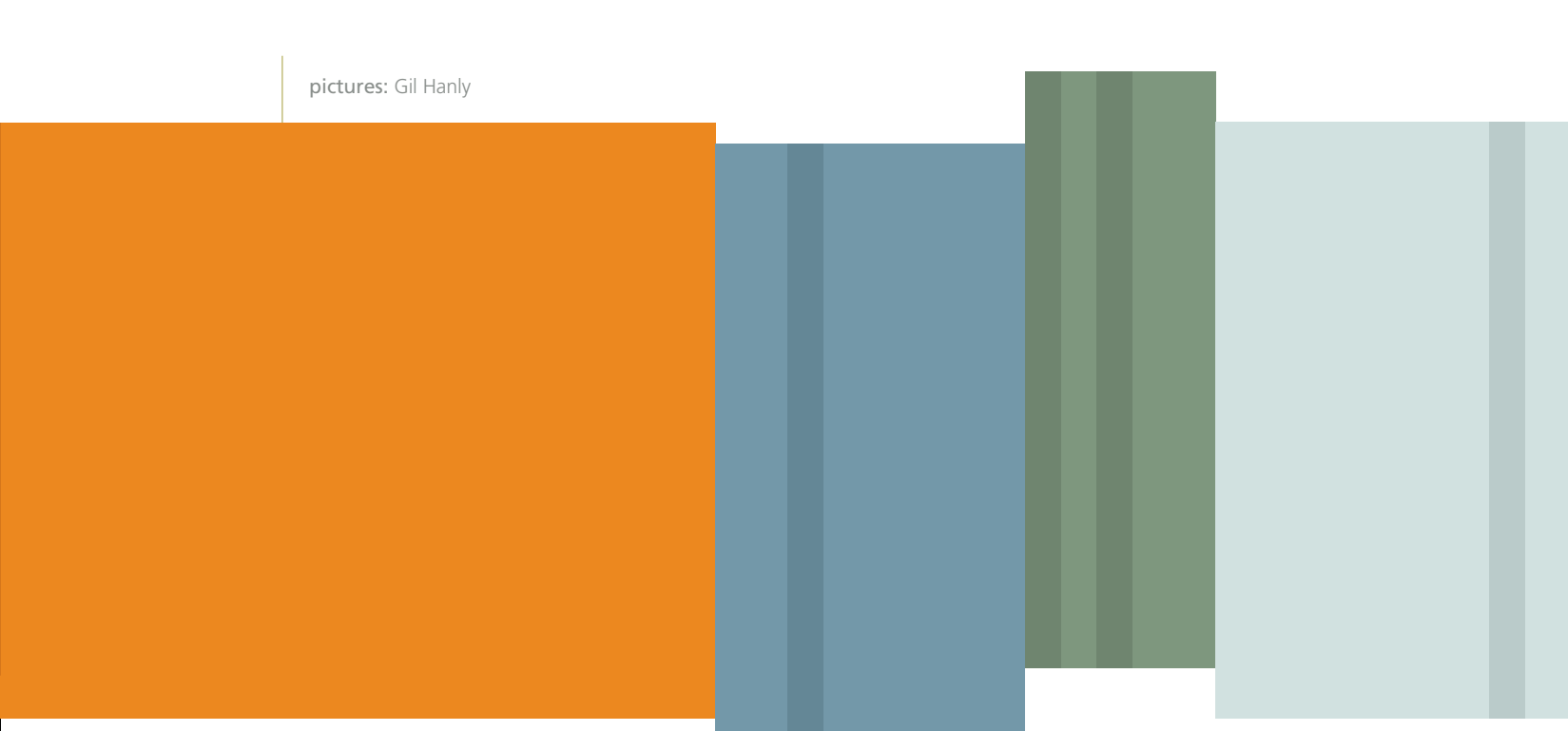


garden by the sea



alternative ideas for this
exterior on pages 102-105





The beach is a great place to live and it's so quintessentially Kiwi. Seaside homes enjoy an outlook that's constantly changing – one day it can be calm and peaceful, with the sunlight sparkling on the waves, and the next it's wild, grey and restless.

