



# the secret garden

The tree-covered Waitakere Ranges in Auckland are the perfect setting for a serene garden.

**T**here's a certain mystique to the Auckland suburb of Titirangi. Its tree-clad slopes, shady dells, native birdlife and magical peeps of the Manukau Harbour make it feel far from the city. But those very elements make it tricky for establishing a garden with its short sunlight hours, poor soil and sticky clay.

When Jono Sagar and Neil Sparkman bought a home there, it was a forgotten 1970s property in desperate need of a makeover. They wanted their house to merge and connect with the land, and to

recreate the sense of sanctuary associated with resorts they had visited in Asia so that every day would feel like a mini escape when they came home.

Jono and Neil called on landscape designer Jules Moore to create a new garden. The garden's sloping section dominated the landscape so creating a flat area for outdoor living with a cut and fill approach was the only option. The terrace is now finished in concrete blocks painted in Resene Gravel.

The rest of the garden was too steep for more structured retaining, so Jules optimised the natural terrain by using steps and paths to create more of a rambling feel.

Looking from the entry at the top of the garden to the lower realms, the design takes you on a journey through many levels and on to the bush. This tucked-away aspect is much loved by the couple. >



**Above left** A boardwalk in Resene Woodsman exterior stain tinted to Resene Bark leads from the house to a terrace courtyard.

**Above** A maple, cycad, banana palm and bromeliads underpin the garden's eastern and subtropical influences.

**Left** A levelled out area is contained with walls painted Resene Gravel.

### top tip

Stain your deck with Resene Woodsman Decking Stain to protect the timber from the weather and keep it looking good for longer. See the Resene Exterior timber colour collection for options, available from Resene ColorShops and resellers.



*“We can hide out here and let the world go by. You come down into the garden and look out towards the ocean.”*

Says Jono: “The garden is quite low down so we can hide out here and let the world go by. You come down into the garden and look out towards the ocean.”

They also love the connection between the house and garden, which is great for entertaining. The property coped well when they held a Christmas party for 120.

It’s quite a green garden so stays looking good year-round,” says Jono. “I like the different textures and shapes – spiky, smooth, rough and shiny – as well as the different greens.”

Mosses and rocks work in well with their collection of statues, with the garden evolving into more of a carefree collection of bromeliads and foliage plants.

While some plantings are quite structured, like the lepidozamia cycad underplanted with black mondo, other areas are less defined and are an eclectic mix of the owner’s favourite plants – added to and moved around over the course of three years while the garden was being created.

The upper levels of the garden has a different feel altogether. Here, the aim was to create a more contemporary style, but not let the concrete block retaining walls make the entertaining area feel too closed in.

The design needed to be minimal yet practical, while also incorporating long block walls and enabling people to move from one level to another with ease.

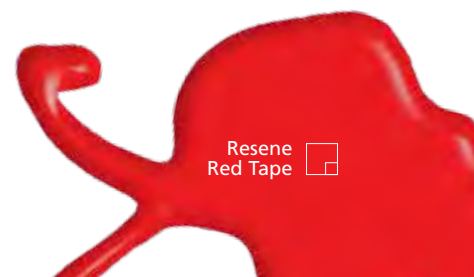
Including a water rill resolved the visual problems by introducing another level in front of the long block wall. Alongside this, a metre-wide boardwalk was built to connect the house to the outdoor dining and day-bed area.

Made from kwila and stained dark brown, the boardwalk is a stunning contrast between the grey paving stones and the natural bamboo screens. Various poles and timbers around the house are finished in Resene Nero.

Either side, tapered and aged stone pots hold simple plantings of bamboo to continue the Asian theme.

Looking out from the house, if it weren’t for the tui and wood pigeons flying by, you could be forgiven for thinking you had been transported to a tropical hideaway. **H**

words Jules Moore and Sharon Newey  
pictures Sally Tagg





**Top left and right**  
Sculpture, furniture, pots and ornaments feature throughout the garden.

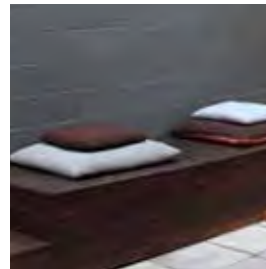
**Top centre** Jono Sagar and Neil Sparkman, with miniature schnauzer Harry Winston.

**Above** The garden is set below the driveway so that Neil and Jono feel secluded from the world. Timber uprights on the house are Resene Nero.

*did you know...*

that steps and paths can become slippery when wet? Avoid falls with Resene Non-Skid Deck & Path, available in a range of colours to suit your home.

 Resene Koru




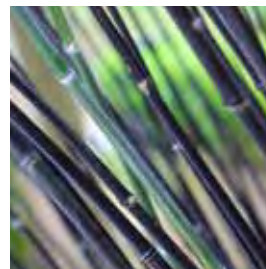
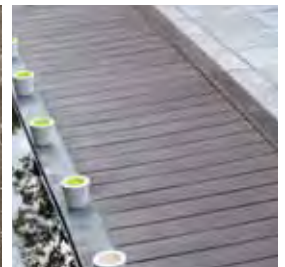
Get the look with Resene Lumbersider tinted to Resene Gravel.

Resene Gravel 



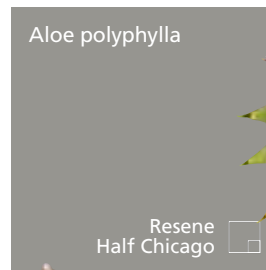
Get the look with Resene Woodsman exterior stain tinted to Resene Bark.

