

-  Resene Armadillo
-  Resene Zeus
-  Resene Triple Tapa
-  Resene Karaka
-  Resene Go Ben
-  Resene Cargo
-  Resene Raptor
-  Resene Cobblestone
-  Resene Lichen
-  Resene Colorwood Mid Greywash
-  Resene Colorwood Natural

# breathing room

Create a zen-like zone with the right interior scheme.



If you've been feeling overwhelmed lately, you're not alone. Our lives are busier than ever, full of distractions endlessly clamouring for our attention – so it comes as no surprise that we are starting to tune out and turn off to regain some sanity in our lives.

There are some places in the world, though, which are consistently reported to be happier and more relaxed than others, and a big part of that comes down to the way their homes are designed. Scandinavia is a prime example. As it turns out, our recent obsession with Scandi design and the return to embracing notions of self-care and wellness are two trends that naturally fit hand-in-hand.

*Hygge* – which, like us, you've probably been pronouncing wrong until now (it's actually 'hyoo-gah') – is the Danish and Norwegian word for a mood of cosiness and comfort, with feelings of wellness and contentment at its forefront. It's a principle that shifts the focus back to enjoying the simple things in life. While we may not need quite the same level of protection from the cold here as those in the far north, the purpose at its core is undoubtedly a concept that we can all still get on board with.

Danes and Norwegians often combine *hygge* with other nouns – not unlike the way we use adjectives in English – that embody all the warm and fuzzy feelings that the term implies. For example, a *hygge*krog is essentially a nook where you can get cosy – picture a window seat where you can wrap yourself up in a blanket and watch the world go by, or your favourite armchair where you curl up to read. When you think about *hygge* in this way, it's easy to see how it ties snugly into the world of interior design.

Eastern design influences, too – particularly those hailing from Japan – have also seen renewed popularity in recent years. Japanese culture greatly values ideas that are associated with both design and wellness; prizing quality over quantity, as well as principles like thoughtful intention and minimalism (hello, Marie Kondo). It's not hard to spot parallels between these and the functionality, honesty in materials and quality craftsmanship that are prevalent in Scandinavian homes – nor is it difficult to draw similarities between *hygge* and Eastern ideas like Feng Shui and Wabi Sabi.

"The atmosphere in a room is influenced by what's around you. Certainly, a ceiling – be it high or low or dark or light – bears an impact, but it's the ➤



**Above:** Creating literal symmetry adds to the zen-like balance in this elegant tearoom. Upper wall in Resene Eagle, lower wall in Resene Waiouru, floor in Resene Colorwood Mid Greywash, skirting in Resene Ottoman, planters in Resene Cut Glass, round rattan cushion tops in Resene Eagle, paper lantern bottoms in Resene Sweet Corn and shoes in Resene Waiouru. Artwork from endemicworld, floor cushions from Nood.

**Opposite:** The room you get your rest in is the natural choice for a place where you'd want to create a *hygge* space. For a rustic yet elegant bedroom you won't want to wait to wind down in, go for tongue-and-groove timber walls in Resene Armadillo, timber flooring stained in Resene Colorwood Natural, a chair in Resene Zeus, a bedside table in Resene Triple Tapa and a vase in Resene Karaka. For a bit of art therapy, paint a pot in Resene Go Ben and add your own freehand designs in Resene Cargo and Resene Beachcomber. Linen bedding from Foxtrot Home, cushions and rug from Citta, throw and lamp from Paper Plane, chair from Mocka.

**Left:** Background in Resene Armadillo with A4 drawdown paint swatches (from left to right) in Resene Half Nomad, Resene Quarter Gravel, Resene Raptor, Resene Cobblestone, Resene Go Ben, Resene Beachcomber, Resene Zeus, Resene Triple Tapa, Resene Armadillo, Resene Lichen and Resene Karaka, woven bowl in Resene Quarter Gravel, tea light holder in Resene Half Nomad and jug vase in Resene Raptor. Linen from Foxtrot Home, throw and candle holder from Citta.

