




branching Out

A blank canvas was the perfect invitation for one creative homeowner to experiment with colour.

Resene Smitten 

Resene Awash 

If there's one thing Debra Yearsley is not afraid of, it's colour. The interior designer wears bright hues with ease, and breathes new life into retro-style furniture for her company Chair Squad, by re-upholstering pieces in bold, vibrant shades. And while her 1980s plaster home might look fairly unremarkable from the outside, inside it's anything but bland.

Debra moved into the house 18 months ago with her husband Adam and their two sons. Set on a sloping north-facing site and designed over four split levels, the home's layout suited the family's needs perfectly. The inviting open-plan living spaces curve around a full-height central atrium, with the master bedroom upstairs, and the boys' bedrooms, plus a large games room, on the lower level.

"We love it here," says Debra. "We feel like this is the house we were always meant to have – it's made for us and it has everything we need."

However, the neutral décor didn't match her personal style. "When we bought the house, it was completely beige inside and out. It was lovely, but I'm not a beige person. This place has a lot of curves and they were just crying out for colour."

With no master plan, the interior scheme evolved organically, at times inspired by a piece of furniture or a rug, and at others by the aspect of a space. While initially Adam didn't always share Debra's colour vision for certain rooms, he trusted her, gave her free rein and now loves the result.

The living room was the first space to be transformed. Taking her inspiration from a red, blue and gold Persian rug that now hangs on the wall, Debra chose a combination of fresh blues and rich reds to visually cool the sunny room. A pair of 1950s French chairs, re-upholstered in red velvet and teamed with a rug of the same colour, contrasts with the two-toned blue walls in Resene Awash and Resene Marathon, and the grey-blue couch.

"I'm quite brave and I love colour," says Debra. "I'm never really sure how it's going to turn out, to be honest, and sometimes it can be a bit nerve-racking when the painter first starts, but if it doesn't work, you can always paint over it." No room exemplifies her bravery more than her hot pink Resene Smitten study.

And that's exactly what happened in the adjacent



Right: A true reflection of Debra's colour bravery, her south-facing office is painted hot pink Resene Smitten.

Above: Debra Yearsley in one of her favourite mid-century pieces, a French red velvet 1950s chair. The wall behind is Resene Awash.

Opposite: A tree sculpture in the central atrium is painted with an array of Resene testpots. Beneath it, a new deck built in a wavy design is painted with Resene Awash and is scattered with bean bags.

 Resene Daredevil





top tip

Don't be afraid of using what appear to be similar colours in one space, like these two Resene blues.

mid-century style

Restoring neglected mid-century furniture is a passion Debra has turned into a business. Her company, Chair Squad, upcycles chairs and sofas, with a focus on classic pieces from the 1950s to 1970s, many of which are showcased in her home. They include wing-back armchairs reupholstered in zebra print, an iconic coconut chair, and the simple forms and timeless appeal of wooden Scandinavian furniture.

"It takes a bit of research to find good pieces, and while there are still some bargains to be had, they are getting harder to find."

Debra recommends choosing what you like, whether it's a Formica table with hairpin chrome legs (one of her favourites), or a simple sofa finished in a bold fabric.

"I don't get hung up on it all having to match. I mix wooden legs with metal and even different coloured woods. If you really love something, it works and it personalises your home."

Debra's favourite mid-century colours are red, blue, green and orange.



Resene
Smitten



- Resene Awash
- Resene Marathon

Far left: To visually cool the sunny main living room, Debra chose a combination of two blues inspired by the colours in a rug – Resene Awash (lighter) and Resene Marathon (darker).

Opposite bottom: Contrasting with the vibrant orange of the rest of the games room (in Resene Daredevil), the rear wall is Resene Nite Life, a deep inky blue.

Left: Debra’s hot pink Resene Smitten study.

Below: In keeping with other blues used in the house, the main bedroom has a bedhead wall and ceiling painted in Resene Seachange.



- Resene Alabaster
- Resene Nite Life
- Resene Seachange

dining room, which was repainted four times. Its walls are in Resene Roasted Orange from the Karen Walker Paints range. The paint’s subtle metallic sheen sparkles in the light, adding depth and complementing the appealing curves of the Scandinavian dining table and sideboard. But it took a few attempts to get it right.

“I started off with a jadey blue, but that was too bright so I went for a paler green, but I didn’t like that either,” laughs Debra. “We finally settled on gold to match the upholstery on the dining chairs.”

Upstairs, the master bedroom – another hot, north-facing space – features a tranquil combination of blues and greens, with the walls and ceiling painted in soothing Resene Seachange. “I wanted to keep the

blue theme going upstairs,” explains Debra. “It’s a really nice moody blue that’s relaxing and the dark ceiling makes it quite cosy.”

Debra and Adam always knew the house would be ideal for a growing family. Their teenage sons have full run of the lower level with its large, boldly themed games room decorated in monochromatic animal prints and a surprising combination of colours. Resene Nite Life, a deep navy blue, is used on the wall behind the TV, offset by Resene Daredevil, an uplifting orange inspired by a favourite print.

The boys chose wallpaper and colours for their bedrooms; 14-year-old Fin opting for more subtle earthy shades, while his brother Harper chose a high-



Above: Resene Daredevil brightens the games room and contrasts with a zebra-patterned Zazu chair.

gloss black wall of Resene Blackout behind his bed and accents of red and white.

