

based on the original



after



It took just a few thumbnails posted on an internet property site to convince Jason Hague-Smith he'd found a house ripe for renovation.

"My sister had emailed me the all-important link," says Jason, who immediately showed the pictures to his wife, Irene. "Both the section and the house turned out to be just what we were looking for – sheltered, with good bones, character and great views of the Cook Strait and Rimutaka ranges."

While the property is located in one of Wellington's sought-after coastal suburbs, unbeknown to the couple a cyberspace glitch had helped eliminate competition from other punters, and Jason and Irene were able to snaffle the old weatherboard house at a fair price.

"No, we didn't go and look at it first – in hindsight, I guess we were pretty impulsive," laughs Jason. "But we'd made a firm decision to move closer to the city and wanted to live in Seatoun. It's a friendly neighbourhood that offers great schools for our children."

After renting the property out for a couple of years, the family moved in. As well as having two children, Ruby (9) and Archie (5), Irene was also expecting Phoenix (now one) at the time. And although the Hague-Smiths knew that you should live in a house for at least 12 months – to experience it in all seasons – before you do anything to it, they decided to throw caution to the wind and renovate, just four weeks after shifting in.

They commissioned John Mills of John Mills Architects to create the striking transformation they had in mind. Jason, as a tradesman and owner of Paragon Fireplace Specialists, says he'd seen a lot of John Mills' architecture through his job, and admired both the designer and his flamboyant style. And although Jason didn't know it at the time, Irene had also become a fan.

"John came across as very good to deal with; intuitive, reasonable and with a good eye," explains Jason. "His work had life; it wasn't boring. It was relaxed, and captured both a Kiwi and Pacific essence, something Irene and I wanted to incorporate in the design."

As well as a multi-cultural feel, the Hague-Smiths wanted a four-bedroom home that was contemporary, colourful and child-friendly. However, the renovation also needed to reflect some of the original dwelling's character and integrity.

"While cost was no doubt a driving factor, one reason we didn't demolish and start again was because we felt brand new homes often lack heart and soul," says Jason.

John and senior architect James Warren worked closely with the couple, looking at the family's evolving lifestyle and how to create spaces that could be easily configured around that. Preliminary measures also included examining the nature of the steep, sloping site. Foliage, for example,

- Resene De Janeiro
- Resene Moccaccino
- Resene Quarter Tana
- Resene Tana
- Resene Wasabi

was scrutinised to determine where the wind and sun was hitting, says James. And with the house perched at the end of a steep right-of-way, complex town planning issues meant having to work within tight parameters.

“Although, this was a positive thing, in that it made us have to really think through the spaces,” he adds.

Taking all this into account, the designers set out to transform the single-storey house into a striking two-level dwelling that made the most of the sunny, sheltered site and panoramic views of both the ocean and mountains beyond.

Clad in weatherboard and featuring a corrugated iron roof, the original 1910 house was one level, comprising two bedrooms and an attic. Various alterations and additions had been carried out over the years, and at the onset of the renovation, these revealed shoddy workmanship and amateur DIY gone wrong.

“When we got into the structural work, we found it wasn’t too flash – things such as cornices holding up the ceiling and posts made of just blocks nailed to each other,” says James.

Extra structural work was required, so the interior of the house was gutted, leaving only the ceiling and a wall on the seaward side. The space was reconfigured to include four bedrooms, a living room, a bathroom, a laundry, and a new ensuite and walk-in wardrobe for the main bedroom. A new entry way was also created, which leads to a foyer, casual lounge, and the stairway that provides access to the top floor. The original roof and attic were removed to make way for a new, mostly glazed structure, which stretches the length of the existing floor and cantilevers over the casual lounge.

“The ceiling, made from timber plywood, creates a structural diaphragm to counteract and stabilise the use of the glass,” explains James. “Following the slope of the section, it is cranked over the double-height void in the casual lounge, folding back down into a single height in the new upper living area.”

Jason took seven months off work to step into the role of project manager... a job that also involved being a barista.

“My daily routine included making lattes, flat whites and cappuccinos for all the tradesmen,” he laughs, adding that his record was getting 17 coffees out all at once in 15 minutes. However, it was well worth it, he says.

The family lived in the home during the entire renovation process, which wouldn’t have been so bad had the

weather not wreaked havoc with the work schedule, says Jason. The original idea had been to build the new upper level first – with the kitchen and open-plan living spaces – and move the family in there, before tackling the ground floor renovations. However, torrential downpours day after day threw any logical timeline out of kilter. Rather than delay a tight schedule, the family had no choice but to live in a state of chaos for two or three months.

“It was a nightmare, hideous, especially for Irene, who was pregnant with Phoenix,” says Jason. “We did consider moving out, but by that time we had all our possessions here, and with only one solid wall there was the question of security.”

