



**THIS PHOTO:**  
The home's seaside theme is immediately evident in its exterior, with a "creosoted" effect achieved through the use of stained marine-ply cladding.



**THIS PHOTO:**

Carolyn achieved a marine look for her family's home by using materials – wicker chairs, watery colours and images of the ocean.



# SEACHANGE

Beautiful memories of beach holidays influenced this Auckland home close to the water

**T**he dreamy little suburb of Point Chevalier has been undergoing something of a makeover lately as hip young Aucklanders inhabit an area that was previously a coastal haven for granny flats and retirement homes.

When Carolyn Smith, a director of Collective Architecture, was looking for a suitable site to build her family home, it was the seaside charm of the suburb that drew her in. The beach is a strong theme for this architect, and with views of the rocky borders of Meola Reef and lush banks of mangroves to inspire her, Carolyn was in her element.

Hints of the ocean are immediately obvious when you first lay eyes on

## Nautical images

- Use materials that conjure up beachy themes – for instance, ship wire to thread through the deck railings – to bring the sea to your home.
- Blue tones immediately give the home a watery mood. Think of strong aqua hues and don't just restrict their use to the bathroom. Carolyn used blue glass in her concrete floors to add to the theme.
- Keep living spaces casual with simple furniture; try to recreate the mood of a seaside bach in the city.
- Get into beachcomber mode and collect shells or smooth pebbles. Display them in a large, clear glass vase.
- Plant succulents and natives and use clean white shell underfoot as a groundcover.

STORY BY STACY GREGG  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PATRICK REYNOLDS





**THIS PHOTO:** Hazel plays "chasey" with Bud, the family cat. The metallic gold wall in the living room is part of a golden "spine" that runs through the house. **RIGHT:** The rewarewa veneer of the kitchen cabinetry gives the room a watery sheen, while the open shelves display Carolyn's antique teacup collection.

## Storage solutions

- If you're building a new home, storage needs to be thought through before you begin to lay foundations. Even consider ways to include space below ground level – for a wine storage area for instance.
- Make more space by creating dual-purpose furniture; a bedhead can double as a shelving unit, a stereo cupboard can be included in the back of a kitchen bench.
- Storage doesn't have to mean putting everything out of sight. Think about any collections that you might like to display in the kitchen or living areas, then build to suit. Clever solutions can be found to display collections in the floor (such as in a glass channel) or in the walls (such as built-in recesses).

her design, from the classic Kiwi bach connotations of the black-stained plywood exterior, to the sail-inspired tension membrane canopy that shelters the home.

But it is once you venture inside that you really feel the beach hit home; the polished concrete floors could almost be a sandy shore underneath your feet. To get the true seaside effect, Carolyn and her husband Duncan Watson, spent their weekends cruising the bottle banks for unwanted blue glass. They then hand-crushed the glass with rollers, rinsed and recrushed it before finally handing it over, along with a sack of white marble chip, to the guys at Firth to incorporate into the concrete aggregate for the floor.

"It was a lot of effort, but it was worth it," Carolyn insists. Even more work was the glass channel that runs

through the front entrance to the home. Looking for somewhere to store the seashells and various treasures found on past beach holidays, Carolyn and Duncan came up with the idea of a shallow trench, topped with 19mm-thick toughened glass. Pop in the shells, seal it up and you've got a simple, visually stunning way of keeping those pearly mementos on display.

Sea themes abound elsewhere, too. Carolyn chose the kitchen cabinetry timber, rewarewa, because its shimmering appearance reminded her of light bouncing off waves. The pavilion that connects the main house to the carport is painted a crisp shade of aqua blue, hinting at sea or sky, and the wooden breezeway that connects the level above the music room and garage has gaps between the floorboards – giving the feeling of walking the plank.





**BELOW:** Carolyn aimed for a sea gantry effect, "like walking the plank", in the upstairs hallway, which opens to the walkway and the music room.

## FACT FILE

### EXTERIOR

Walls constructed of Alpine 2000 grooved plywood, stained with Wattyl 'Blackbean'; joinery in silver anodised aluminium by Summit Aluminium, Auckland; cedar shutters also by Summit Aluminium.

