

# Colours of the season

Dunedin style meister  
**TAMSIN COOPER** is inspired for  
a late-summer get-together

I'm a big fan of collaborating with like-minded creative souls. The project may be as simple as a good old pot luck dinner - and if your friends happen to be foodies it is amazing what a feast can appear on your table! At the other end of the scale I've been fortunate to collaborate on some fabulous creative projects with professionals in other fields. Working with the Royal New Zealand Ballet to produce a catwalk collection, celebrating my tenth anniversary and their 60th anniversary, was my most exciting project to date. Having RNZB ballerinas dance en pointe down the catwalk to Tchaikovsky played live by Auckland Philharmonic violinist Miranda Adams was a spine-tingling highlight of my career.

On an everyday basis, I'm fortunate to work in the creative historic quarter of Moray Place in Dunedin surrounded by artists, other designers and the innovative florist Jolene Wilkinson. Jolene opened Estelle Flowers after returning from working as a florist in Paris. Her shop is housed in a stunning old stone building next to mine and all who pass by admire Jolene's changing window display. My designs are often inspired by florals and botanicals and I enjoy being able to stop by daily and see Jolene's latest fresh flower pieces.

Last year my sister Emily from Silkbody and I had Jolene create floral headpieces and accessories for our combined catwalk show at iD Dunedin Fashion Week. We've become great friends with Jolene, often sharing ideas and trends on current projects.

On the home front, I've had an idea for a while of placing a long table under our pink flowering rhododendron tree, as the perfect spot to celebrate an afternoon with some of the friends who've worked with me and inspired me



**Styling tips:**

A collection of anything en masse can look stunning, whether it be floral mismatched antique plates, cake stands or even glass jars. Try starting with several of one item to tie the setting together.

A trick I learned from Jolene for a centrepiece is to first make a grid across the top of a vase with sticky tape rather than using the traditional florists' oasis.



during the past year. It was Jolene's suggestion that I create a cost-effective outdoor table using a crackled recycled door. We've removed some internal doors inside our house to create more space and to eliminate door-slamming from small boys, so I'm delighted that one can be reimagined as a tabletop. Jolene has several antique door tables in her store using trestle legs and heavy glass cut to size to create an even surface. I simply borrowed this concept at home for my late summer afternoon tea party!

My door has weathered crackled paint which you can recreate using Resene Crackle (see right).

To create this scene we combined found objects from our personal collections - starting with my cut-glass candle stick holders, (which Jolene has kindly added to over the last few months as she stumbles across them in her foraging of second-hand shops). We used my collection of vintage crocheted lace table cloths and a bedspread to drape over the table. We then chose the colour palette - gold, cream and green - themed around the beautiful Royal Doulton Dinner Set that was a wedding present from Jolene's grandparents to her parents.

My precious dining room chairs that arrived in New Zealand on one of the first ships from colonial England added a dash of black. From here Jolene chose the flowers: gorgeous lime green snowball viburnum and berries, anemones in deep claret, peach irises, lily of the valley and Queen Anne's lace. Overflowing bowls of apples, kiwifruit, avocados and pears in vibrant fresh greens and dark purples echo the Victorian era of Fern Cottage, as do the candles in black and apple green. A touch of gold is added in the water glasses and jug and two mismatched gold charger plates. And to complete the look we added hollow-stemmed retro wine glasses into which we poured a delicious rose-gold sparkling pinot gris from Peter Yealands' new season.

The final most important ingredient is the friends and collaborative partners who inspire me, share my passion for fashion, vintage, flowers and of course bubbly! They include Sharon Bratton, stylist and owner of The Vintage Dress Company, my sister Emily Cooper, director of Silkbody, and florist Jolene Wilkinson of Estelle Flowers, all in their beautiful vintage dresses to share a beautiful afternoon at Fern Cottage. 



## Get the look

**Plummy tones**

Conjure the grace and grandeur of Victorian and Edwardian times with rich reds and maroons, deep greens, shades of black in old jet beads and ebony piano keys. Check out the Resene Heritage Colour Palette for more suggestions on vintage shades.

Resene  
Kaitoke  
Green

Resene  
Aubergine

Resene  
Ebony

Resene  
Crackle

**Get crackling**

You can replicate the patina of antique crackled paint using Resene Crackle. This paint effect is ideal for uneven or rough walls, old furniture, picture frames, small feature areas and any other surface that needs more character added.

**Painting tips:**

Apply an acrylic basecoat (such as Resene Lumbersider) in the colour you want to show through the cracks. Once dry, cover with a coat of Resene Crackle and a final coat of an acrylic topcoat tinted in a contrasting colour. As the topcoat dries, the Resene Crackle will shrink causing the acrylic topcoat to crack and reveal the basecoat colour.

You can achieve varying crackle effects depending on the thickness of the crackle layer. A thick coat of Resene Crackle will result in fewer larger, deeper cracks, while a thin coat will give smaller, shallower cracks.

For other looks, experiment with different basecoat and topcoat colour combinations.

