



touches of whimsy

Long grass and broken down sheds have been transformed into a whimsical oasis for this historic home.

Alison and Ross Ruddenklau don't seem a bit smug about their gorgeous Akaroa location. Maybe because it wasn't handed to them on a plate. Their relaxed demeanour belies a lot of vision, hard work, and a dose of serendipity.

Alison had recently bought a 'Love Akaroa' keyring which she handed to Ross, telling him that he could supply the house keys. After unexpectedly selling some land, the purchase of Lofty Akaroa House became a possibility.


Their lives are now happily spent in three places: Akaroa; Arthurs Pass for work where they own the Arthur's Pass Store & Cafe; and Christchurch's Cashmere Hill, where they're supervising an earthquake rebuild. Here in Akaroa the challenge of rescuing




did you know...

that Resene is constantly reviewing its colour collections so that some older shades, like Resene Scorpion and Resene Orange White seen here, are superseded by newer colours? Try Resene Mortar and Resene Villa White instead.

Resene Shady Lady 

Resene Scorpion 

Resene Mortar 

Resene Villa White 



what's been described as the 'jewel of Akaroa' decided this labour-of-love renovation.

Built as a single-storey dwelling in 1884 for Akaroa's mayor of the day, Mr Tosswill, Alison and Ross are the fourth owners. They've been here for just over a decade, renting it out to families and corporate guests when not in residence themselves.

Photos of the day they spied it show the villa flanked by long grass, dilapidated outbuildings and macrocarpa hedging. "That day we first visited, we sat on the veranda, enjoyed the unkempt setting, and could see life unfolding here. Even now before leaving it's our ritual to sit on the veranda with cups of tea, smell the roses, and make the most of the final minutes of such peace."

The couple started their mammoth upgrade in 2004, carefully adding a second storey designed by MCD Architecture in keeping with its heritage features. Choosing the home's exterior colours and the style of garden were highlights. The weatherboards are painted in Resene Shady Lady; a lavender grey Alison saw on an Australian barn. The window joinery is picked out in Resene Orange White with sills in the dark grey Resene Scorpion while the roof is COLORSTEEL® Grey Friars.

A rustic out-building in near-original state stands beside the house. It was the old dairy and wash-house, complete with copper; now Ross claims it's his man cave. Other than this structure, a large Norfolk Pine, an old kowhai, a nikau palm and a few established

Above left: Rustic elements like an old gate, weathered posts and the classic Akaroa scallop shell path add to the seaside appeal of the house.

Above: Pretty Iceberg roses and lavender complement the home's long history.



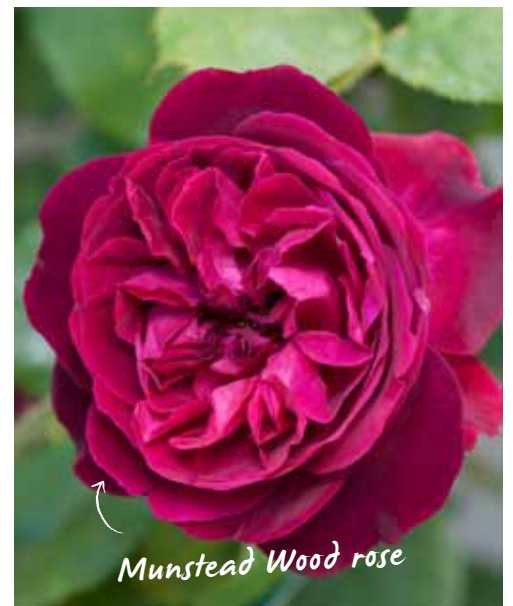
Clockwise from above:
The historic Akaroa House sits proudly on a hill, reached by a path flanked by clipped buxus. The weatherboards are painted in Resene Shady Lady and the trims are Resene Orange White.

A side entry comes straight off the street in true French style.

The view looks past an old Norfolk pine down into Akaroa Harbour.

A formal network of paths and steps helps anchor the house to the hill and allows for more formal gardens. The design is by Canterbury landscape designer Ben McMaster.

Resene Shady Lady 



Munstead Wood rose

top tip
Raised gardens help bring perfumed flowers right up to veranda level.



camellias, the couple cleared the land and began their garden anew.

Describing themselves as 'non-fanatical' gardeners, Ross and Alison asked well-known Christchurch garden designer Ben McMaster to create relatively easy-care surrounds.

The resulting garden successfully combines formality, well-defined lines and swathes of colour with the more rustic feel of a historic holiday village. Beneath the formal elements and leveled areas around the house, sloping lawns fall away to the street.

A wide scallop-shell pathway directly beneath the house leads to the original formal entrance from William Street. This whimsical feature is "quite an Akaroa thing," with its proximity to the sea, Ross says.

Planting includes an abundance of Cecil Brunner, Margaret Merrill, Iceberg roses and the red rose, Munstead Wood. Rows of buxus, Portuguese laurel and the feathery star-flowered Choisya x dewitteana 'Aztec Pearl' provide formal structure. Other traditional, pretty and hardy plants were chosen to suit the setting: catmint, perfumed sasanqua camellia (Cinnamon Cindy) hedging; tiny white and blue hydrangea, and fragrant daphne.