Outside the games room and reaching up through the central atrium space is one of the home's most striking features – a sculptural painted tree. Set into concrete, it was originally surrounded by stones, which have been replaced by a wavy deck painted in Resene Awash. With a boxful of accumulated testpots, Debra patiently painted the branches a kaleidoscope of vivid shades.

"We'd talked about putting a sculpture there but the budget didn't allow for that, so I just thought: let's paint the tree," laughs Debra. "I didn't plan it out, it just happened organically. It took a while, but it was so much fun." **H**

words Deirdre Coleman
pictures Mark Heaslip



Scandinavian Bumling lamp, bought second-hand.

Get the look with Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen tinted to Resene Awash, great for visually cooling hot rooms.

Resene Awash

second hand gems



Get the look with Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen tinted to Resene Seachange.



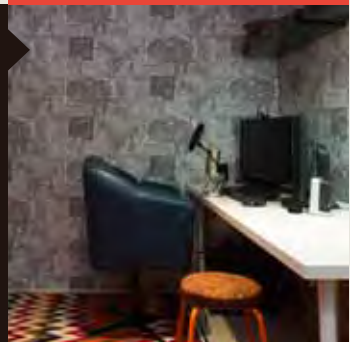
Japanese wooden dolls on a sideboard in the dining room.

Get the look with Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen tinted to Resene Daredevil, a sizzling retro colour.

Resene Daredevil

Get the look with Norwall wallpaper (no 6643-27), from Resene.

Resene Blackout



→ Turn the page for alternative looks to Debra and Adam's dining room...

Resene Black White




before

Above: Vibrant colour makes this dining room sizzle with personality and is joined by fun pieces of furniture. Also featured are a Brittany Bass Navy Geo artwork from Etsy, an extra large gold Uashmana plant holder from MintSix and Ball Heritage Mason Jars from Jamie Kay used as vases.

top tip

Minimise fly spots on ceilings with Resene Fly Deterrent. Designed to discourage flies from sitting on the painted surface, it reduces the appearance of unwanted fly spots.

 Resene Alabaster

bright is right for this casual dining space



Victoria Bibby and Dael Brady of Bibby + Brady suggest this alternative scheme:

We wanted to create a fresh, bright and relaxed space. Resene Elvis blue makes a stunning backdrop for the furniture and art pieces. We added a panel of Resene Captain Cook to add extra interest and create a subtle design feature. To highlight the beautiful curved wall we've chosen a hot pink called Resene Smitten, which picks up the pinks in the art and rug. The bright pink draws your eye around the room to create a cohesive space. The art and the sideboard create a relaxed focal point at the far end of the room. The table is anchored by the light shade and the rug, which also help to create a zone for the dining area.



phone 021 207 9903 (Dael) or 022 090 1770 (Vic)

web www.bibbyandbrady.co.nz

Resene Elvis 



Jens Roson replica chairs

Zuca
www.zuca.co.nz
0800 10 99 11

Rose Kilim rug

Izzy and Jean
www.izzyandjean.co.nz
06 880 0295

Resene Smitten 

Resene Captain Cook 

Arden Buffet by SM Interiors

www.bibbyandbrady.co.nz
021 207 9903



Resene Meltwater 

Large Viva Dining Table by SM Interiors

Bibby + Brady
www.bibbyandbrady.co.nz
021 207 9903



Pinhole Dipped Yellow light shade

Homebase Collections
www.homebasecollections.co.nz
06 835 8735


Resene Spotlight 



illustration
Malcolm White



before

 Resene Thorndon Cream

Above: Resene Mobster walls and amber accents give this room soft elegance and glamour with neutrals like Resene Thorndon Cream and Resene Alabaster. Wide floorboards in Resene Colorwood Weathered Grey stain anchor the scheme. The room also features a Ruckstuhl Salim rug from Sallee, a New Antiques Container table, Moooi Chess side table and Tom Dixon vessel from ECC, an Allan Chawner colour photograph Musee du Louvre I from Galerie Langman, and a Bourgie lamp from Backhouse Interiors.

top tip

Enhance timber flooring with Resene Colorwood stain in your choice of timber colour then finish in Resene Qristal ClearFloor waterborne urethane to protect its good looks.

the perfect space for the metro man



Janet Weir of Beautiful Rooms suggests this alternative scheme:

Achieving the wow factor in the rather stark architecture of the retro period can be a daunting task to most homeowners. That problem has been overcome in this scheme by choosing well-designed products with good colour that have simple, stylish lines – but with a cheeky twist. The chairs are purposely mismatched and together with the bowler hat lights and quirky Chess table, the room has the feel of a sophisticated gentleman's retreat. The deep bruised colour of Resene Mobster, sits alongside soft neutral colours like Resene Thorndon Cream and Resene Alabaster. Accents of translucent amber tones and gold add touches of luxury and glamour to this internationally inspired room.

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illustration
Malcolm White



Monster dining chair
ECC Lighting + Furniture
www.ecc.co.nz
04 473 3456

Innermost Jeeves + Wooster pendant lights
ECC Lighting + Furniture
www.ecc.co.nz
04 473 3456



 Resene
Clockwork Orange

**Marcel Stone Stool
by Kartell in Amber**

Backhouse
www.backhouse.nz
04 499 8847 or
09 309 0500



 Resene
Mobster

 Resene
Alabaster

**All Saints Mirror
by Ludovica +
Roberto Palomba**

Backhouse
www.backhouse.nz
04 499 8847 or
09 309 0500



Monster dining chair
ECC Lighting + Furniture
www.ecc.co.nz
04 473 3456

 Resene
Weathered Grey