

top class

Decorate top-to-toe by incorporating colour into your ceiling.

Resene
Half
Bokara Grey

top tip

It's best to paint the ceiling before the walls and trims. This is because it's easier to cut into the top of the wall than the edge of the scotia, plus paint drips won't affect already finished areas. Choose Resene SpaceCote Flat for the most washable finish, Resene Earthsense Ceiling Paint for the highest renewable content or Resene Ceiling Paint. All are low odour, smooth finishes with Environmental Choice approval.

Resene
Half Black White

Left: Atlas Architects in Victoria, used colour to accentuate the dramatic architecture of the raked ceiling of this renovated 1980s farmhouse. The main living, dining and kitchen area ceilings are painted in Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen tinted to Resene Half Bokara Grey. The walls are in Resene Ironsand, a softer-tone charcoal, which differentiates them from the ceiling and makes it appear as if the ceiling is floating.

Resene
Ironsand

They're one of the most overlooked parts of the home, but ceilings can be transformative. Michelangelo knew it when he painted his heavenly scene in the Sistine Chapel. Paul César Helleu and Charles Basing got it when they painted New York's Grand Central Station green and gold. It's only in the past 70 years that white flat ceilings have become the norm. But decorative and colourful ceilings are having a renaissance as many designers and homeowners start seeing ceilings as an opportunity to add design flair and cosy comfort.

Fifth element

Think of ceilings as a fifth wall just begging to be painted or wallpapered, says interior designer Kate Alexander of Places & Graces. Painting a ceiling can add drama and create cosiness. "Dark, dramatic ceilings are great in spaces where you want to create intimacy, such as dining rooms, sitting rooms, studies or bedrooms," says Kate.

"A bold-coloured ceiling can make a space feel super cosy or glamorous. The cocooning effect is amplified if the same colour is used on the ceiling and all the walls, particularly if it's a darker colour."

Resene Colour Consultant Amy Watkins recommends a flat finish on ceilings to hide imperfections; Resene Ceiling Paint is a flat paint with a low splatter formula specially formulated for the job. For a more washable finish try Resene SpaceCote Flat, or choose Resene Earthsense for its higher renewable content.

"I always go for a flat finish on ceilings as imperfections will often get highlighted by lighting if you use a higher-gloss finish. Resene

SpaceCote Flat with Resene Fly Deterrent would be my top choice for ceilings. The deterrent additive helps to discourage flies from settling on the surface, reducing the size and number of fly spots," says Amy. If wallpapering a ceiling, opt for an extra washable design. It can be fiddly to wallpaper a ceiling yourself, so take your time and enlist the help of another pair of hands – it's a two-person job.

Distraction tactics

Painting or wallpapering ceilings is a common optical trick used by interior designers; it even has a name – diversion theory. "Painting your ceiling a dark colour is quite useful if you want to employ diversion theory – that is, drawing your attention away from certain aspects in a space," says Kate.

"For example, I decorated a home recently, painting the ceiling in Resene Big Stone. It not only made the space feel more colourful but also diverted attention away from some architectural quirks. The room had been extended over the years, and all the entryways and windows were at different heights. It would have accentuated the differences if we'd used a feature colour on the wall, but the dark ceiling colour unified the space," says Kate. According to Kate, using the same colour on the walls and ceiling can help disguise uneven or crooked walls. However, consider your floor colour when opting for a dark ceiling and lighter walls. A dark-coloured ceiling paired with dark flooring and lighter walls might have a 'sandwich effect'. "It will look like you have shortened the walls," adds Kate.



top tip

Add Resene Fly Deterrent to your ceiling paint to reduce the size and appearance of fly spots.

Left: This villa has been modified over the years leading to windows and doors at different heights. Kate Alexander chose Resene Big Stone for the ceiling and Resene Half Black White for the walls and skirtings to tie the space together while disguising architectural quirks. The adjoining office ceiling and walls are also Resene Big Stone.

Resene Big Stone 



Devil in the detail

Many heritage homes have gorgeous detailed mouldings, cornices and ceiling roses that can be highlighted with paint. "If you want to highlight heritage ceiling features, change the gloss levels on the roses or mouldings with Resene Enamacryl gloss or Resene Lustacryl semi-gloss while still using the same colour as the rest of the ceiling. This will create a soft two-tone shadowy effect," says Amy. Another way to amp up the drama is to create a picture-frame effect using a different colour on the cornices to the main ceiling.

Hall pass

Hallways are an excellent place to start when incorporating colourful ceilings into your home, particularly modern homes with flat ceilings.

Hallway ceilings can also guide guests to the more public areas of your home. "A colourful ceiling draws your eye down a long hallway past bedrooms and private spaces to the rooms you want guests to travel to," says Kate.






For those nervous about trying a colourful ceiling, Kate says to give it a go. "Painting the ceiling a colour is one of my favourite things to do, and it gives you a lot of decorating freedom." **H**

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Above: A ceiling painted in Resene Bunting guides visitors towards the dining room at the end of the hall. Walls in Resene Barely There and skirtings and door in Resene Half Barely There.

-  Resene Half Barely There
-  Resene Quarter Merino
-  Resene Half Merino
-  Resene Merino
-  Resene Bunting

top tip

Ceilings reflect less light than walls so the same colour on the ceiling and wall will look darker on the ceiling. If you're choosing a lighter coloured ceiling, opt for a colour that is half strength or less of your wall colour. For example, if you use Resene Merino on the walls, opt for Resene Half Merino or Resene Quarter Merino on the ceiling and trims.



-  Resene Colour Me Pink
-  Resene Alabaster

Left: Lucy Treep of Burgess Treep & Knight Architects used Resene Colour Me Pink on the ceiling of this pergola with trims painted in Resene Alabaster, to add a sense of celebration.