

country haven





Many of us conduct our lives at a dizzying pace, with rarely a moment to catch our breath. This Canterbury holiday cottage is the perfect place for taking a break and recharging the batteries.

Built seven years ago, the cottage sits on the banks of the Selwyn River near Garfield, just 15 minutes drive from Mt Hutt and the Terrace Downs Golf Course. The original owners commissioned architect Gavin Willis, of Willis & Associates, to design a simple, compact home. Their budget, including the purchase of the land, was less than \$100,000.

“We opted for a simple construction to fit in with the lovely natural environment,” says Gavin. The cottage is surrounded by native trees and conifers, with a large flat section providing a great place for relaxation and recreation.

In keeping with its setting, the cottage has an alpine-inspired design. As well as a steep mono-pitch roof, the rear wall is also pitched and works at a right angle to the roof slope, making the structure very resistant to seismic movement. Council regulations and the building’s vicinity to the river meant that it had to be placed on pile foundations to prevent flooding in the unlikely event of the river rising.

The exterior, accented with small windows of varying shapes and sizes, is clad in low-maintenance corrugated COLORSTEEL® in New Denim Blue. Inside, the layout is simple. The ground level contains a living area that runs across the front of the house, a small kitchen, a bathroom (with a shower, basin and



toilet) and the master bedroom. Upstairs, the loft sleeps up to five people.

Exposed ceiling beams and panelled walls, as well as a log-burner, create a rustic, back-to-basics atmosphere. Translucent fibreglass panels on the wall above the living area bring extra light into the loft space.

The interior colours were chosen to complement the warm, oil-stained timber. The kitchen features the deep maroon shade, Resene Bulgarian Rose, while the area above the living-room wall panelling is painted in Resene Armadillo. Shuttle Grey and Gull Grey, both Resene colours, are used in the bathroom and bedroom respectively.

Kathryn Kerr and her husband bought the cottage about 18 months ago, and find it an ideal place to unwind with their three children and groups of friends.

“We love having friends out here or just coming out by ourselves for a break,” says Kathryn. “You can go to the

cottage for one night and come home feeling so rested and revived. It’s such a great retreat.”

The north-facing deck and outdoor area is one of Kathryn’s favourite spots. Complete with a brazier and a built-in stone barbecue, it looks down onto the river.

“We sit outside having barbecues with friends late into the night.”

It’s a year-round place, she says. Nestled under the mountains, the cottage enjoys a real microclimate.

“We’ve been here when there’s been a full snow – it’s so gorgeous and really cosy inside with the log burner. Then in summer, it can get very hot. It goes from one extreme to the other.”

This simple, little cottage really is a home for all seasons. **H**