

MT EDEN

Resort to a tropical paradise

Towering palms complete a beautiful landscape in Mt Eden, writes Graham Hepburn

Being a keen swimmer, businesswoman Theresa Gattung was captivated by this art deco home as soon as she saw the pool framed in a tropical setting in the backyard.

"I fell in love with it straight away because I am a mad obsessive swimmer, so I am in the pool two or three times a day when I am at home," the former Telecom chief executive says.

While the swimming pool area was already beautifully landscaped when she bought the home three years ago, Theresa has continued to refine the plantings, which feature the likes of begonias, star jasmine and gardenias beneath towering palms.

Theresa loves the tropical resort feel of the pool area so much that she has exchanged having a dining table in her living area so that there is an unimpeded view as you come through the front door.

Walking up to that front door takes you on a meander through another delightfully landscaped area featuring palms, yuccas and aloes, stepping up to the roughcast plaster house, which dates from the 1930s.

Theresa has populated the home with colourful artworks and furniture, a mix of the old and the new that sits well with the home's vintage.

"I love colour; I couldn't do white on white," she says.

Timber floors in the living are a give way to tiles in the kitchen, which Theresa has modernised, including resurfacing the rough-hewn wooden benchtop that is a centerpiece in the kitchen.

A butler's pantry off the kitchen seems to have been taken over by her cats, Ollie and Archie, who also enjoy lazing around the sunny pool area.

At the front of the home the master bedroom has an en suite and its own west-facing balcony with views over the suburb.

There are two more bedrooms on the southern side of the house, one serving as a locker room for Theresa's luggage as she flies around the country and overseas in her different business and philanthropic capacities.

She is well known more recently for being a co-founder of My Food Bag, plus she also chairs Australian insurance firm AIA, IT player Telco Technology Services and the Wellington branch of the SPCA.

On top of speaking engagements, she is also involved with women's groups and charitable trusts such as the one providing schooling for Cambodian girls.

"I'm away a lot so that's why I am selling as I need something more lock-up-and-leave, with a smaller garden," she says.

It's the garden that she will miss though, as it provides a beautiful backdrop for the pool and cabana at the rear of the property, and teems with birdlife.

As well as fixing up the fence out here, Theresa went to great trouble to install colour-matched awnings on the house and the cabana.

The red awning on the house is keyed off its shutters and diamond motif, while the blue awning of the cabana picks out the colours of the diamond tiles in the pool.

The cabana - built later but in a similar style to the house - has a bedroom and bathroom, and studio opening out to the pool.



21 ELDON ROAD, MT EDEN
 Size: Land 703sqm, house 140sqm (approx) plus cabana
PRICE GUIDE: Interest above CV \$15 million.
AUCTION: March 10 on site at 3.30pm
INSPECT: Sat/Sun 2-2.45pm
SCHOOL ZONE: Balmoral Primary & Intermediate, Auckland Girls' Grammar School and McAibert Grammar School
CONTACT: Andre Coppell, 021 300 704 or Cheryl Crane, 021 444 140, Bayleys
ON THE WEB: bayleys.co.nz/1700201



There is also a spa pool tucked in a corner of the backyard and a sauna outside the back door. A deck for outdoor dining in the sheltered north-east corner completes the picture.

"It is like a tropical resort out here and it's been used for photo shoots because of that," says Theresa. "The garden really makes the house so you do have to look after it."

PHOTOS / TED BAGSHAW