

Spring 2007

# @home

*The Bay of Plenty's Lifestyle Magazine*

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# THE ULTIMATE: DESIGN IT YOURSELF

STORY MONIQUE BALVERT-O'CONNOR PICTURES JOHN BORREN

## FEATURE HOME

Matt Biddle jokes that wife Tracy is the worst client he's ever had. The realisation came when the architectural designer began working on design concepts for their new family home.

Once Matt had drawn up the plans, his wife made an appointment to visit him at his Residential Design office. He clearly remembers she came armed with a twink pen.

In her defence, Tracy says she loved what Matt had created for their home in a quiet cul-de-sac in Tauranga's Cherrywood — it just needed a little tweaking. She simply altered the configuration of some of the downstairs spaces, she says, to better suit the practicalities of life with three sons.

The husband and wife team effort has resulted in a home that not only works brilliantly for ➤







their bustling young family, but also looks good enough to feature in a magazine — as they are often told.

They opted to build two storeys to maximise the amount of lawn space for the boys, and to make the most of the Otumoetai golf course views enjoyed from the glass stairwell and some of the upstairs bedrooms.

Their plaster and linear house is only two years old, although the Biddles have lived on site longer than that.

About five years ago they moved to a cedar and weatherboard house on the front of the full site. The plan was to renovate, which they did. There was no initial intention to build out the back, but the lure of a brand new home got the better of them.

Tracy and Matt had fairly clear ideas from the start about what the new home had to incorporate.

They wanted all three boys to have their own bedrooms; they needed an office that could be closed off; and they wanted separate lounges for the big, and not so big people.

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THE INTERIOR WALLS THROUGHOUT ARE PAINTED IN THE POPULAR, MUTED SHADE OF RESENE'S TEA, WHICH PROVIDES THE PERFECT FOIL FOR BRIGHT TOUCHES OF RED, LIME GREEN AND COBALT BLUE.

The garage had to be sizeable to include workspace, and it was imperative their home had seamless flow from the main living areas to an outdoor courtyard and the lawn beyond.

Everyone sleeps upstairs at the Biddle household — Matt and Tracey, Logan, Riley and Karl — with the boys snug under their Spiderman, Hotwheels and Thomas the Tank Engine duvets.

At ground level can be found the required office, washroom, spacious laundry and open plan lounge, family and dining rooms and kitchen. The double garage with workroom is attached.

There's one thing there isn't room for, and

that's clutter. Tracy and Matt like clean lines, with splashes of colour rather than numerous accessories adding the visual interest.

The interior walls throughout are painted in the popular, muted shade of Resene's Tea, which provides the perfect foil for bright touches of red, lime green and cobalt blue.

The curtains in all three boys' rooms are red, as are the lights suspended from the stairwell ceiling.

And in the kitchen — made by Mount Maunganui's Kitchen Business — two bright red splash backs draw the eye and look stunning coupled with the tobacco-coloured cabinetry. ➔

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Tracy has opted to have the sink up against an internal wall rather than under the window or on the expansive kitchen island.

"I didn't want to be sitting in the lounge looking at dirty dishes on the bench. It works well this way," Tracy says.

The red splash backs feature above this double sink, and over the gas hobs on the adjacent wall.

Beyond the kitchen island — ideal for both food preparation and supervised homework — is the kids' zone. In this family room, a modern and long green couch is placed to make the most of the backyard view. The same lime green is repeated in cushions in the adults' lounge.

The Biddles have skillfully applied colour to add interest in the boys' bathroom and the ensuite. Here, the walk-in showers are a definite break from the norm. The children's shower is lime green, and the ensuite is cobalt



THE BIDDLES HAVE SKILLFULLY APPLIED COLOUR TO ADD INTEREST, AND IT'S THE CLEVER ADDITION OF OCCASIONAL COLOUR THAT VISITORS OFTEN COMMENT ON.

blue. These bright splashes are repeated in the mirror borders atop black vanities.

In fact, it's the clever addition of occasional colour that visitors often comment on. Another talking point is the black carpet throughout much of the house. Hot favourite number three, Matt says, would have to be the stacker slider doors leading from the lounge, dining and family rooms to the courtyard. It's so seamless that the stackers open without a pillar to encumber the view where the dining room meets the family room at a 90-degree angle.

The exterior of the home, built by Bob Campbell Builders, is also impressive. The Biddles have opted for the sandy tone-on-tone paint colours of Levene's Drumbo, married with Resene's Napa. Mat black is used on a linear pillar and repeated on the garage door.

Structured plantings of standardised magnolias, palms, and black mondo grass add the final, perfect touch. ■

