

four fireplaces, four looks

For millennia, humans have gathered around fires for warmth, protection and nourishment. The hearth has traditionally been the heart of the home, and a focal point for cooking and social interaction.

And, despite modern conveniences such as electric ovens, gas barbecues and central heating, which ensure our comfort and render the cooking pot over the flame obsolete, many of us still take great pleasure in the feel, colour, light and movement of a fire. It creates a special welcoming ambiance, and can be enjoyed whether you're alone reading a book with a cat curled on your knee, or socialising with friends. The fireplace is still a key feature of our living spaces – and probably always will be.

On the following pages, we feature four different fireplaces in four distinct settings, to give you an idea of what might suit your home and lifestyle.

■ Resene
Fudge

■ Resene
Mondo





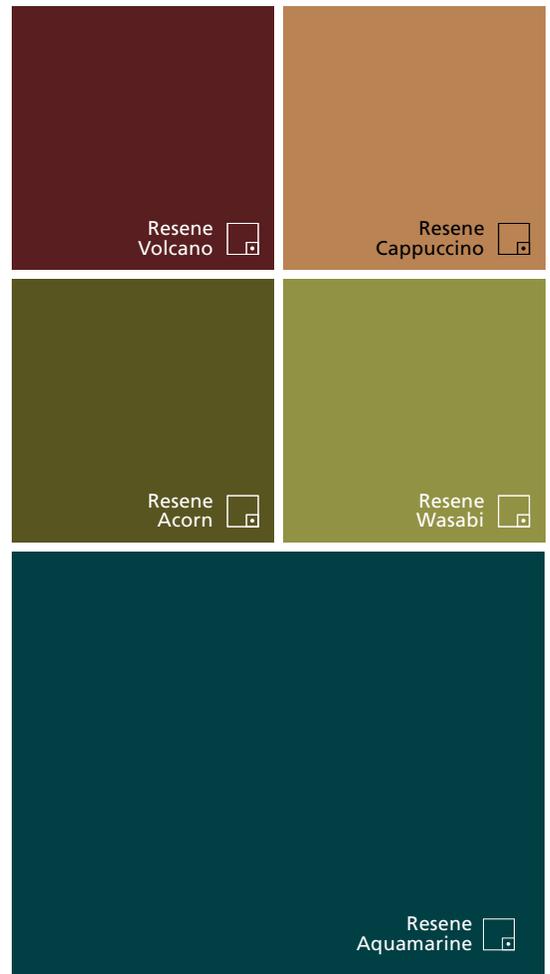
traditional touch

In the early 1900s, an open fire was virtually the only means of home heating. As a result, it wasn't unusual to find three or four fireplaces in large homes of the period. Nowadays, many owners of traditional villas and bungalows still enjoy the ambience and sense of satisfaction that comes from setting, lighting and tending their wood-burning fires. And while it may not be the most efficient way to heat a room, there's nothing quite it.

The fireplace in this renovated 1920s villa reflects the period styling of the house. Owner and designer Glen Cornwell, of Avery Team Architecture, chose to enclose the rustic exposed-brick chimney, which stands in the centre of a long living and dining room, to create a more contemporary look. A kauri mantel and surround featuring scrolled detailing was sourced from a local timber recycler. Originally painted white, it was stripped and polished with a clear wax to protect it and bring out the warm honey tones of the wood. The cast-iron register is original. It is inlaid with ceramic tiles in shades of green and painted with a floral Art Nouveau motif.

An antique French hearth surround made from brass and burnished steel provides the perfect finishing touch. A custom-made, removable fireguard (not pictured) has also been fitted to protect the owners' young children from getting too close to the flames.

Chinese antiques complement the décor of the room and tone in with the feature wall, which is painted in Resene Volcano. A pair of black, red and gilded timber panels hang over the fireplace, while three 19th century lacquered-wood Chinese magistrate figures decorate the mantel.





hot outside

Outdoor fireplaces have become increasingly popular over the past few years – and it's easy to see why. Just as we all love a bonfire on the beach, there's nothing quite like sitting by an outdoor fireplace or brazier in the evening, enjoying a glass of wine with friends. What's more, an outdoor fireplace is the perfect way to extend your living space and make use of your outdoor areas all year round.

This modern, four-bedroom Auckland home features a Through Wall Gas Outdoor Fireplace from Real Fires. The fireplace opens onto the second-level outdoor entertainment area, as well as onto the open-plan lounge and dining room. Its double-sided design means that you can actually see through the glass door on the exterior past the flames and into the room beyond. The external side has a sealed glass front to make it weatherproof and emits about 30% of the fireplace's overall heat, while the living room side is open.

This fireplace is designed for new timber frame installations and isn't suitable for existing masonry or brick fireplaces. It can run off mains gas or off an LPG gas bottle, as is the case here.

