

Living walls

RIVERLEA'S BEAUTIFUL HEDGES ARE KEY TO ITS YEAR-ROUND STRUCTURE, DIVIDING ONE GARDEN ROOM FROM THE NEXT AND SMARTLY DEFINING THE LINES BETWEEN LAWNS AND GARDEN BEDS.

Camellias

Besides their beautiful flowers, camellias are worth planting for their foliage alone. For trimmed hedges, varieties with small leaves and small flowers are ideal. As a backdrop to her formal perennial border, Ann chose *Camellia transnokoensis* for its red new growth and dainty flowers. She also recommends *Camellia* 'Spring Festival' for its strong upright growth, good where a slim hedge is needed.

Camellia sasanqua varieties make excellent hedges. Of these, Ann and Vince have planted the popular white flowered 'Setsugekka' and two hedges of compact, red flowered 'Yuletide', one at one metre tall and one at two metres.

Behind the maple walk is a tea leaf hedge, *Camellia sinensis* with shiny bright green leaves. The tea camellia is a small tree naturally but is commonly grown at around a metre tall and wide. Small white

single camellia flowers occur on untrimmed plants, while frequent pruning promotes the fresh leaf growth for tea plucking.

Corokias

New Zealand native corokias make excellent hedges. Tiny leafed cultivars are especially smart as a formal trimmed hedge. Vince and Ann have planted 'Frosted Chocolate' with its silver grey and chocolate tones and 'Genty's Green', which is popular for its olive like leaves. Corokias are best trimmed little and often. Vince trims his at least twice a year.

European beech

A formal lawn area, which extends from Vince and Ann's sunny veranda, is enclosed by a 3m tall hedge of *Fagus sylvatica*. Deftly carved into its leafy green walls, elegant archways frame views into the adjacent garden rooms. A large deciduous tree in its natural form, beech is a top choice for a tall dense

hedge. Fresh green leaves have a silky sheen in spring. In autumn they turn gold then bronze, falling just prior to the emergence of new spring growth.

Nandina

Echoing the colours of Ann's hot flower border, a hedge of *Nandina* 'Gulfstream' flaunts its bright coppery red foliage. Tough and drought tolerant nandinas grow differently from most hedges; rather than regular shearing, Vince cuts his back hard every summer, reducing its height by one third to promote a fresh flush of growth.

Horopito

A low sweeping curve of *Pseudowintera* 'Burgundy Delight' makes a vibrant accent between green lawn and shrubs. This compact hedge has light gold-green leaves with red overtones that deepen to rich red as the weather cools in winter. It tolerates frost and periods of dry.



THIS PAGE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
Corokia 'Frosted Chocolate';
Pseudowintera 'Burgundy Delight';
Podocarpus totara 'Matapouri Blue'.
OPPOSITE: Fagus sylvatica and
Myrsine aquilonia (inset)

Tororaro

With tiny heart-shaped leaves on lacy brown-red twigs, *Meuhlenbeckia astonii* is a beautiful lacy textured native shrub that's superb either as a billowy informal hedge or trimmed to more formal shapes. This one is excellent for windy and coastal sites.

Totara

Podocarpus totara 'Matapouri Blue' is a blue-green variety of totara which makes a stunning hedge with thick dense yew-like growth. Vince trims his at a metre but it is also a good choice for a taller hedge of 2 or 3 m.

Poor Knights matipou

Dark green *Myrsine aquilonia* makes an attractive NZ native alternative to English box with small heart shaped leaves. Clipped as a waist height hedge, it is thriving in Ann and Vince's garden. 🌿

