

Beach style

JILL DELICH AND HER HUSBAND JAMIE, LOVE THEIR RENOVATED WAIKANAĒ HOLIDAY HOME SO MUCH, THEY'VE DECIDED TO TRY LIVING THERE FULL TIME.

Words **Soraya Nicholas**
Photography **Paul McCredie**

WHEN JILL AND JAMIE Delich received an unexpected phone call from Weta Digital Studios asking to rent their Wellington apartment, they immediately said yes. They had always talked about retiring one day to their 1950s renovated holiday hideaway in Waikanae, and this gave them the chance to live the beach lifestyle permanently.

Says Jamie: "We really wanted to see if we could live here full time, so this was a great experiment for us. Even though it takes an hour each way to commute to the city, as soon as you head towards the beach at the end of the day, the city just leaves your mind and you forget all about it."

Empty nesters Jill and Jamie moved to an apartment when they sold their large Wellington home and planned to visit their Waikanae house often for seaside breaks.

Then, Jill owned and operated a busy cafe, so they barely had time to use the beach house for the first five years after they bought it. When they did finally start to visit more often, they were keen to renovate it.



LEFT AND FAR LEFT

The Croatian national flag is a tribute to James' grandfather. The couple's favourite household item is the industrial coffee machine.

BELOW

A chandelier from Yvonne Sanders Antiques hangs above the main dining table.

OPPOSITE PAGE

Hoop Pine Plywood was used extensively in the kitchen.

PREVIOUS PAGE

The original 1950s architecture was respected throughout the renovation to maintain character.

"It had great bones, but at 80 square metres, it was way too small," says Jill. "It had no real indoor-outdoor flow, the living area was tiny, and we really wanted to create a place to enjoy being with our friends and family."

The mid century house was strongly built of traditional weatherboards, solid matai floors and rimu framing, and as was the style of the times, it had a flat roof. They were keen to keep part of this character, but make it more contemporary.

As they planned the renovation, they scribbled ideas on a piece of paper, trying to figure out exactly what the renovation would involve.

Says Jamie: "At the time, we kept asking ourselves whether we should just sell and buy something new, or get stuck in and really make this place our own."

Visiting a house for sale designed by Space Architecture Studio, gave the couple the inspiration they needed, and led them straight to the firm's architectural design team.

Their brief was for a new master bedroom and bathroom, larger kitchen and living areas and protected outdoor living spaces. It was also important for the house to retain its relaxed beach style, be great for entertaining and designed for the couple's daughters and their partners to visit.

Jill loves to cook, so the kitchen was a major feature. "I owned a café for a number of years, so I really wanted modern appliances and a great kitchen to work in," says Jill.

Instead of an all-white palette, she wanted to infuse the space with colour. Above the rear bench a strip of



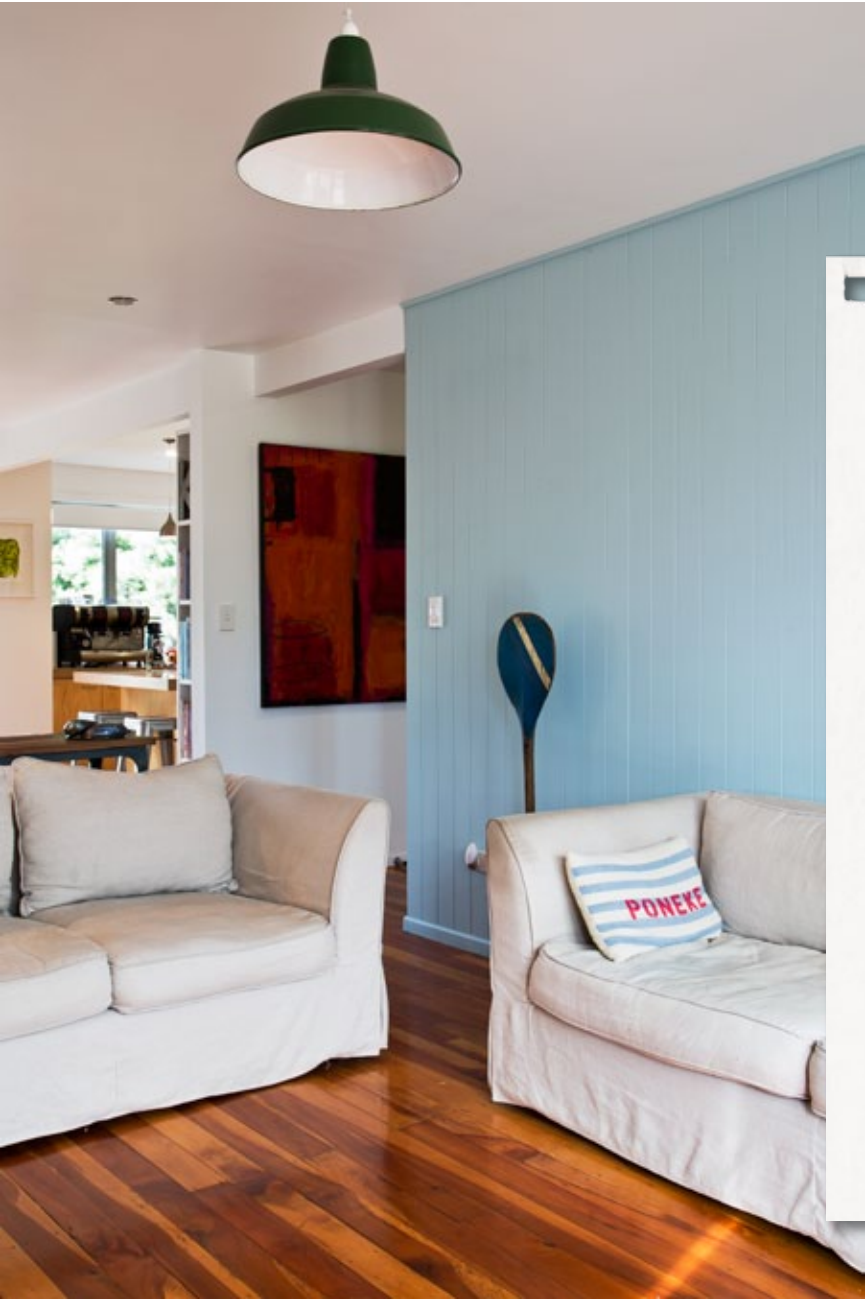
"I OWNED A CAFÉ FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, SO I REALLY WANTED MODERN APPLIANCES AND A GREAT KITCHEN TO WORK IN" — JILL DELICH