Annually Ross makes himself equal to the task of topiary-shaping and tree pruning. Alison is more frequently obliged to be the shaper and dead-header of roses.

Towards the perimeter of the property, a plethora of well-spaced fruit trees includes Alison's favourite, Blackboy peaches. "I guess I'm enacting my dream of the good life," she says.

The most recent garden additions are shiny black chimney pots. Acting like garden sculptures, the pots were too ornate and beautiful to discard after the Canterbury earthquakes rendered their positions in the sky too tenuous. They now sit quirkily to the side of the Aylmers Valley Road house entrance. **H**

pictures Juliet Nicholas

words Leisl Johnstone

Iceberg rose



Resene Shady Lady

Get the look with Resene Lumbersider CoolColour tinted to Resene Shady Lady.



Resene Scorpion

Get the look with Resene Enamacryl tinted to Resene Scorpion or try Resene Mortar for the front door.

Resene El Nino

Rustic elements like a rusty gate or shell path bring vintage appeal to a more formal garden.

Resene Orange White

Get the look with Resene Enamacryl tinted to Resene Orange White, or try Resene Villa White as a more current alternative.



→ *Turn the page for alternative looks for this garden...*

Resene Half Rice Cake



Above: A romantic alfresco setting is framed in camellia hedging and star jasmine climbing up a pergola painted in Resene Sea Fog. The house weatherboards are Resene Masala using Resene Lumbersider CoolColour paint with Resene Sea Fog trims.

did you know...

that Resene CoolColour paint reflects more of the sun's heat than standard paint, to reduce the stress on the coating and surface? It's ideal for darker colours used on exteriors.



classical good looks make an inviting outdoor area




Landscape designer **Sandra Batley** suggests this alternative scheme:

The new look for this small outdoor living area is sympathetic to the architecture of the home and continues the classic semi-formal feel of the rest of the garden. The paving is replaced with coloured concrete cut into squares. The outdoor fireplace is a key feature providing both ambience and warmth while a free-standing timber pergola in Resene Sea Fog gives shade. The front picket fence is repainted Resene Sea Fog. The contemporary armchairs are light and white with an open weave design while, in contrast, the table has a traditional rustic feel, made of beautiful aged teak. The plants are kept to a classic white and green colour palette. The murky brown tones of Resene Masala, used on the weatherboards, go so well with many garden elements and plants as well as working with the surrounding landscape.


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Resene Sea Fog




Outdoor fireplace
Broady's
www.broadys.co.nz
09 274 0658




Block aged teak table and Luis chairs
Poynters
www.poynters.co.nz
09 815 1580



White camellia



Star jasmine



Portuguese bay laurel

Resene Rapture

Resene Bokara Grey

Resene Triple Sea Fog

Resene Koru

illustration
Malcolm White



Above: With plants that include bromeliads, mondo grass, kentia palms, dianella, ligularia and cycads, this courtyard is joined by a house painted with Resene Surrender weatherboards, Resene Seashell trims and a door in Resene Torea Bay.

top tip

Stain your deck with Resene Woodsman Decking Stain to protect the timber from the weather and keep it looking good for longer. Or use Resene Furniture and Decking Oil for a lightly oiled look. See the Resene Exterior timber colour collection for options, available from Resene ColorShops and resellers.

a shading tree and lush planting welcome you in



Campbell Strachan of Strachan Group Landscape Architects suggests this alternative solution:

This cool and contemporary courtyard retreat beckons with its shading silk tree and lush subtropical planting. The built-in kwila seating, griselinia hedge and slatted gate create a sense of enclosure while the robustness of the concrete table and planters contrasts against the delicacy of the tree leaves and fine kentia palms. Likewise, the warmth of the decking, finished in Resene Furniture and Decking Oil, plays off against the cool tones of the concrete and pale grey Resene Surrender weatherboards of the house. The decking is laid in boardwalk style, slicing through the concrete and leading you, literally, across the veranda to the vibrant Resene Torea Bay door. It's an area that can be used for dining, arrival or just relaxing, and would look superb in urban, rural or coastal settings.

mobile 021 557 658 **email** campbell@sgla.co.nz


Resene Torea Bay 



 Resene Salsa

Red bromeliads




Silk tree  Resene Shark

Urban Grey Slope Table

Sanstone
www.sanstone.co.nz



 Resene Seashell

Ligularia



 Resene Desperado

Kwila seat and decking

Finished in Resene Furniture and Decking Oil

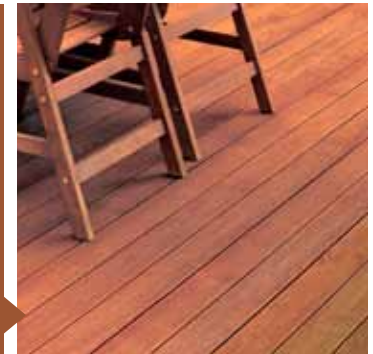


illustration
Malcolm White

Resene Surrender 