



perennial brights

Bold Resene paint colours inject vibrancy into this Waikato garden, regardless of whether the flowers are in bloom or taking a seasonal break.

Amy loves colour. Visitors flock to her Villaleigh Gardens and Nursery in rural Waikato in spring and summer to admire the abundant and vivid flowering perennials in every colour under the sun.

Come winter, when the garden is more subdued, Amy ensures it remains a celebration of her love of colour – with the help of vibrant Resene paints and repurposed farming materials.

The 1.6 hectares of Villaleigh where Amy lives with her husband Aaron, a builder, and children Patrick, 13, and Caeley, 10, are a meandering mix of paths, lawns, trees and sprawling densely planted flower beds. Bright sculptures, colourful garden features and furniture, all painted in vibrant Resene hues, also draw visitors' eyes through the multi-levelled plot and keep it looking interesting when the flowers hibernate.

"I have always loved every colour. I've never been one to say I wouldn't have 'pink' or any particular colour," Amy says. "When the perennials disappear, I still want something that catches your eye in the garden and draws a line to something else interesting."

A key feature of the garden is a large archway over a path painted in summery blue Resene St Tropicaz,

which is a beautiful contrast with the rich aubergine of Amy's 'Forest Pansy' tree and the stunning copper of her beech trees.

"I like bold contrast a lot. I like the paint colours to play off against the flowers rather than trying for a harmonious matching look," Amy says. "I look at other gardens that are all harmonious with matching colours, and I think they're lovely, but it just doesn't seem to be what I do."

Amy's ideas for colourful garden features are often inspired by what materials are available and what parts of the garden she wants to showcase.

Villaleigh is surrounded by farmland, so the most easily sourced materials for upcycling are often from the stockyards or parts of old fences. In one instance, she's made good use of half a hot water cylinder. Amy finds beauty in it all, repurposing resources in ways that add height and visual structure to the garden, as well as colour.

Besides the archway, three sizeable wooden foundation posts sourced from a building site have been thoughtfully placed in the elevated garden at the rear of the house, painted by Amy and her children in bold crimson Resene Rock N Roll. This colour is repeated on a bench seat in another secluded spot.



Above: A stool set made from parts of an old fence is painted in Resene Adrenalin to reflect the door of the children's playhouse (painted in Resene Iron), as well as nearby canna lilies.

Opposite, clockwise from top left: Vivid dahlias are a colour feature of the garden in summer. Simple posts in Resene Rock N Roll pop from the greenery. Their colour was inspired by the 'Forest Pansy' tree which contrasts against an arch painted in blue Resene St Tropicaz.

- Resene Desert Sand
- Resene Domino
- Resene Piazza
- Resene Madison

top tip

Resene Umbrella Additive provides protection from light showers even before your paint has fully dried so if a sneaky light shower comes through your paint won't end up washing off.



Resene
Pale Prim 

Colour inside and out

Resene Colour Expert Meryl Southey says the best outdoor spaces work as an extension of a home's interior.

"Consider the architectural design of your home, the setting, and the theme you are creating or have created inside. This will lend itself to what design, colours and plants to bring outdoors.

"Once you've thought about what colour you might like in a room, look to the garden to see if there is a colour that can be added or repeated inside," she says.

"Our focus on wellbeing and valuing nature is bringing a trend for more colour and vegetation in our gardens, including wildflowers. That gives plenty of scope to bring accent colours in.

"If lots of colour is not your thing, complex earthy palettes, with structural elements and plenty of texture, will help to create cohesion between your home and garden. Try on-trend earthy shades such as Resene Domino, Resene Piazza or Resene Desert Sand and add timber stained with Resene Colorwood (for interiors, or Resene Woodsman for exteriors) to enhance its natural beauty."

Resene
Iron

Resene
Adrenalin

Resene
Rock N Roll

Resene
St Tropaz



"I chose that colour because when I looked up the levels of the back garden, particularly in winter, I wanted it to link in with the colour of the Japanese maple.

"I actually cut off a branch and took it to my local Resene ColorShop. We worked with the colour charts to find the shade we thought best matched," Amy says.

The use of orange is also a standout, beginning when Amy planted an orange geum next to a purple salvia and fell in love with the mix of hues. "I immediately thought I needed to get more orange."

That came in the form of a large Modscene planter and the more recent addition of a tall table and chair set, built by Aaron from an old wooden fence and painted in vivid Resene Adrenalin. It pairs perfectly with the planter, the orange door of the children's playhouse and the surrounding purple, orange and magenta flowers.

"I do have really soft colours around in other parts of the garden as well, but there is something about those bold, bright colours that I love."

Against the bouquet of colour in the garden, Amy's home exterior is painted in soft grey Resene Iron. Inside the family home, she has opted for colours rather than neutrals, with Resene Pale Prim yellow on most walls and bolder shades such as bottomless blue Resene Madison and warm lavender grey Resene Gun Powder in living areas.

"The deep colour in the living area works well because the window in that room really frames the garden, and it draws your eye outside."

Though Amy keeps telling herself she's not adding any more new plants to her already large beds, she can't help but constantly evolve the colours and pathways to get the most from her property.

"My goal is to have a garden I like being in all year. Walking around in it every morning with my cup of tea, I still want to enjoy what I see."

See more of Amy's garden and plan your visit at www.villaleighplants.co.nz. **H**

words Kerri Jackson images Ruth Gilmour