

colourbydesign

Colour is arguably the ultimate design and décor tool. What else comes in infinite varieties and combinations, is as versatile and makes as great an impact? Colour is inspiring and inspired. It is the universal language that says what you can't – a vibrant red simply screams, while a whisper of blue instantly puts your body and mind at ease. Read on to discover the coolest colours and hottest hues for your home, as chosen by our favourite designers.

by **LYDIA MCNUTT**

JUST LIKE THE BLUE-GREEN COLOURS IN THE LARGE LANDSCAPE PAINTING, NO TWO BLUES IN THE ROOM ARE ALIKE, GIVING IT DIMENSION AND ELEGANCE

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LIVING ROOM BLUES

Is it blue or is it green? Truthfully, the custom colour we created for this living room that is awash with natural light by day, is hard to describe because it changes with the light. That's why we love it. As opposed to siding one way or the other, we prefer to think of it as the perfect combination of blue and green. Whatever colour your eyes see, there is no denying it's sophisticated.

This room was designed to serve as an inviting gathering place for drinks and conversation before and after dinner. By using a consistent colour palette for the walls, upholstery and draperies, no single element pulls focus, and our eyes are allowed to wonder about the room without disruption. This is a good rule of thumb to follow when decorating smaller rooms. Our use of symmetry helps to make the room appear larger and creates a calming, harmonious balance in the space.

And just like the blue-green colours in the large landscape painting, no two blues in the room are alike, giving it dimension and elegance. We added texture with the upholstery fabric, choosing a pattern for the chair fronts and a coordinating solid for the chair backs. The soft green-blue tones and subtle sheen of the silk ball-gown draperies add a touch of glamour, while the mirror-framed architectural prints and glass coffee table add sparkle and reflect the light and sophisticated colour scheme throughout the room.

The mouldings, baseboards and fireplace are painted our favourite go-to trim colour – Cloud White (CC 40) by Benjamin Moore.

JEFFREY'S & DEBORAH'S CUSTOM BLUE-GREEN
BENJAMIN MOORE, 602-2B USE FORMULA BIY4, C40, D12





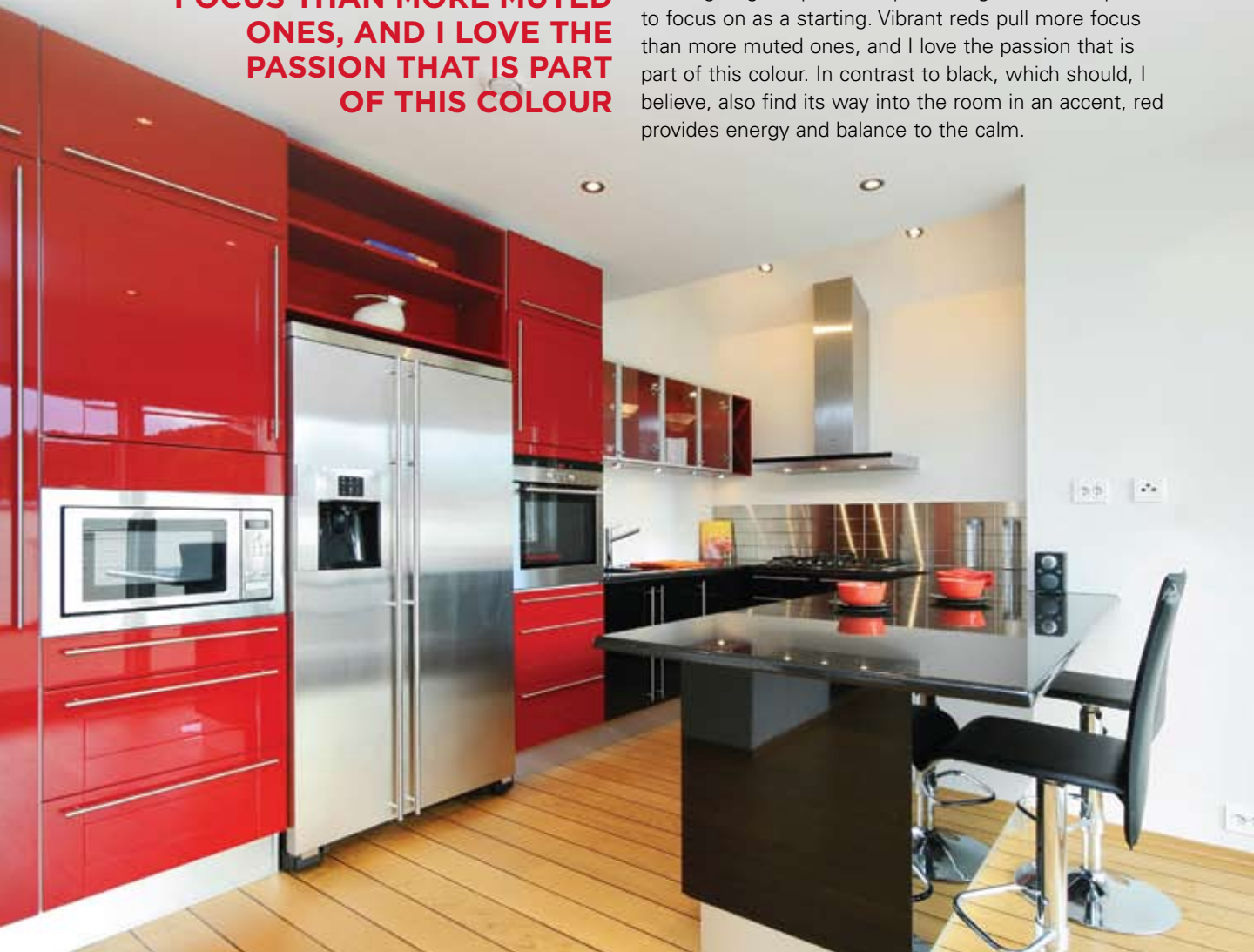
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VIBRANT REDS PULL MORE FOCUS THAN MORE MUTED ONES, AND I LOVE THE PASSION THAT IS PART OF THIS COLOUR