We might love such a variable and unpredictable setting, but many of our favourite plants do not. This means it can be hard to create a garden that will grow and flourish in such an environment.

Auckland landscape designer Cilla Cooper says choosing the right plants for a coastal property and knowing where they'll be happiest is one time when talking to the experts can be helpful. Otherwise you risk spending lots of money and having little to show for it.

"Most plants respond poorly to salt spray and around 95% of them won't cope with windy, exposed conditions," she says. "You do have a limited number of plant options and generally your choices come down to hardy coastal natives or succulents."

When Cilla designed the landscaping for this refurbished beachfront home on Auckland's North Shore, she opted predominantly for a selection of structural succulents – the "survivors", she calls them. Having been given free rein by the homeowners to come up with an appropriate planting plan, she decided to work with a base theme of silvery blue-grey, accented by orange.

The seaward side of the property is very exposed to harsh nor-easterly winds and salt spray, and has sandy soil, making it a difficult spot for anything to grow. For this area, Cilla selected a mix of hardy eye-catching Aloe thraskii, underplanted with orange-flowered gazanias – the very resilient beach daisy – and iceplants or mesembryanthemum. The area in front of an existing high stone retaining wall features large, fleshy Agave attenuata, while pots on the front deck contain Aloe striata, which has a delicate orange flower.

Fortunately, the garden is not entirely exposed to the elements and the more protected south side of the house provided extra leeway for variation.

"Most plants respond poorly to salt spray and around 95% of them won't cope with windy, exposed conditions."

"The front of the home is north facing and the house acts as a buffer to the wind. The orientation and the extensive paving, which absorbs the sun's rays and throws up a lot of heat, creates a little microclimate at the back," she explains.

Complement your new garden with rejuvenated pavers using Resene Concrete Stain. See the Resene Decks, Paths, Driveways and Recreational Areas chart for colour options.

september and october in the garden

- > Prepare and sow new lawns; fertilise existing lawns and treat them for moss.
- > Now is the best time to plant new roses. Fertilise existing roses and spray for pest control.
- > Sow or plant your spring flowers: dianthus, snapdragon, cosmos, celosia, gazanias, zinnias, delphinium, nemesia, stock, arctotis, asters and lobelia. Mulch flower beds and feed with a liquid fertiliser for loads of spring colour.
- > Spray citrus trees to kill black aphids and prevent fungal infections.
- > Plant out your herbs in containers or into the garden.
- > Plant your tomatoes in a warm, sheltered position with well-drained soil. Stake plants and apply a slow-release tomato food to assist establishment. Water regularly and feed fortnightly with a liquid plant food.
- > Plant or sow carrots, silverbeet, spinach, zucchini, capsicum, melons, peas, radishes, cauliflower and lettuce.
- > If you're planning on planting shrubs or trees, prepare soil with compost and slow-release fertiliser.



Beds flanking the entrance and driveway feature a mix of orange hibiscus, a Fijian native called DJ O'Brien, and a bright orange flowering variety of tropical rhododendron called Gava Lights, offset by blue-grey Senecio serpens and fan aloe. Queen palms enhance the tropical beachy feel and add an element of height, while spiky Furcraea bedinghausii create interest and texture.

Cilla says that if you're lucky enough to have such a microclimate on the sheltered side of your property, you can use this area to incorporate some of your favourite plants. However, she cautions, they will still be exposed to salt spray to some degree, so it pays not to choose anything too sensitive.

Along the side of the house, a garden scattered with shells is planted with a border of native Silver Spear (*Astelia banksii*). *Yucca elephantipes*, transplanted from elsewhere on the property, add height along the fenceline. The delicate, round, petal-shaped succulent *Echeveria elegans*, planted in clumps, creates visual interest at ground level and contrasts nicely with the flatter leaves of the yuccas and astelia.

