



Hidden benefits

What you can't see is just as important as the more obvious delights presented by this new home from David Reid Homes.

There's a lot more to this new Waikanae house than can be seen at first glance.

The bold symmetrical form, schist stone pillars and cedar trim demand a second look, but what's going on behind the scenes helps to make the home stand out.

Owners Yvonne and Richard Mansell took the long view when they approached architectural designer Peter Davis of AD Architecture to come up with a plan.

"With the children away from home, we wanted a house that would work well for just the two of us," says Richard. "We wanted to be able to close

off part of it, but we also wanted a big, open-plan, indoor-outdoor living area for large gatherings."

And they were prepared to take a serious approach to sustainability - the home features a solar water heating system and photovoltaic cells that generate electricity.

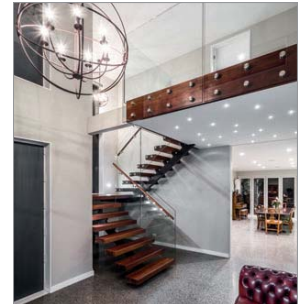
As a HomeStar assessor for the NZ Green Building Council Peter Davis was in a good position to advise on the sustainable features. The design maximises passive solar gain, and there are deep walls to accommodate extra-thick insulation, and double-glazed, thermally broken windows.

Tim Sunderland of David Reid Homes Wellington was in charge of the build, which was completely customised, as is 99 per cent of the company's work.

"Any good home starts with good design, and that's what makes this home stand out," he says.

The Mansells say they enjoyed the build process, and appreciated the good lines of communication between the construction team, tradespeople and themselves.

"There are so many things we just love about the house, and we have no regrets about any part of it."



Q&A

Best decorating tip: Get a professional to help you with the interior

Best thing about the build:

I really enjoyed interacting with all the tradespeople, especially the builders and electricians who were on site for a long time. (Richard)

If you are planning to build: Think long and hard about how you live, and work out what is really important to you. Expect to pay more than you originally thought - you won't want to compromise.

Favourite spaces: The ground-floor living area that opens up to the garden. (Yvonne) I love my man cave, and the fact that I was allowed to buy an obscenely large TV. (Richard)

Best time of the day: The evening and going up to our bedroom, which is a perfect oasis at the end of a busy day. Actually this is probably our favourite space of all.