



# *Designer Dwelling*

It was architectural designer Noel Jessop's biggest challenge yet when he designed a unique home for his family.

Words **Soraya Nicholas** Photography **Amanda Aitken**



The kitchen was designed in a way so that it is not immediately obvious that it is in fact a kitchen. The joinery was painted in Resene colours Black and White Pointer, with the design work completed by Noel.



AFTER LIVING IN A HOME LOCATED TO THE REAR OF THEIR property for some time, architectural designer and ADNZ member Noel Jessop, along with wife Kerina, was familiar with the style and feel of their immediate surroundings. He also had a good understanding of what would suit their section, and a greater appreciation for homes designed within tight space constraints. "I really liked the small platform the home we had been living in had been designed to, and because of the size of our building site, it was important the design I created was space conscious," says Noel. He was conscious of preserving what he could of the existing plantings on the section, for the sake of his own outlook and his neighbours. "Now that the house is complete, I really like lying on the couch and looking back at the kitchen, and seeing the garden and the trees through the kitchen windows. There's a seamless connection between our neighbours trees and the two large existing Italian Alder trees on our property."

A large Totara tree was also retained, with the deck built around it so as not to disturb its existence. Rather than see it as a restriction, Noel was happy to work around the tree, and it was the perfect place for daughter Carter's swing to be hung from. It also softens the look of the exterior, which incorporates large amounts of glass, Cedar and steel.

The relaxed yet designer appearance of the home suits both Noel and Kerina's style, and they went into the process with a joint understanding of what they wanted to achieve. "We

**ABOVE** A David Trubridge light hangs above the dining table and the lounge area, adding a designer feel to the space. It stands out against Resene White Pointer walls, and complements the contemporary furniture.



## Q&A with Noel Jessop

**What was your design brief?**  
Originally it was pretty basic. We wanted to achieve a small functional home that was still fantastic despite its small platform.

**Were you restricted in any way as to what you could build?**  
It's a small site (450m2) facing due north towards a busy road. We also had a budget for the build, so we had the same basic restrictions as any of our clients would have - and my wife was the client, so I was answerable to her! The four cars had a bit of input into why the roof slopes in the direction it does and at the pitch it does - I designed this around the height I needed in the garage to get in a car hoist, so I could stack one car on top of another.

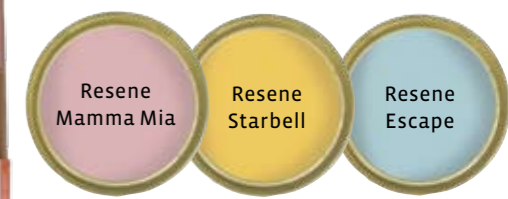
**Was it difficult designing for yourself, as opposed to working for a client?**  
Yes and no. I think the hardest thing most designers' face is that we have so many ideas, as we're exposed to so many possibilities. The biggest influence on this job was our existing home, designed by architect Bernard Gleeson in 1973. As the two properties were going to be quite close to each other there had to be a connection - which is largely the low pitch roof with the opposing, steeper pitched ensuite and bathroom roofs.



Vertical Shiplap Cedar coated with Drydens "dark" wood oil is the primary external cladding material.

In Focus

ABOVE David Trubridge kitset hanging lamp available from [www.davidtrubridge.com](http://www.davidtrubridge.com). LEFT Black hanging lights purchased second-hand via Trade Me.



The custom-made book shelf incorporates concealed cupboards painted in Resene colours.

"The house isn't heavily designed, and friends and family often comment on how spacious it feels, even though it is actually very tight in terms of the space I had to work with." - Noel Jessop.

had a clear idea of the materials and style we wanted, and I didn't deviate from this, as that's when things can become cluttered and confusing," explains Noel. "I spent a summer on the deck listening to music designing this house, there was no pressure and I could alter and adjust it in between surfs! I'd move a wall and then re-sketch it and show Kerina, although she got a little over it after a while. I think I've got about 20 sketches largely of the same design!"

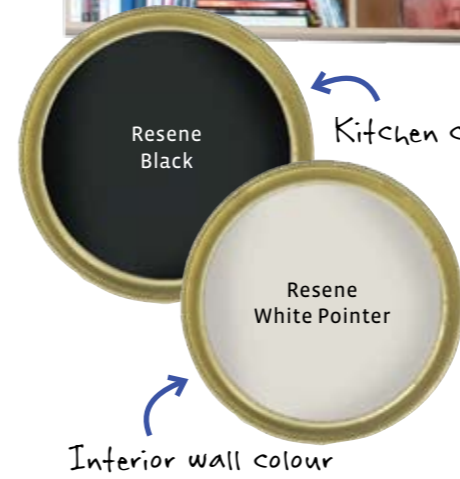
The only thing that did make them stop and think was when they found out they were expecting their first child. "The only change from the original sketch was a month after we had finalised the layout. What was going to be the music/media space became our daughter's room," says Noel with a laugh.

One thing that did not change at any point was Noel's desire to create a very unique kitchen. At the time he was the main cook, although he does confess that Kerina has taken over the culinary duties of late, now that she is at home with Carter. "What I love about the kitchen is the way it doesn't aesthetically look like one," says Noel. "From the outside, the kitchen is like a box, and at first glance it is not obviously a kitchen."

In reflection of how he designed his home, Noel describes it as "simple, compact and functional." But points out that it is not "over designed", rather a real home that can be enjoyed by his family, and he is proud of the spacious feel inside and out, despite the actual footprint.

It is also special to Noel and Kerina because it is the first home their daughter has lived in. "Kerina actually went into labour when we were living in our old house, and when I brought her home it was to the new house, which was finished and ready to move straight in to." ■

Noel Jessop Architecture, 07 854 6635, [www.nja.co.nz](http://www.nja.co.nz)



Resene Black

Kitchen cabinets

Resene White Pointer

Interior wall colour



1. Bathroom tiles from Artedomus 2. Corten Steel feature cladding 3. Kitchen feature crafted from a Bestwood veneer, supplied by Corden Joinery.

<b>THE SPECS</b>	Hamilton \$200,000 - \$300,000 125 Sq m	3	2	1
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