

Green, gold and brown rise to top of season's color palette

by Denise Sautters

Crab apples are hot. So is sage. Chocolates, mulberries, and lattes are trendy.

We're talking color, and the palette for 2007 is rich.

"There is just a variety of popular colors this year," said Joan Snyder, designer at Harrison Paint and Decorating in Jackson Township, Ohio. "Spring greens, lots of browns like soft chocolate, reds, berries, there is just so much to choose from this year."

HOT NEW COLORS - Winter is an ideal time to decorate anew. An inexpensive way to give a room a new feel is with paint. CNS Illustration by Scott Heckel.

MIXING IT UP - Scott Gibson, paint department manager at Metzger's Ace hardware in Louisville, Ohio, uses a paint mixer to add color to a gallon of base paint. CNS Photo by Scott Heckel.

Winter is an ideal time to start planning interior-decorating changes. An easy and inexpensive way to give a room a new look and feel is with paint.

"Our customers gravitate toward the more intense colors," said Scott Gibson, paint department manager at Metzger's Ace Hardware in Louisville, Ohio, explaining that there are three basic color categories: natural, intense, and neutral.

The intense colors are the dark browns, spring greens, and deep golds that help define the cultural tapestry color category. The natural colors include tans, pottery browns, and other subtle, light tones with rich colors.

"These are probably the two biggest trends I see," said Gibson. Neutrals are colors such as the whites, beiges, grays, and creams.

Color trends come and go like the tide, said Denise Turner, an internationally recognized color forecaster, certified interior designer, and founder of the Color Turners and The Room Turners in Alta Loma, Calif. She is a member of the Color Marketing Group, an organization that meets twice a year to predict color trends one to three years in the future.

There are about 1,000 members of the group, representing industries as varied as transportation, crayon manufacturers and fashion. When members get together, they divide into groups of 10 to 15 to discuss the various color choices. As the groups choose the colors they like, the selected colors go through several other committees before being chosen as the colors for a particular year. It is big business in every industry, she said.

Turner compares members of the group to weather forecasters.

"We watch and see what is going on. Elections, wars, even catastrophic events can actually change colors."

For instance, she said, brown is the color of grounding.

"When our environment is unstable, we want to be grounded. Blue is a stable color and is one of the most favorite colors because it is calming. It represents authority."

So, how do you select the ideal color for you?

"Color preferences are very individual," she said. "Colors have been scientifically proven to have consistent physical and emotional effects."

She said Roman, Egyptian, Chinese and Greek cultures knew the importance of color therapy, noting that Hippocrates used a variety of colored ointments and salves on his patients and painted his treatment rooms in colors that promoted healing.

"He discovered that red helped patients with circulatory problems, while blue aided in reducing the temperature of feverish adults and children."

In your home, Turner recommends choosing colors that reflect your personality.

"Color has always been my love. Interior design has given me the vehicle to work with colors."

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT COLOR?

Denise Turner, a color forecaster, offers these thoughts on the meanings of colors and where they can be best used.

Turner recommends using colors with skin-flattering yellow-pink-blue undertones in rooms such as the bathroom, where women usually apply their makeup. She recommends holding a paint chip next to your face to see what hue makes you look your best.

- Oranges and reds stimulate the appetite and work well in a kitchen area or dining room. However, if you are

dieting, consider green, a color associated with health and harmony.

- Yellow is the color our eyes see most readily in any situation. It is a good color for counseling and conference offices because it encourages people to communicate.

- She said pastries taste better when they come out of pink boxes or served on pink plates because pink makes us crave sugar.

- Purple and violet are the colors of spirituality and creativity.

- Green stimulates the feeling of balance and harmony with nature and ecology. Green interiors reduce stress, connect us to nature and make people feel secure.

- Blue is considered to be the favorite of 35 percent of the world's population. It brings a tremendous feeling of peace and tranquility, particularly to terminally ill patients. A navy blue suit is the standard in the Western world.

- Brown connects us to the earth and makes us feel safe.

- White encompasses all colors and is the color of cleanliness and freshness.

- Black absorbs all light; it is the color of sophistication, power and mystery.

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