SEEING RED

Colour has the ability to affect mood and, in fact, the longer you stay in a room with a particular colour, the impact on you changes. Colour can make you relax or be agitated, and much research has gone into the psychological impact of colour. You will notice that fast-food restaurants are very different in colour from those where you sit and luxuriate. The former wants you to eat and leave, as they have collected all the money they will get from you at the counter where you placed your order, whereas the restaurants where you sit and chat may sell you a second bottle of wine, coffee or an after dinner drink. The colours selected are not by accident. They are meant to evoke an emotion or feeling on a subconscious level.

In residential design, we strive to use colours that will invoke a sense of calm for adults and something a little more vibrant for children to match their energy levels and need for stimulation. Neutrals seem to work best (greys and beiges) as an overall palette. However, I love the injection of something red in the room to pull focus, giving the person experiencing the room a place to focus on as a starting. Vibrant reds pull more focus than more muted ones, and I love the passion that is part of this colour. In contrast to black, which should, I believe, also find its way into the room in an accent, red provides energy and balance to the calm.



CHARCOAL GREY IS ONE OF MY FAVOURITE COLOURS BECAUSE IT PLAYS SO WELL WITH OTHERS, BEING ABLE TO BLEND WITH JUST ABOUT ANY COLOUR PALETTE

PHOTO BY BRANDON BARRE

GRACIOUS GREY

Charcoal grey is one of my favourite colours because it plays so well with others, being able to blend with just about any colour palette. This luxurious wall colour, Benjamin Moore's Escarpment, has such a pleasant personality. It's not too cold or too blue when applied, making it the perfect backdrop to showcase wood floors and furniture, upholstery and decorative accessories.

Deep greys provide a wonderful neutral backdrop that allow furniture and decorative pieces to stand out, giving them the prominence they deserve. What I love most about charcoal grey is that it's so versatile. It can be bold and dramatic when paired with contrasting cream, white or beige, or it can be classic and sophisticated when used with black, taupe and chocolate brown.

To enhance a cool and sophisticated grey colour scheme I like to add pale blue and then punch it up with warm wood and touches of fiery orange accents to ignite this otherwise neutral colour scheme.

Because charcoal grey is both a cool and warm colour, it works well in almost any space.



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BROWN IS THE ULTIMATE NEUTRAL. FINISHED IN HIGH GLOSS OR PAIRED WITH METALLICS, BROWN CAN BE COMPLETELY LUXURIOUS. TONE IT DOWN FOR A MORE CASUAL LOOK, OR MAKE IT RUSTIC FOR COTTAGE-INSPIRED COMFORT

BROWN – THE ULTIMATE NEUTRAL

My favourite colour seems to change every month. With each project and client come new challenges with colour, and I'm always exploring different combinations and colour schemes. It keeps my job interesting and fun, and makes every design I create unique.

I do have some tried-and-true favourites, and there is one colour I can safely say I use in almost every room – brown. That's right, brown.

Now, before you judge, stop and think about this for a minute. Almost all wood products, unless they are painted, are brown. Adding even a little bit of wood to a room makes it feel more comfortable and livable. I love using a dark chocolate brown for contrast and drama, and a mid-tone walnut (my current favourite) for richness and warmth.

Wood tones are easy to incorporate into any décor, regardless of the colour scheme or style. I can't think of a single colour that does not look good with some shade of brown. It is the ultimate neutral. Finished in high gloss or paired with metallics, brown can be completely luxurious. Tone it down for a more casual look, or make it rustic for cottage-inspired comfort.

While wood is a wonderful way to bring brown into your décor, it's not the only way. There are all sorts of fabulous fabrics and wallpapers that include brown in their patterns. Brown is the perfect neutral to pair with bright, strong colours, keeping them from feeling overwhelming. For a current, ultra-chic look, I love the combination of feminine pink florals paired with menswear-inspired wool in a brown pinstripe.

BASIC BLACK

I love using black in all my spaces! Implementing black requires moderation and a sense of balance. Using too much can be overpowering and visually harsh. Black is usually always present in staple items like your flat-screen TV, fireplace insert or appliance details, therefore it is important to try and balance the black in your rooms.

I have used black on floors, counters, furniture, as well as artwork and smaller decorative accessories.

Here is a great tip: wherever you use black, it is always an eye stopper. No, really, the colour black will stop the eye from wandering. Black really grounds a space and gives it some depth and dimension.

Here are some different ways you can incorporate black into your home: mosaic tiles, black crystal chandeliers, upholstered headboards and memorable one-of-a-kind decorative accessories.

Add a black Murano glass bowl in the centre of your dining room table, or how about a black granite counter or black glass vessel sink?

Like black diamonds and black swans the colour black is pronounced and always makes a statement. You can never go wrong by adding a little black to your life.

Think of black as your secret weapon. Just like that little black dress hanging in your closet, it always works!

BLACK REALLY GROUNDS A SPACE AND GIVES IT SOME DEPTH AND DIMENSION

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