



Christchurch designer Lou Barker, pictured here with Holly the beagle, painted her living room in Resene 'Seeker' and loves the way it works with her bright furnishings and Marimekko fabric lampshade.

www.resene.co.nz



THE COLOUR EXPERTS

Interior designer Lou Barker says vibrant colours make her happy

When you walk in the front door of Lou Barker's home, the first thing you notice are the vibrant colours. "I've always had a fascination with colour," says the owner of Blue Scarlet, a furniture and interior design business. "I'm simply drawn to it." After buying her Cashmere hills home three years ago, she transformed its off-white interiors. From her turquoise living room to the vivid pink and yellow accents in her kitchen, Lou's home is testament to her belief that colour makes the world a happier place. You can visit Lou's home on *NZ House & Garden's* Christchurch House Tour on 24 March 2017 - the tours are sponsored by Resene.

WHY DID YOU PICK RESENE 'SEEKER' FOR YOUR LIVING ROOM? I've always loved turquoise and I wanted to use a bright colour in the room to complement the brass fittings that are scattered around my house. It works beautifully and I couldn't be happier.

ADVICE FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO BE BRAVER WITH COLOUR BUT ARE NERVOUS ABOUT IT? Injecting colour into your home can be a shock to the system if you're not used to it. Bright cushions and accessories can make a huge difference to a neutral background and are a simple way to ease into using colour. When you're ready to paint, a primary colour such as red can be easiest. Start by experimenting in rooms such as the bathroom or laundry - you can simply close the door and shut it away while you're still getting used to it.

ANY TIPS FOR MAKING BRIGHT COLOURS WORK? I love mixing unexpected colours and creating a room with a vibrant palette. I've found when two colours don't mix well with each other, bringing in a third colour ties the room together. And a sharp white trim sets off bright colours; I used Resene 'Alabaster' in my home. I also think it helps to be tidy - if you use bright colours and you're messy, everything can just turn into a big jumbled mess.

WHO OR WHAT INSPIRES YOU? I like to take cues from fashion and nature: for example, a flower with beautiful pink petals that are sharply contrasted with a vibrant yellow centre, or a person on the street who is wearing an unexpected pop of colour or a bright pattern. A trip to Mexico was also inspiring - they really embrace colour.