The fireplace is mounted in an expressed chimney block finished in charcoal-coloured Nu-Wall aluminium cladding. Its modern styling, with a slim-line brushed stainless steel trim (black trim is also available) and a modern grate, was chosen to complement the contemporary design of the house.

The beauty of a double-sided fireplace like this is that, while providing warmth and light, it also acts as a visual centerpiece and talking point for your outdoor area.





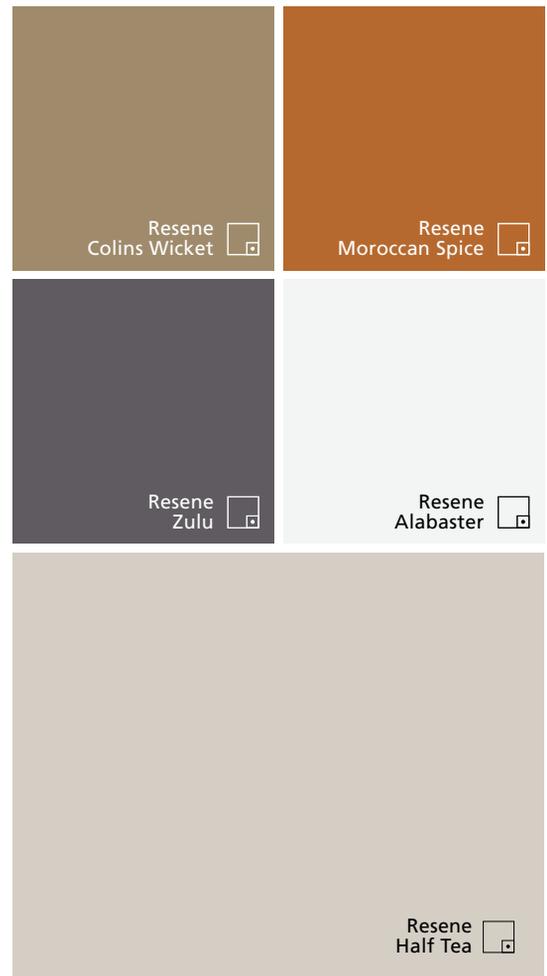
make a statement

In addition to their obvious practical purpose of bringing warmth and light to a room, fireplaces also act as visual focal points in many living spaces, even when not in use. And where, in the past, hearths and fireplaces were less dramatic, today they have been elevated to a new status, where aesthetic appeal is a key consideration alongside functionality.

This completely refurbished family home, designed by Peter Eising and Lucy Gauntlett, of Pacific Environments Architects, features spacious, light-filled living areas, connected by a gallery and opening out to the pool. As a result, the fireplace in the downstairs lounge was designed to fit in with the large scale of the spaces and to complement the artwork showcased throughout the house. The fireplace's huge concrete hearth shelf measures 6m in length, running from wall to wall, while the fireplace itself is a generous 4m long.

Both the hearth and the boxed-out section above the fireplace are finished in 600mm x 600mm metallic tiles. With their natural volcanic look and mix of dark grey, beige and golden tones, they add visual texture and depth, despite their smooth finish, and complement other elements in the room, such as the rug and slate-coloured cushions. Standing out dramatically from the neutral walls and ceiling, painted in Resene Half Tea, the tiles also evoke the natural surroundings of the home, which sits on the lip of a volcanic crater lake.

Behind the gas-fired flames, a stainless steel rear wall reflects the colours and movement of the fire as it burns. In addition to this mirror effect, the steel also complements other stainless steel elements found throughout the house.





contemporary comfort

The look and design of the fireplace has changed significantly over the last century. In addition to tiles, materials such as glass, stainless steel, marble, slate and stone can all be found on the modern fireplace. The mess associated with real wooden logs has been replaced by fuss-free gas-fired flames, controlled electronically from the comfort of your chair. There is also the option of a diffuser burner, where the entire ember bed glows or, for the more contemporary look, strip or candle burners that create a wall of fire the length of the fireplace. Other choices include coals and logs, or the new Cotswold stone or glass-pebble ice-effect burners.

This Eastside fireplace from the Living Flame Element range features sleek, contemporary lines designed to suit modern homes. The 2m-long gas Euro model in this house was chosen by designer Lynne Russell. Sitting in a masonry chimney painted in Resene Putty, it has glass ends and a stainless steel rear wall. Its three individual log burners can be controlled separately, to create as much or as little heat as required. A thick, black-granite hearth, raised off the ground, floats beneath the fireplace, its strong horizontal form softened by a pair of tall wrought-iron candelabra.

In an improvement on the traditional open, wood-burning fireplace, where much of the heat escapes up the chimney, Eastside fireplaces have a dual radiant and convection heating system designed to maximise heat output. This means that while the flames heat you, any heat that would normally get lost up the flue is trapped in a special convector at the top of the fire and re-directed back into the room.