RIGHT
Floor to ceiling tiles add luxury to the ensuite bathroom.

FAR RIGHT
Jill and Jamie Delich in the kitchen.

BELOW
A feature wall in Guthrie Bowron Sitting Duck adds a gentle touch of colour to the living room.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Mesh globe lights from Lighting Plus create a unique statement, hanging from the Hoop Pine Plywood ceiling.



Our place

with Jill & Jamie Delich

I love this home because... (Jill) It actually feels like home. It even feels like home to our girls, and they've never lived here. There's a really nice balance of it as a retreat from our city lives, away from the hustle and bustle.

The best thing about staying here is... (Jill) being so close to the coast, being only a few steps to the beach and enjoying activities like bike-riding around Waikanae. There are also a few great cafés here and some equally good restaurants for night-time, so it's nice to have the balance of people living here full time, with holiday-makers here during the summer season.

My favourite room is... (Jamie) the living spaces. We deliberately put our time and effort into the living spaces, to make sure they flowed well. We love spending time with friends and family, so we like the nice big covered outdoor deck for entertaining. The whole end of the home opens up to make it feel like one massive room.

My best buy was... (Jamie) the coffee machine. It came from Jill's ex-café and we had it plumbed in. It gets a real thrashing!



“THIS HOUSE WAS DESIGNED FOR HOW WE LIKE TO LIVE, SO THERE’S NOTHING WE WOULD CHANGE. IT’S PERFECT FOR US JUST THE WAY IT IS” – JAMIE DELICH



bright cupboards are painted Resene Code Red, Grasshopper, Chino and Black Jack; all colours that instantly attracted Jamie.

Because they love sharing their home with people, Jill and Jamie were determined to have ample areas for entertaining, and they bought three large dining tables for the house. One is placed alongside the kitchen, and there is one in each outdoor living space, so whatever the weather, they can enjoy fine food, wine and company.

“This place has a completely different feel to our apartment, and we love the size of it and how each space works, as well as the amount of useable land we have,” says Jamie.

“We’re really relaxed here, but at the same time we’re always doing things, like finishing the chicken coop or planting out the vegetable garden.”

Jamie and Jill are keen to live a sustainable lifestyle, and already share their property with two Pekin bantams, soon to be joined by Rhode Island Red hens. The garden is bursting with beetroot, garlic, peas and other homegrown vegetables, as well as fruit such as passionfruit and figs.

For the time being, they’re living there full time, so there are plans to finish the project by adding landscaping around the outdoor shower.

“This house was designed for how we like to live, so there’s nothing we would change,” says Jamie. “It’s perfect for us just the way it is, and now that we’re living here, we’ve realised how much we love it. We could definitely see ourselves staying here.” ■

Space Architecture Studio (ADNZ)
04 233 9906, www.spacearchitecture.co.nz
Allcam Builders
04 905 2723, www.allcambuilders.co.nz

