



Shades of hot pink inject energy and playfulness into the bedroom.



WHAT'S PAINT GOT TO DO WITH IT?

The right colors may rev you up or relax you, but one thing is certain: changing them is an easy way to freshen your home's decor.

BY ELIZABETH MCMILLIAN

THEY CALL PASADENA INTERIOR DESIGNER JEANNETTE CHASWORTH "THE COLOR WHISPERER." INDEED, CHASWORTH'S APPROACH STEMS FROM HER BELIEF IN "THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF DESIGN AND COLOR," AS SHE EXPLAINS ON HER WEBSITE, THECOLORWHISPERER.COM.

"When I first begin selecting paint colors for a client," Chasworth told *Arroyo Monthly*, "I first determine the 'gift' that the room or home should give: relaxation after a hard day, creativity and focus for a home office or maybe even a little romance. I draw inspiration from my client's wardrobe, favorite artists or an accessory that ignites passion. From there, I can capture the colors of their soul. My job is to help them discover which color is going to make their heart happy and to create a cohesive palette that celebrates their best qualities."

For Pasadena interior designer Gabrielle Gliniak, who started as an art director in Hollywood, color is intrinsic to the emotional impact of a space. "Colors selected for various elements of a film set are carefully

PHOTOS: Douglas Hill, courtesy of Diane Bedford

chosen to convey information about the inner life of the characters — their emotions, motivations and their story,” she says. “In *The Astronaut’s Wife*, the main character’s New York apartment projects the growing tension between the astronaut husband and his beautiful young wife. The luxurious aged wood paneling and caramel colors in the foyer feel comfortable and familiar. As we descend into the main room the colors are higher in contrast. Touches of red mixed with dark gray steel and slate, shiny metal fixtures combined with a luminous glass-block wall and dangling lights portray the uneasy feeling the wife has toward her [space] alien husband. The interior is stunning but something isn’t right, just like the gorgeous couple.

“In real-life design,” Gliniak continues, “the same principles apply, yet with greater subtlety. Color is a powerful design element that affects our emotions and, when used appropriately in combination with other elements of design, can greatly enhance one’s experience in one’s own space, [making one feel] restful, energized, pensive or happy.”

At the very least, changing up the paint color of your home is an easy way to freshen its look. “Paint color is one of the least expensive and least permanent things about enhancing one’s environment,” says Pasadena interior designer Diane Bedford. “Once the prep work and the trim is done it is very inexpensive to change a wall color or a ceiling.”

Bedford’s own guiding principle is to have fun with color. “Paint it red or navy blue. Even a black or charcoal room with light trim can be such fun and so dramatic. If you don’t like it — paint it again.”

And be brave, she says. Don’t necessarily go with your first instinct. “I have always been of the opinion that a small, dark room should be painted a dark interesting color. If it is painted white or a light color, as so many people believe is the proper solution, what you have is a small, dark boring room. But try a rich, deep, rosy terracotta, or even a chocolate brown. Now we have a small, dark sexy room!”

“If you like blue tones for a bedroom — as those are very restful but can often be cold or Easter egg-pastel — try a blue that is more part of the seafoam family,” Bedford adds. “A lovely color for a bedroom is Restoration Hardware’s Silver Sage.”

Since color fashions — influenced by high and popular culture — change over time, keeping up with color trends is key for designers and do-it-yourself home decorators. If you want to know how your color ideas click with the design of your home, you might want to check out this tome from nationally known expert Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, which bills itself as “the authority on color”: *Pantone: The 20th Century in Color* (Chronicle Books; 2011), written with Keith Recker, offers the color palettes of each stylistic period. Residents of Bungalow Heaven will find a useful section on the Arts and Crafts movement, illustrated with numerous Pantone

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Bedford’s color palettes are inspired by clients’ passions.



Seafoam is a resifful hue close to — but softer — than commonly used icy blue.

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swatches that coordinate with period furnishings, such as Greene & Greene décor.

Of course, nature creates some of the most delightful colors and complementary color ranges. Take a photograph of hues you like in, say, a luscious piece of fruit or garden sanctuary or take a page from an interior design magazine. Then visit a color-matching website to create your palette.

At degraeve.com, you can upload your photo into a color-palette generator, and the site will produce five subdued and five vibrant colors that match the image, which you can print out and take to a paint store. Colorhunter.com offers a similar service, but you don't have to provide the photo. Instead, you can type in a search word like "heart," and the site will "hunt" through Flickr.com for images with that label and use them to create a palette. Both sites offer this service for free. Keep in mind that computers — like your paint store's color matcher — are known for slightly altering colors. Nonetheless, this handy technology can help you focus in on your desired hue and coordinate a palette for the room's main color, major and minor accent color or trim color.

Pasadena designer Debbie Talianko says her own color choices are inspired by her travels through Mexico and Central America as well as Renaissance architecture and the landscape around her home in Sierra Madre. She offers these suggestions:

- If the home is small or if the rooms flow from one room to the other, use a palette of only two or three colors. Vary the shade to make everything cohesive from room to room.
- Use the same trim color throughout.
- Try out the color on a good-size area and paint two coats before making your choice. Ideally, live with the samples for a few days and view them under lighting at various times of day and evening.

Charmean Neithart, a Pasadena designer who is inspired by Asia, agrees that hues of rooms flowing together should be carefully coordinated. "Room colors should be cohesive and have a natural flow from space to space," she says. "Save calming colors for bedrooms and sitting rooms. More energizing colors can be considered for the dining room, family room and living room. It's important to think of a whole-house palette when choosing paint colors for your home. Consider there are colors that you may like, which may be different from colors you want to live with. There is really a big difference between the two."

As color whisperer Chasworth notes, carefully curating the color of your home can have a big payoff. "The process requires a little planning," she says, "but the result is a palette that brings to life the story of my clients, leaving them 'hugged' by their home every time they walk through the door." ||||



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