Resene Waiouru

Resene Quarter Gravel

Resene Eagle

Resene Half Nomad

Resene Ottoman

Resene Cut Glass

Resene Sweet Corn

Resene Beachcomber



-  Resene Duck Egg Blue
-  Resene Inside Back
-  Resene Dragon
-  Resene Secrets
-  Resene Double Sea Fog
-  Resene Balderdash
-  Resene Celeste
-  Resene Terrain
-  Resene Cobblestone

colours and materials that are head-to-toe that really matter," says interior designer Sylvia Sandford. "Walls, windows, doors and openings, how they are decorated and what is beyond – vistas, views, gardens and street scenes – can all provide a sense of nurture if planned thoughtfully."

While Feng Shui and Wabi Sabi can be acknowledged when you're designing a space yourself, Sylvia says they need to be properly understood to really work the way they're supposed to.

"I subconsciously seek harmony in any scheme and use these principles as a guide when required. I think one can draw from these practices in the pursuit of a theme and integrate them for the desired outcome," she explains.

This is perhaps why *hygge* has recently become the

most widely embraced of the three. It's a more casual concept, one that's hard to define yet simple to agree on – if it gives you the warm fuzzies, it's *hygge*.

## Colour me tranquil

The journey to designing a restful and relaxing room – your own special *hygge* room where you'll want to put your feet up – begins with choosing the right colours.

"Each colour has an energy and an emotional aspect to it," says Tracie Rodwell-Dunne, who worked as an interior designer and now helps share her immense knowledge with other aspiring designers as the owner and principal of Courses 4 Creatives.

"Certain colours are innately restful and calming, like blue and green. But, when white is added, it softens all colour energies. This is the case with tints like pale blue, pale green, pale pink and the like."

Green, in particular, can evoke powerful emotions and has the strongest association to wellness. Look to nature and you'll see the seemingly endless variety of shades of green expressing growth, renewal, life and abundance. It's also the colour that conjures thoughts of refreshment and peace for most of us. Performers are invited to relax in the 'green room' before going on stage, and many doctors even use green in their offices to help put their patients at ease.

To some, however, green can also be perceived negatively when associated with materialism – whether it be money, envy or possessiveness. While these associations are more the exception than the rule when it comes to its use within the comforts of your home, Tracie says it's still worth noting that while one hue might make you feel a certain way it can have a completely adverse effect on other people.

"Whether we like a colour or not is mostly driven by our own emotional programming. Our like or dislike of a colour is very personal. For example, one person might find pale grey calming while someone else might find it depressing – it's normal for individuals to have different responses."

Generally speaking though, colours that are most commonly considered 'restful' are ones that are neither too light nor too dark – those that sit somewhere in middle ground are ideal. "Their beauty has a subtlety in what may be called a 'veil of grey.' Resene Dusted Blue, Resene Duck Egg Blue, Resene Inside Back, Resene Dragon and Resene Secrets are all great options, and they work well with colours close to them on the colour wheel. Those shades and tints can be lighter or darker and used in varying proportions to support the key colour, but it's best to avoid anything with too much contrast," adds Sylvia.

## Finishes that factor in

"Other key factors in creating a restful room are having space and a sense of openness, incorporating privacy and avoiding high gloss surfaces or busy, repetitive patterns," says Sylvia. "That means getting rid of clutter and looking for ways to bring in comfort and lightness with leggy furniture, such

## Tranquil trios

Resene Half Carefree 

When searching for the right hues for you, interior designer and renowned colour expert Debbie Abercrombie recommends taking your own personal definition of wellness into consideration.

"Wellness is an active process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life. Therefore, wellness can mean a healthy balance, wellness can mean nurturing, wellness can be calming and wellness can be what makes you happy," she says.