### KITCHEN/DINING

Dining table and chairs by Katalog, Auckland; end wall painted in Dulux 'Purple Plum'; rear kitchen wall in Dulux 'New Leaf'; joinery by The Kitchen and Vanity Shop, Auckland; kitchen handles by Cornall Joinery, Auckland; Smeg oven from Applico Group, Auckland.

### LIVING ROOM

Feature wall in Mainland Metallics' 'Metallic Copper Gold'; sofa by Katalog; rug from Danske Møbler, Auckland; artwork by Auckland artist David Holmberg.

### MAIN BEDROOM

Feature wall in Mainland Metallics' 'Metallic Copper Gold'; rear wall in Dulux 'Purple Plum', other walls in Dulux 'Cameo Stone'; bedspread by Bed, Bath and Beyond, Auckland.

### HAZEL'S ROOM

Walls in Dulux 'Purple Plum' and Dulux 'Cameo Stone'.

### BATHROOM

Walls in Dulux 'King's Robe', cabinetry in Resene 'Deep Koamaru'; tiles in 'Leaf Green' and 'Cobalt Blue' by Heritage Tiles, Auckland; semi-recessed basins by Vitra and wall-hung toilets by Pera, from Franklin's, Auckland.

### UPSTAIRS HALL AND STAIRWELL

Upstairs floors are Strandboard stained with Wattyl Industrial 'Jarrah' stain; lighting by Modus Lighting, Auckland; walkway walls painted in Dulux 'Water Blue'.

Contact details, page 134.

The beach feeling hits home – the polished concrete floors could almost be a sandy shore under your feet





**THIS PHOTO:** A plywood bedhead doubles as a shelving unit, while shades of purple in the duvet cover are reflected in the walls. **BELOW:** The canopied gantry runs around the home's exterior.



Carolyn realised it was important to keep her landscaping colour schemes simple on the small site, where the gardens need to function as secluded, self-contained environments. Instead of being tempted with oceanic themes here, she kept things pared back. Plain concrete pavers are bordered by Kaiaua pebbles and trimmed with yuccas or borders of buxus and grass.

Inside, the house is a different story. Carolyn's colour sense has added a touch of glamour that is a world away from the rustic Kiwi bach. Warm soft aubergines and limey greens spark up the dining room and kitchen where dainty candy-coloured teacups, a collection that once belonged to Carolyn's grandmother, make a striking display on spot-lit glass shelves. Strong

colour themes continue in the bathroom with vibrant blue and green tiles and upstairs where the floors, made from basic Strandboard, have been stained with a jarrah finish to give them depth.

Gold paint, thatched on in a flax pattern to give texture and relief, embellishes a central feature wall that runs through the hallway, living room and upstairs bedroom. Also, both the master bedroom and two-year-old Hazel's bedroom have feature walls painted in a muted mauve, to add further vitality to the rooms.

The family have used giant blow-ups of photos for artwork. These snapshots of Duncan and Carolyn on holiday in France and Italy take on a new dimension when greatly enlarged.

Duncan made the artwork his







**LEFT:** Hazel's bedroom opens out to its own courtyard, giving a sense of extra space.

**BELOW:** Strong lime and cobalt colours complement the bathroom's jarrah wood shelving.

## Colour themes

- Adding a feature wall can bring a fabulous touch of colour to your home, but too many disparate wall colours throughout a house can make it look disconnected. Why not try painting one central wall that runs throughout the house like a spine, in a single key colour. The effect makes the home feel more united.
- Help a colour scheme to look cohesive by using the same stain on all wood surfaces.
- Strong colour can look odd in combination with a soft shade. Instead, use it up against another colour with an equivalent strength of hue.
- Colour does not need to be confined to walls. Try using it on the floor too.

Gold paint embellishes a central feature wall that runs through the hallway, living room and upstairs bedroom

mission while Carolyn was laid up in bed, unable to walk for 10 months due to a separated pelvis after Hazel's birth.

"I couldn't go anywhere," Carolyn explains, "so Duncan made these for me and he said 'this way, you'll be able to remember where we went and go there all over again in your mind'."

These days Carolyn is far more mobile – and so is Hazel. "She loves the channel filled with shells. All kids do – they pretend it's a river and leap over," Carolyn says. "We use commercial glass suckers to open it up – we raided it just the other day for sea eggs to give to a friend who was going overseas."

After all, you never know when you might need to beachcomb in your own home.

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