baby blue splash-back tiles and strategically placed mushroom and chocolate cupboard doors.

Wellington Interior designers Baker & Graham upped the colour ante further, adding raspberry-hued chairs, a beige couch and green window seat and cushions.

"It shouldn't have worked," says Sue. "But it does, and somehow the architect and the interior designers have managed to pull it all together. It has totally exceeded our wishes and we couldn't have had a better result..." **H**

Below An old laundry was demolished to make way for a sun-room, painted in Resene Smalt Blue from the Karen Walker range, which is now a favoured breakfast spot.



<p>Oven: Fisher & Paykel oven Cooktop: Westinghouse</p> <p>Resene Caffeine </p>	
	<p>Rangehood: Robinhood Fridge/freezer: Maytag</p> <p>Get the look with Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen tinted to Resene Tana.</p> <p>Resene Tana </p>
<p>Dishwasher: Asko Tapware: Grohe</p> <p>Resene Sanguine Brown </p>	
	<p>Benchtop: Tasmanian Ash with aluminium inserts, by John Calvert</p> <p>Resene Anemone Green </p>
<p>Dining room table: Matisse Architect: John Mills Interior Designer: Baker & Graham</p> <p>Resene Quarter Parchment </p>	
<p>Resene Smalt Blue </p>	