Resene Bark 



Black bamboo (Phyllostachys nigra)

Resene Nero 



Aloe polyphylla

Resene Half Chicago 



Designer:  
Jules Moore, [www.landscapedesigner.co.nz](http://www.landscapedesigner.co.nz)

Resene Sea Fog 

*turn the page for alternative looks to this garden*


Resene Red Tape 



^ A warm and inviting scheme has a twist of fun with the metallic paint Resene Treasure Chest on the higher walls, and Resene Big Bang on the others. The Ethan table is used with the existing Parson James Side Chairs rather than the ones shown at right.

### top tip

Add subtle texture to landscaping walls with Resene Sandtex Mediterranean effect. It's also ideal to help hide less-than-perfect surfaces.

 Resene  
Double Merino

# a vibrant and fiery fun solution



**Bill Holden** of Design and Landscape suggests this alternative scheme:

The new plan is designed to add vibrance and usability to this space. The lower timber deck has been replaced with a second pond below the existing pond, linked with a curtain waterfall on the corner to introduce moving water, and populated with water lilies and goldfish. The walls on the left have been given added life and fun with the metallic paint Resene Treasure Chest, which would look spectacular with outdoor lights or flares sparkling off it. If metallic is too much, you could use Resene Sandbar instead. The vibrant orange Resene Big Bang is used for the other walls. The deck has been used as seating by adding brightly covered squabs, while outdoor dining is catered for with a quality outdoor furniture setting including a large umbrella. New planting includes orange-flowered clivia, and native irises.

mobile 027 224 8797 email info@billholden.co.nz



illustration  
Bill Holden,  
Malcolm White

Resene Kombi 



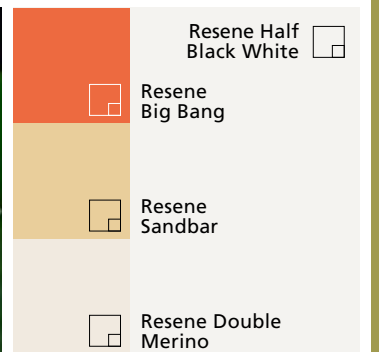
<  
Clivias (Clivia miniata)

>  
New Zealand iris  
(Libertia grandiflora)




>  
Water lilies


V  
Round timber table,  
large umbrella  
  
Ethan Outdoor Furniture  
www.ethan.co.nz  
0800 378 873



Resene Half Black White 

 Resene Big Bang

 Resene Sandbar

 Resene Double Merino



>  
Karaka Burst exposed aggregate  
concrete using Matangi pebble  
and cut to form pavers

Allied Concrete  
www.alliedconcrete.co.nz  
0800 425 5433



alternative solution - high country style



^ Dusky, bruised colours with walls painted in Resene Double Ash echo colours of the high country landscape. Resene Butterfly and Resene Melting Moment are the soft shades of mountain daisies and other high country flowers.

*top tip*

If you want to change the colour of your paving, use Resene Concrete Stain, which will add colour while retaining the natural paving features. See the Resene Decks, Paths, Driveways and Recreational Areas colour chart for colour options.

Resene Melting Moment

# subtle dusky shades permeate this garden



Landscape designer **Lyndell Shannon** suggests this alternative scheme:

This garden is inspired by high country 'gardens', where shrubs and dwarf trees blend with grasses and alpine flowers. Natural elements combine with clean contemporary lines, grasses and small flowering plants. The original high wall has been lowered and painted in Resene Double Ash. Planting at ground level lets users feel part of the garden. A simple stainless steel spout feeds a pool surrounded by rocks. The rocks interrupt strips of stainless steel that form part of the pool edge, the garden edge, and dividers in the exposed aggregate concrete courtyard surface. A manuka twig gate provides another contrast between rough and smooth. Plants include red tussock, carex, mountain cabbage trees and kawaka. A succession of small plants flower in different seasons. Colours are subtle and furniture is light and unobtrusive, such as Flutter Design's version of the classic butterfly chair. Lisa Sarah's stainless steel sculptures sit among the plants.

phone 09 419 1910 email [lyndell@ihug.co.nz](mailto:lyndell@ihug.co.nz)

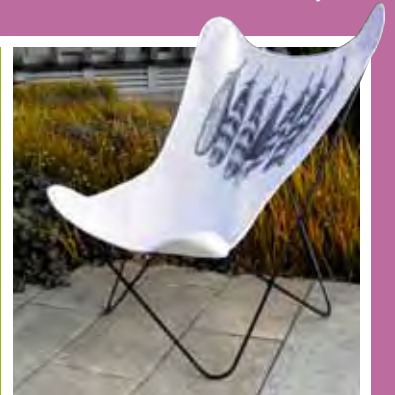


illustration  
Lyndell  
Shannon,  
Malcolm White

Resene Butterfly 







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Verbena bonariensis  
  
>  
Feather chair  
Flutter Design  
[www.flutterdesign.co.nz](http://www.flutterdesign.co.nz)



>  
Brachyscome 'Sunburst'  
  
v  
Tui and Fantail stainless steel sculptures  
Lisa Sarah  
[www.lisasarah.com](http://www.lisasarah.com)



Resene Double Ash   
Resene Impromptu   
Resene Melting Moment   
Resene Butterfly 



>  
Red tussock  
(Chionochloa rubra)

