

out of the square

Take 16 years of gestation, lots of passion and commitment, and you have a garden quite unlike any other.





For 16 years, the ideas for a garden were forming in Sara Noble's mind. For 16 years, she and husband David Kirkpatrick raised their children and renovated their old masonry villa in Mt Eden, Auckland. Then, finally, it was time... and the garden was born.

Says Sara: "We had put off doing anything substantial to the garden on the theory that it would get trashed while we were working on the house. We put it off until last. Saw it as the icing on the cake."

And what a cake! Painted a sunny yellow, Resene Moonbeam, the house is one of a row of masonry villas, all a bit different in style, but built by the same man just after the turn of last century. Called the Seven Sisters, they have all survived the past century relatively unscathed.

The inspiration for the adventurous exterior scheme came from masonry homes in colonised countries like the Caribbean and

India, as well as Southern Europe. Painting extra-wide architraves Resene Half Dutch White helped balance the strength of the yellow while new tessellated tiles in the porch, in tones of cream, yellow, brown and black, complete the look.

That same Resene Moonbeam is used on garden walls and also in combination with several other yellows, including Resene Buttercup, Resene Sandwisp and Resene Desert Sand, on the boundary wall beside the pool. Sara wanted an aged effect – "100 years of wall" – and achieved it with a mix of rough plaster and layered paint, much of the work done by Sara herself.

Another recurrent theme is the use of wrought iron, which is a material Sara and David used to great effect inside the house.

Sara has always had a very strong vision for the garden and it's a clear reflection of her personality and passion. Previously a teacher of sociology and cultural studies, she >

Opposite The unusual masonry villa looks even more stunning painted Resene Moonbeam and enhanced by large swirls of lime chip set within miniature mondo grass.

Above Sara works in the lower garden, set down from the raised pool.

top tip

Re-colour exterior concrete slabs and pavers with Resene Concrete Stain. See the Resene Decks, Paths, Driveways and Recreational Areas colour chart for ideas.

-  Resene Sandwisp
-  Resene Half Dutch White
-  Resene Moonbeam
-  Resene Buttercup
-  Resene Desert Sand



Left The side path is a stunning, seemingly random, arrangement of carved pavers and round mill stones.

Below Architectural detailing is continued in the garden with arches painted Resene Moonbeam and Resene Half Dutch White.

did you know...

Steps and paths can become slippery when wet. Avoid falls with Resene Non-Skid Deck & Path, available in a range of colours to suit your home.

 Resene Moonbeam

 Resene Half Dutch White



loves eclectic styles, interpreted in individual ways. “We are continuously taking in inspiration from everywhere. We have different inputs but it’s how we put those together that makes something unique. If you take a bunch of stuff you like and put it together, it’s going to reflect you and work for you, no matter how eclectic the various components are. I don’t believe in aesthetic ‘rules’.”

She likens the formation of the garden to what happens to a language when it moves from one country to another. The structure or grammar is European but the vocabulary or components are local. “That’s the beauty of being here, where Asian and Pacific influences are so strong.”

And which is why the dramatic yet whimsical Jacobean-inspired lime chip and mondo grass swirls in the front garden could also be interpreted as having Maori origins, or Asian... the list goes on. While being quite controlled as a pattern, they are also very

organic, which is another combination Sara particularly likes. To keep the clarity of pattern without major maintenance, Sara had steel edging made to her own design and sliced into the ground.

Texture is also important, with river stone borders playing off against water and grass. With architectural cabbage trees rising up out of feathery acacia Limelight, curly ground covers, spiky oi oi and cushiony scleranthus biflorus. There are certainly no sharp edges, minimal spaces or hard lines in this garden.

While Sara was quite clear in her vision, translating that within the space available was a task taken on by landscape designer Robin Shafer. “She tucked it into shape, and made it work. Robin also has a dream team of people like Frontier Pools and Second Nature, who work together so well. They are all creative, dedicated and technically proficient.” It was a design collaboration that worked extremely well.


Says Robin: “It was an incredible experience, working with someone who was so involved and had such an intelligent approach – Sara had such a huge resource of materials and inspirational images. It pushed me and challenged my design preconceptions but I’m really proud of how much we have achieved in what is a fairly small garden and of the attention to detail.”

The plant choices for the garden were strongly influenced by plants from Sara’s childhood. She believes in using natives where possible because they are more suited to our environment, attract native birds and need to be used in order to protect their future. She also loves the calming effect of watching leaves moving in the wind.

