



# Get a feel for fabulous interior design

Words MAVA MOAYYED Pictures WILLIAM DAVENPORT

**Most of us will be familiar with the childhood experience of going into a shop and being reminded firmly not to touch a thing. For some of us an unyielding desire to engage the tactile sense continues to dominate.**

You can imagine my delight upon entering Wall St and realising that all the stunning things around me – fabrics, wallpapers, furniture, textiles – were there for exploring, examining and touching. After I had spent some time admiring the store, the fabulous wallpaper samples and the exquisite window displays, I sat down to chat with Stephanie Bruce, interior designer and

owner of the beautiful Wall St showroom in Thorndon.

The value of an interior designer cannot be overemphasised. The artistic ability to compose a space coherently – taking into consideration colour, texture, lighting and composition – is invaluable when looking to renovate, furnish, or add life to your home or business. Stephanie Bruce and her highly skilled team at Wall St are experts in the field and some of the loveliest women in the business.

Walk in to Wall St in Tinakori Road and you will be instantly inspired. There is a vast range of wallpapers, gorgeous fabrics for curtaining and upholstery and

stunning bespoke furniture. Wall St specialises in wallpaper, which was the inspiration for the name. “We have the largest range of imported and locally made wallpaper all in one place. I like to source unique papers that can really add that wow factor to your home or business,” says Stephanie.

Wellington born and bred, Stephanie has always had a passion for art and design. It was during a course in textiles that her love affair with patterns and textures began. She used that talent for renovating houses and it was then that she discovered a real gap in the market for unique wallpaper. Stephanie noticed that there was

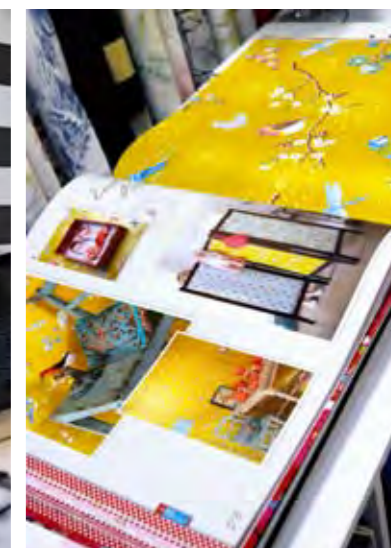


“I like to source unique papers that can really add that wow factor to your home or business.”



really nowhere to go if you wanted something a little bit different. At the same time, she had started to use her interior design skills to help out friends during home renovations and decided to take things to the next level and open a business that specialised in wallpaper.

After some extensive research and a couple of overseas trips to source new suppliers, Stephanie opened Wall St. The store was originally situated in Wadestown and although the space was small, Stephanie quickly established a reputation with her unique flair and ability



to create amazing spaces. After 18 months she needed more space to showcase her rapidly growing selection of wallpaper sample books and to expand her range so she could offer her clients more. “We can do anything from carpet to curtains to furnishings, blinds and shutters,” she says. Additionally, Stephanie has employed designer Kate Barlow to work with their expanding client base.

With their extensive range of wallpapers, upholstery, curtaining, cushions, rugs, flooring and furniture, there is truly something in everyone’s price bracket and working with Stephanie or Kate means you can be confident your own unique style will be transformed into something fantastic.

The reasons people use interior designers are vast but there seems to be a few main factors influencing the decision. They may not have time to work on

their own home or they might not be confident about using colour, texture and design, or how to pull all the elements together.

Working with an interior designer can also be surprisingly affordable. “I think people get scared that interior designers are only for the wealthy, but actually they’re not – you can use us for the smallest job to a complete build,” says Stephanie. With Wall St’s extensive range there is truly something in everyone’s price bracket.

The team works in a number of ways, but often the best way to start is with a one-hour consultation in which they will tell you everything you need to know for the space you’re looking to renovate. “We come to your house or business, assess possible options and then come back with a proposal,” says Stephanie. Wall St can do everything from project manage an entire venture to simply finding the perfect interior wall colours for a room.

There are some great things happening in wallpaper. With new ranges coming out all the time, they



Stephanie Bruce

tend to follow fashion trends. "I am seeing some really exciting colours, geometrics and textured stripes. I don't necessarily follow the rules with scales of pattern and size of rooms, the smallest room in the house could look amazing with a large scale, over-the-top pattern," she says. "Wallpaper can be a great starting point from which we can begin layering a room. It is wonderful in its ability to instantly create an atmosphere. It is also great to hide imperfect walls with a textured paper or just to add a touch of drama or beauty."

Stephanie has also been working on her own bespoke furniture range, including one-off occasional pieces of furniture, mixing up fabrics and styles to create something



unique and special. These have proved extremely popular and will become a permanent fixture at Wall St. "The windows at Wall St are my greatest advertisement. In the first weeks after we opened I watched a woman drive slowly into the back of a bus outside the shop. When I went outside to make sure she was ok, she told me it was my fault. Apparently I had changed the window display and she was so busy looking at it she didn't look at where she was going! I think it was a compliment, but not one I wish to repeat!"

Clients of Wall St remain loyal and a strong trend has emerged where they go to Stephanie and Kate when they are ready to do more. Recently Stephanie received this lovely email from a happy client:

"I just wanted to send a quick email to you to say thank you for taking the time to help me today and point me in the right direction for decorating our house! I had just come from three places who had all suggested that I get some ideas before I try to start looking, or alternatively they tried to sell me their in-house design services rather than just letting me browse. I was even sent off to the library by one shop to look through old magazines to get some ideas! So it was lovely to be given a good hour or more of your time and to be pointed in the right direction!"

Every single person who walks through the door at Wall St is made to feel at home. With their high level of knowledge and years of industry experience, it is well worth paying a visit. The showroom is unique, lively, colourful and completely 'touch' friendly and the people who work there will make you feel welcome.

Wall St  
352 Tinakori Rd, Thorndon  
T. 04 499 8684  
[www.wallstdesigns.co.nz](http://www.wallstdesigns.co.nz)