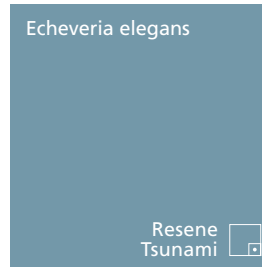
"While your planting options are limited in a coastal setting, the huge range of succulents allows for a lot of variety and interest," says Cilla. "The forms range from really spikey shapes to rounded-leaf plants, which add good texture and contrast. And most succulents are winter flowering, which is a real bonus." **H**



Agave attenuata
Resene Paradise



Aloe thraskii
Resene Spinnaker



Echeveria elegans
Resene Tsunami



For a low-maintenance garden, consider stones or shells over weed mat as a groundcover. Many planted groundcovers suffer from exposure to salt and bark can have a tendency to blow away.
Resene Hero



Gazanias
Resene Ranger

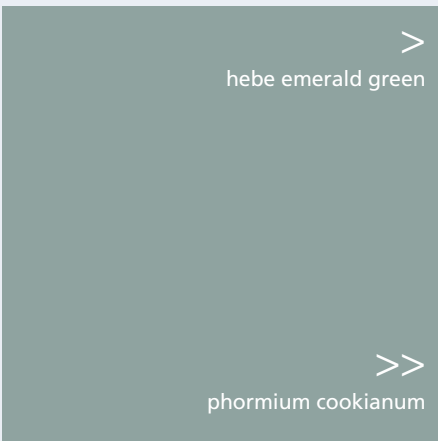
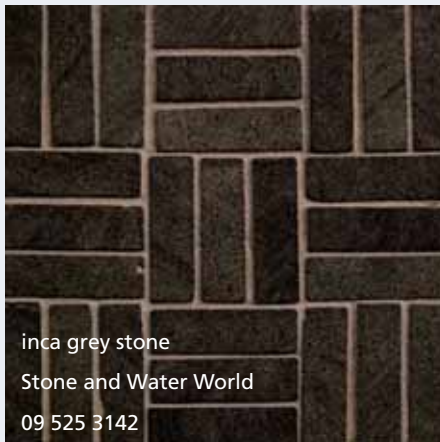
Resene Freestyling

on the following pages, find two alternative style suggestions for this garden

karo kiri



^ Get this look using New Zealand natives.



Sam Lockie from Urbane Landscapes proposes this alternative scheme:

The kiwiana nature of this coastal garden could be enhanced by using native plants. Pseudopanax ferox would work well in front of the stone walls and speckled out toward the beach. Beneath these, both in front of and on the wall, Phormium cookianum Green Sleeves and Astelia banksii could be planted in groups, with golden sand covering the ground beneath. Swirls of hebe Emerald Green and astelia, with a clump of cordyline Karo Kiri at the centre of

each, could replace the grass. The ground surface beneath could be a mix of 30% crushed shell, 15% paua shell flecks and 55% golden sand. Six 600mm-high aluminium, spike-mounted spotlights could illuminate the cordyline clumps. A path of stepping pavers could provide access to the garden space.

Sam Lockie, Urbane Landscapes, phone 027 471 8764, email urbane@ecomaintenance.co.nz.



^ Create a garden with a very New Zealand feel.



griselinia littoralis



poor knight's lily



metrosideros tahiti



phormium



Resene Roulette

Resene Awol

Resene Pohutukawa

Resene Quasar



light

Modus Lighting

09 815 8400

www.moduslighting.co.nz



meryta sinclairii (puka)



steamer chair

Design Denmark

09 377 7831



Murray Lye, from Murray Lye Landscape Design in Hamilton, suggests this design alternative:

A selection of native plants in a palette of red and green would create a very New Zealand feel. Along the beachfront, the large native flax Phormium tenax would add impact and height. Growing to 1m high, Metrosideros Tahiti would complement the large pohutukawa and add a splash of red. On the right, groups of the lilac-flowered hebe Wiri Splash could be offset by the strong, green foliage

of Griselinia littoralis and Meryta sinclairii (pukas). The hardy groundcover Coprosma prostrata would cascade nicely over the stone wall, with Xeronema callistemon (Poor Knight's Lily) providing good colour and texture behind. A steamer deckchair to relax in under the pohutukawa, copper bollards lining the path, and wooden posts with ropes would complete the picture.

M Lye

Murray Lye, phone 027 444 6025