With the original house being gutted around them, living conditions were basic.

“Our kitchen bench was basically a door. We had a crock pot, toaster and electric frying pan, but with limited power, we could only use one appliance at a time. Everything was demolished bar the toilet, which sat in the middle of the room with only a wall sheet for privacy,” explains Jason. “One of the most annoying things was at night, when the plastic building paper attached to the timber frames would rustle. The sound could keep you up for hours. I tried tightening and strengthening the paper, but it would catch even the slightest breeze.”

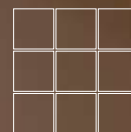
“The ceiling, made from timber plywood creates a structural diaphragm to counteract and stabilise the use of the glass.”

Getting materials onto the site was never going to be easy – the house sits up a long right-of-way past three other houses, and is perched on a dog-leg. As the owners have no driveway access, visitors must park on the road below and walk up to the house. So, a helicopter was used to get most of the materials in there.

“That was an exhilarating, yet absolutely terrifying experience,” says Jason.

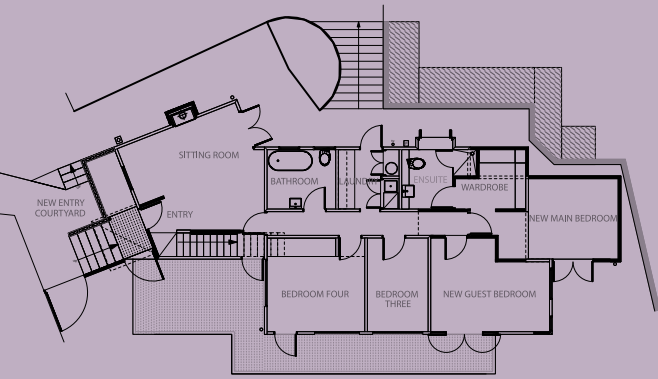
Dodgy weather again threatened to hinder progress, with the helicopter pilot making a marginal call on conditions and the wind picking up halfway through the load lifts.

“At 7am we had five trucks lined up, and with only two minutes between each chopper lift, it was really touch and go. It was such a buzz, we were all still talking about it for days afterwards!”

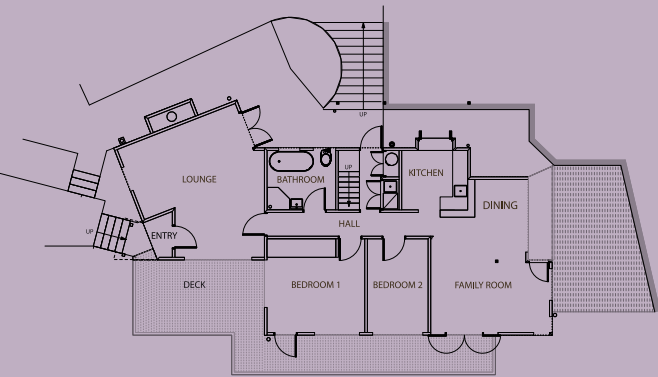


alternative ideas for this interior on pages 20-23

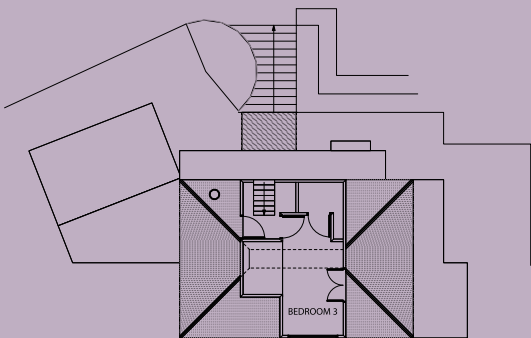
ground floor before



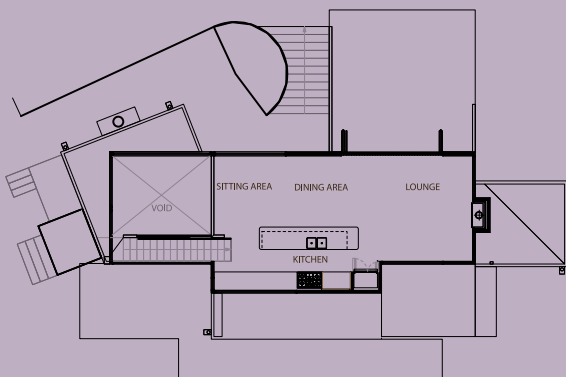
ground floor after



first floor before



first floor after



With 70% of the new upper level made from glass, all the glazing had to be carried onto the site by hand. This was another exercise that required precision timing and deliveries had to be carried out at certain times to minimise disruption to the neighbours.

