



# cooking up character

A dose of colour could be all you need to take your kitchen design up a notch.

**Above left and right:** Thanks to pops of bold Resene brights that tie into a favourite fabric – which was used to reupholster heirloom armchairs seen in the adjacent living area, Amy and Mark’s kitchen is brimming with character while still looking fresh and modern. Walls, trims and ceiling in Resene Alabaster, kitchen cabinets in Resene Sea Fog, kitchen drawers in Resene Rock Spray, dining table in Resene Cabaret and tongue-and-groove panelling in Resene Saratoga.

**G**enerally speaking, most people don’t treat their kitchen as a trend-focused space in the way they do a bedroom or living room. And it makes sense; kitchens are bigger investments and many parts aren’t as easy to update as paint and furnishings. The trouble is, when kitchens are designed to be completely devoid of personality so as not to offend ‘prospective buyers’ – regardless of whether or not you actually have plans to sell your home within the foreseeable future – they’re not very warm or inviting places to spend time in.

The phantom effect of designing your home around saleability is that you end up being the one who misses out on enjoying the spaces you actually live in. We look at two enviable kitchens brimming with style and personality – with gorgeous Resene colours baked right in.

## Fresh, fun and fabric-inspired

A few playful pops of colour are what punctuate Amy and Mark’s eclectic contemporary kitchen and take it far beyond your typical white kitchen in terms of style and flair. The redesign of this character-filled space was part of a recent tip-toe renovation of their classic 1960s weatherboard home. After looking around at other houses for the better part of two years, the couple chose to stay put because everything else just seemed to pale in comparison. They adored their property with its big,

beautiful backyard plum tree and the cul-de-sac it sits in, which is surrounded by lovely neighbours and lots of kids for their two young children, Levi and Hazel, to play with.

As it often happens with spaces that have been thoughtfully decorated, the colour choices in the reconfigured kitchen look effortless – but Amy assures us that was far from her reality.

“I bought what felt like about 50 testpots,” laughs Amy. “I struggled to find a starting point because I felt like I couldn’t choose the paint before I chose the bench tops, which I couldn’t pick before I’d chosen the tiles, which I couldn’t choose before I’d confirmed the colour for the panelling, which I couldn’t choose before the upholstery and curtains and so on. I was going around in circles thinking that I’d just do everything white. But then I found the most beautiful fabric which I used to recover two armchairs that my parents bought when they got married nearly 50 years ago and that became my ‘red thread’ for the design.”

The fabric works a treat to unify the Resene Sea Fog cabinets, Resene Rock Spray drawers, outward facing Resene Saratoga tongue-and-groove panelling and Resene Cabaret dining table surrounded by Resene Alabaster walls, trims and ceiling. Amy has also used it to inspire other colours she’s chosen in adjacent areas of the home, including a hallway and fireplace surround in sunny Resene Pizza.

While the colour palette is undeniably reflective of the new upholstery, it also mirrors Amy’s shining personality.

“It’s just me! I’ve always loved bright colours and I think what we’ve chosen reflects our family really nicely and gives our house character. The colours just really make us happy,” she says of the results.

For those struggling with their own colour selections, Amy recommends taking your time to make decisions. “Our renovation took four months and I probably looked at colour samples every day until it was time to make my final choices. Definitely take home plenty of testpots and samples so that you can look at things in different lighting.”



Resene  
Clockwork Orange


Resene  
Pizza

**Left:** Instead of your typical white kitchen, walls in soft sage Resene Smoky Green and uppers in iconic Resene Clockwork Orange mix with warm woods and cork flooring, making Rachel and Shane's kitchen a standout. Resene Ecu White has been used as an accent colour on the trims and ceiling to reflect the bench and stool tops.

Resene  
Cabaret

Resene  
Saratoga

- Resene Alabaster
- Resene Sea Fog
- Resene Ecu White
- Resene Smoky Green

 **Choose Resene AquaLAQ to add colour to your kitchen joinery. The range is especially designed for cabinetry, furniture and joinery and includes a waterborne sealer, colour coat and Environmental Choice approved clear coat.**

#### images

Amy Arnold,  
Rachel Sawyer

## Sage and citrus shine

Silvery sage green and bitter orange, which feature prominently in Rachel and Shane's stellar kitchen space, have been on the uptrend as popular colours to decorate with, but it was actually the couple's penchant for all things mid-mod that led them to select their kitchen's stunning colour scheme.

"We love all things mid-century and wanted our colour choices to be unique, bold and unconventional," explains Rachel. "As the main living areas are essentially all open plan, we needed a colour palette that would work for the entire space." The Karen Walker Paints colour range provided just the right colours. "Inspired by the Bauhaus School of the 1920s, it combines colours from an emotional point of view rather than a technical one, and we grouped them in a way that tells a story rather than simply matching them tonally. It's perfect for our little retro home, and we felt confident in the knowledge that everything would work together!"

The hours that the couple spent doing their homework trawling through library books, Pinterest, television shows and era-appropriate films is evident in the kitchen's design details, as is their commitment to their original vision. The pop of orange on the cabinet

uppers, painted in Resene Clockwork Orange, brings the space to life and ties in with Rachel and Shane's bold front door while soothing Resene Smoky Green on the walls works as the perfect counterpoint. A ceiling and trims in Resene Ecu White is the ideal colour to complement it thanks to its slightly green undertone and plays off the white bench and stool tops to create a cohesive look.

If you share their love for mid-mod style, Rachel recommends really doing your research before embarking on your own design. "The term 'mid-century' spans decades of design, so finding the version of it that suits you – both practically and aesthetically – is key. Pick a colour scheme that works for your lifestyle and reflects your personality. And when it comes to furniture, look out for key vintage pieces and invest in those.

"And don't be afraid to go all out once you settle on a style or colour scheme you love. One of our favourite moments was during a meeting with the kitchen team when they told us our design was completely impractical but exactly as it would have been done back in the day. That was when we knew we'd gotten our house right." **H**