Depending on your association, Debbie recommends trying these Resene colours:



as a chair you can't wait to sink into."

"The senses should be heightened as the room wraps around you and welcomes you with an overwhelming calm."

As the sun rises and sets, the mood in a room changes. Whether it be through artificial sources or window coverings, lighting is a controllable and powerfully manipulative tool that can be helpful in nailing down the tranquillity you're after. "Harsh downlighting needs to be avoided and replaced by a variety of light levels," recommends Sylvia. Try adding dimmer switches, sconces, layered curtains – both sheers and solids – until you build up the right atmosphere. And don't forget to hunt down some candles you love for when you really want to chill out.

Touch, too, can have a big impact on how a space feels. Scandinavian design is inspired by nature, so natural fibres fit particularly well within the concept of *hygge*.

Linen works especially well in an interior design scheme where this relaxed look is emphasised and it has a remarkable way of keeping cool in summer and warm in winter. Because of its absorbent qualities and ability to breathe, linen is hypoallergenic making it a popular fabric choice for bed linen. It is also naturally anti-bacterial which creates a safer, more hygienic environment.

Natural fibres can be layered together to create even more texture and depth within a room. With a chunky wool rug, some beautiful cushions and an easy-on-the-eyes colour palette, you can make a home feel very *hygge*. Natural fibre rugs are hard wearing and great for high traffic areas. Plus, they are also easier to clean than viscose and create more visual texture within the spaces where they're used.

A timber floor stained in Resene Colorwood Mid Greywash gives off a soft weathered look that's just as ideal for a casual bach as it is for an elegant home. Thanks to its hint of colour, the stain makes for a more interesting choice than a simple whitewashed floor but is much more neutral than other coloured stains, which means it goes well with virtually anything.

Because you're not going to be relying on colour so much to create contrast within your space doesn't mean that you should eschew it altogether. Instead, look for ways to incorporate contrast visually so that your restful room remains interesting. While simplicity is generally the name of the game in a wellness-oriented space, subtle patterns can still be included – and often should be to ensure there is enough visual interest in the space – though it's best to stick to more restrained versions.

Even if you're not completely redoing your space, incorporating plants is an affordable and easy way to bring in a breath of fresh air – literally. Some live plants can help to purify the air in your home but all will help increase the oxygen levels. Even better? Pick up some Resene testpots in shades that you find soothing and paint the pots you'll be housing them in. **H**



- Resene Juniper
- Resene Rose Gold
- Resene Dover White
- Resene Colorwood Mid Greywash

**Above:** A restful space that is as minimal and toned down as it could be. Pared down to the un-fussy essentials, this relaxing-looking bedroom seems to embody the principle of *hygge* right to its core. A Nordic blue green, Resene Juniper is a shade that falls firmly in the category of hues that evoke a sense of serenity. Used on this bedroom's walls, it pairs perfectly with the timber floor finished in Resene Colorwood Mid Greywash, a headboard in Resene Dover White, a bench in Resene Balderdash and a pendant lamp in Resene Double Sea Fog with a 'gold leaf effect' created using Resene Rose Gold metallic paint. The bedside table and woven basket (housing the large plant) are painted Resene Double Sea Fog, the vases are painted Resene Balderdash (left) and Resene Double Sea Fog (right) and the small ombre plant pot is in Resene Celeste (top), Resene Terrain (middle) and Resene Cobblestone (bottom). Rug and cushions from Me & My Trend, artwork and tote from Kmart.

**Left:** Bathrooms are at the forefront of the wellness design trend. A simple textural wallpaper design, such as Resene Wallpaper Collection E376049, is another option for creating a calming bathroom space – especially when used to back a tonal colour palette in different shades of indigo, such as Resene Lucky Point, Resene Midnight Express and Resene Bullitt.



- Resene Lucky Point
- Resene Bullitt
- Resene Midnight Express
- Resene Dusted Blue

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