“Thankfully, they were really supportive and empathised with our difficult situation,” says Jason.

The home’s dramatic presence is underlined by rich use of wood, metal, glass and colour. Rusticated cladding in a wide profile and painted in Resene Tana ensures the house recedes into its bush setting, while the weatherboards are also a salute to the character of the original homestead. The decks around the home are made from swamp totara, dredged from the Wairarapa.

“It’s a wood that won’t splinter, and being environmentally friendly and chemical-free, it’s perfect for homes with children,” says the architect.

A rusted steel canopy – already displaying a salt-induced patina – sits above the copper front door. Inside, saligna timber floors feature throughout. In the downstairs casual lounge, there’s a large wall painted with Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen in Resene De Janeiro; its mauvey-purple tones adding a vibrant shot of freshness, says James. Jarrah handrails add subtle warmth and colour to the staircase, also made from tongue-and-groove saligna.

Two of the most distinctive features of the new upper level are the expansive kitchen and its chequered suspended ceiling. Providing a link between the two, and a subtle guideline for other aspects of the renovation, is a piece of tapa. Set in liquid glass, it covers the entire length of the island. The bark cloth, gifted to the family by the team at John Mills Architects, is the inspiration behind the multi-coloured plywood ceiling.

“It’s designed to be a floating artwork, with the shapes and colours providing design cues,” explains James. “In fact, the ceiling was one of the real design drivers in this renovation; how could we create impact and interest inside, and also provide a wow factor for guests walking up to the house? So, rather than

simply looking up from the outside and seeing part of the sky obscured by the roof, they're instead treated to glimpses of the ceiling through the glass, which provides a sense of anticipation."

Blue and various shades of brown highlight the random shapes on the ceilings, with different gloss finishes used to bring them to life. The tapa reference is also evident in the kitchen cabinetry, which features alternating drawers painted with Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen in Resene Moccaccino and Resene Lemon Grass. And the splashes of colour don't end there. Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen in Resene Wasabi features on the wall at the far end of the upper level.

"The vivid colour was a way to frame the room," explains James.

The kitchen, with its sweeping views of the ocean, is a far cry from the previous one, which was tucked in a dark corner of the original house. The owners love the spectacular scenery framed by the large windows, with the changing sea a continuous unfolding drama – stormy and moody one minute, still and calm the next.

The space forms the hub of the home, with areas for lounging, dining, and relaxing pivoted around it. Large bi-folding doors open up onto a large deck, which butts into the back of the site. With the new addition buffering it from any wind, this is an extremely sheltered spot and a great suntrap.

Blue and various shades of brown highlight the random shapes on the ceilings, with different gloss finishes used to bring them to life.

With a growing family like the Hague-Smiths, it was essential to create flexible living areas that could easily be re-organised to meet their future lifestyle needs, says James. It was also important to create pockets of privacy – around the kitchen and around the stairway, for example – where people could do their own thing, yet still feel part of whatever was going on in the house. Take the glass balustrade above the double-height void, for instance, which allows Jason and Irene upstairs to see and hear what the children are up to downstairs in the informal lounge. Nooks for reading and watching television upstairs also mean whoever's cooking in the kitchen is rarely alone.

Despite the testing moments – not to mention having to forfeit a few basic luxuries along the way – Jason and Irene are delighted with the house and their family has quickly adapted to living in it.

"Great craftsmanship, quality products and attention to detail were top priorities," they say. "John Mills Architects' dedication and enthusiasm for the project was fantastic, from the lengths they went to in creating spaces that suit the way we live, through to the finer details, such as looking at the art and pottery we loved. This home's not ostentatious or precious, it's just very relaxing. Everything flows, and whether you're inside or outside, you're a part of it. We love it." **H**

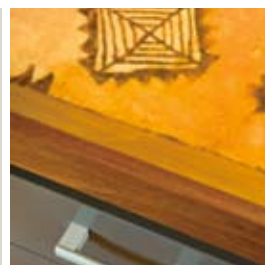


Design: James Warren and John Mills, John Mills Architects

Resene Wasabi

Joinery and door hardware: Urban Joinery
Lighting: Reil Lighting

Resene Quarter Tana



Cladding: Wellington Rusticated Weatherboard

Roofing: ZRX COLORSTEEL®

Resene Moccaccino

Get the exterior look with Resene Sonyx 101 tinted to Resene Tana.

Resene Tana

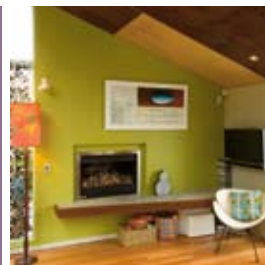


Bath: Wet Light Bath in polycarbonate orange

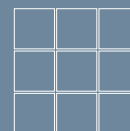
Resene Lemon Grass

Get the interior look with Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen tinted to Resene De Janeiro, Resene Lemon Grass, Resene Moccaccino and Resene Wasabi.