The side path is an inspired part of the design, borne of necessity for more permeable area under local body regulations. Having picked through many garden books, Sara became fascinated with rustic garden paths found in



Get the exterior look with Resene Lumbersider tinted to Resene Moonbeam
Bird of paradise

Resene Surf Crest 


Tessellated porch tiles: Tile Warehouse

Wrought iron: Pausma Wrought Iron, Onehunga

Resene Buttercup 



Design: Sara Noble, Wundergarten (sassyone@orcon.net.nz) and Robin Shafer, Shafer Design (www.shaferdesign.co.nz)

Resene Sandwisp 



Above A garden seat in front of a border of river stones.

Left A black outdoor table and chairs echo the wrought iron detailing. The cape cod chairs are painted Resene Surf Crest.

Below Texture is important with lime chip, strappy cabbage trees and soft scleranthus biflorus.

Buddha head: Greg Mace, Mt Eden, painted in Resene Monza

Resene Monza 



old English estates and in Japanese gardens. Using carved paving stones and round mill stones, she has recreated the look in a seemingly random placement. "I had thought about it a lot, and drawn up a few designs so when it came to the actual placement it only took a few hours," says Sara.

Sara also delights in her miniature orchard of lemons and oranges – ornamental yet useful – like a scene from a Renaissance painting with the backdrop of formal arches "only shrunk into this domestic garden".


With house and garden now finished ("the F word was banned around here for at least a decade"), Sara has decided to focus on developing her design practice called Wundergarten. **H**

words Sharon Newey
pictures Sally Tagg



Carved paving slabs and mill stones: Kinder Arts, Epsom

Resene Half Dutch White 

Resene Moonbeam 

turn the page for alternative looks for Sara's rear garden

alternative solution - eastern influence



^ Fiery accents with Resene Flashback and Resene Wild Thing play off against Resene Basalt (metallic) and the calm Resene Spanish White of the house.

□ Resene Spanish White









a tranquil Japanese-theme with soothing water

Darren Shearer of Shear Magic Landscape Design in Australia suggests this alternative scheme:

This scheme provides a calming haven in the garden with the focus being on the sanshi-style water feature. Planting is kept light and delicate with lady palms, maple trees and small stands of black bamboo. A series of ground treatments fan out from the water feature, with blue stone aggregate, lawn and a type of paving which imitates decking. The courtyard is separated from the rest of the garden with staggered privacy screens, including one in robust latticed bamboo. The warm tones of Resene Flashback and Resene Wild Thing punctuate the otherwise cool palette, while Resene Basalt echoes the charcoal/black tone used in the garden.

phone 0061 2 4961 6829 email darren@shearmagic.com.au

Resene Flashback 

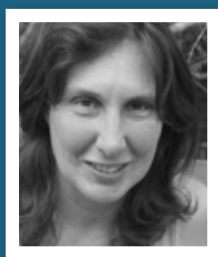
	<p><</p> <p>Tavola Foresta Antislip tiles</p> <p>Porcelanosa Group porcelanosa@australianoffice.com.au 0061 8 8118 6244</p> <p>></p> <p>Japanese maples (acer)</p>	
<p>></p> <p>Sanshi black stone pot water feature</p> <p>Millennium Art Services www.artservices.com.au 0061 3 9499 3443</p>		<p>Resene Outrageous </p> <p> Resene Spanish White</p> <p> Resene Wild Thing</p> <p> Resene Basalt</p>
	<p><</p> <p>Raphis palms (lady palms)</p> <p>></p> <p>Bench seat</p> <p>OzTables www.oztables.com.au</p>	



^ Resene Roasted Orange trims and Resene Moonbeam walls are a spicy backdrop to this antique Persian inspired scheme.

 Resene Moonbeam

spice and shimmer for an antique Persian courtyard



Tania Barke of Through the Garden Gate suggests this alternative scheme:

I've drawn on formal Persian garden themes for inspiration for this courtyard garden. It's a courtyard to be part of, with a covered seating area close to the house. Decoration comes in the form of coloured metal panels with patterns cut into them, which help enclose the space. To complete the setting Atlantean-style pots mark the corners. The seating has been rearranged to look down the garden, focusing on the fountain. Box hedging frames squares of *Choisya tenata*, planted beneath the delicate umbrella canopy of the Persian silk tree, *Albizia julibrissin*, to complete this tranquil setting.

phone 0272 878 592 email tania@ttgg.co.nz




Resene Wanaka 



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Albizia julibrissin
(Persian silk tree)



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