Resene De Janeiro




Resene Escapade



on the following pages,
find two alternative
style suggestions



^ Use light colours to increase the sense of space.

Resene Urbane 



Rug
The Rug Studio
Ponsonby, Auckland
Phone 09 360 7278



<
Day bed fabric
Japonica Bark
Textilia
www.textilia.co.nz

Low table
Champagne

City Business Furniture
09 302 9999
www.citybusinessfurniture.com

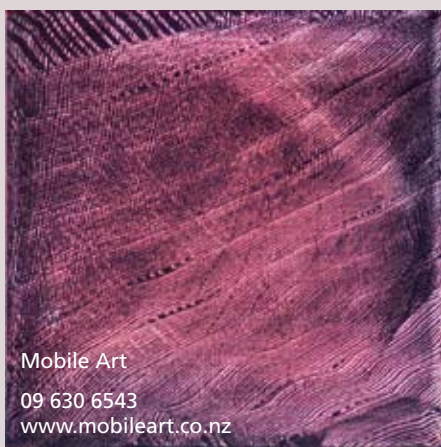


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Stools

City Business Furniture
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Wallcovering in Platinum Blonde
Pattern number 21403
Resene ColorShops nationwide
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Resene
Felix

Resene Double Sea Fog

Resene Vintage

Resene Vista White



Judy Tindill, from Innerspace, proposes this alternative scheme on a budget of \$5000:

A palette of light neutrals is used here to create a cool, calm, airy effect. The walls and ceiling are painted in Resene Vista White, with the kitchen cabinets finished in the same shade in Resene Lustacryl. A tufted wool floor rug adds a textural touch.

To counterbalance the pale colours, the fireplace wall is painted in smoky-taupe Resene Felix. The space is further grounded by the introduction of a low daybed covered in

bold brown-and-black fabric, while artwork accents the walls.

To keep costs down, the existing dining table is inexpensively made over using Resene Natural Textures Wallcovering in Platinum Blonde, topped with a 10mm-thick sheet of glass. The table and chair frames are repainted in Resene Double Sea Fog.

Judy Tindill

Judy Tindill, Innerspace,
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website www.innerspacedesign.co.nz



^ Don't be afraid to use colour to highlight your theme.



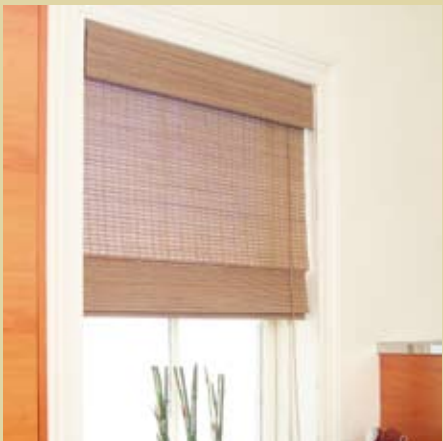
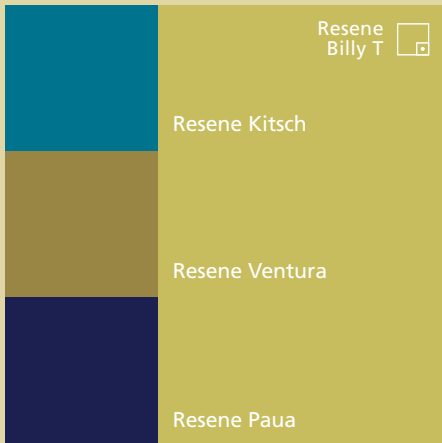
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Prolux Ltd
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www.prolux.co.nz



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Global Living
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www.global-living.co.nz



Jill Merritt, from Colorspecs, suggests this alternative design on a budget of \$7500:

A Kiwiana/Pacifica theme characterises this scheme. It incorporates a mix of shiny glass and metallic surfaces with the warmth of neutral materials, to create a vibrant and welcoming environment.

A bold feature wall in Resene Paua surrounds the fireplace, offset by the other walls, which are painted in Resene Billy T. The highly polished kitchen bench, featuring a Pacific motif, is balanced by the reflective tempered glass of the Torino

dining suite. Leather-backed chairs tone with the existing leather sofa and a rug made from leather strips.

Pendant halogens in cobalt blue complement the bold blue feature wall, which is adorned with two paintings that flank the fireplace. An unobtrusive water feature opposite the sliding doors is surrounded by native ferns for a relaxed touch in the dining room.

Jill Merritt, Colorspecs,
phone 03 323 6422, email colorspecs@clear.net.nz