

Mellow yellows, serene greens join gray as top colors for 2013

By Merlisa Lawrence Corbett
Special to *The Washington Examiner*

Gray is here to stay, but make room for mellow yellows and serene greens, the trendiest hues in 2013 interior paint color forecasts.

Pantone announced emerald green as the Color of the Year. It is as bright and bodacious as last year's pick, tangerine tango, but Alexandria-based color consultant Jean Molesworth Kee warned that what works on pillows might not translate to walls.

"There's a whole world of color forecasting. Every major paint manufacturer comes up with a color of the year and palettes," Kee said. "For me, they are usually meant to inspire."

There is a trickle-down effect with most forecasts, as top colors show up in mass market products, clothing, home decor and accessories. But Kee said those colors rarely show up on walls as paint colors.

Especially not with historically conservative Washingtonians, who prefer to test the waters before diving into wild new hues.

"Washington still has a pretty big love affair with gray," Kee said. "It's a pretty conservative town. People will take a chance inside a bedroom closet or with little doses of color. They are getting a little more adventurous with doors and trim or inside bookcases for a pop of color. But as for covering walls with emerald green, that's just not happening."



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Alexandria-based color consultant Jean Molesworth Kee says Washington is a pretty conservative town when it comes to paint color.

That's OK, said Jackie Jordan, director of color marketing at Sherwin-Williams. "It's not that we anticipate or expect that people will use all those colors in all the palettes," she said. "It's kind of an inspiration" meant to add layers to existing spaces.

Sherwin-Williams' 2013 color palettes are developed from the idea that opposites attract. "Sometimes we live one way during the day and want to escape to something else at

home," Jordan explained.

The palettes are meant to evoke a feeling, tell a story. Sherwin-Williams' Midnight Mystery palette, for example, paints a story about the dark side. Comprised of deep blue, murky grays, intense greens and a plum brown, Midnight Mystery is an ode to 2012 cinema and the dark, gothic settings in movies like "The Dark Knight Rises," "Snow White and the Huntsman," "Hugo" and "Dark Shadows."



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The fashion-driven Vintage Moxie palette, with its funky pastels, includes aloe — Sherwin-Williams' Color of the Year. "It's a throwback

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to the '50s and '60s, [a] very fun, pretty feminine palette," she said

Benjamin Moore's 2013 color palettes, Urbanite, Coastal, Artisan and New Traditional, derive from influences in art, fashion and interior design. Its Color of the Year is lemon sorbet.

Touted for its transitional qualities and the way it complements saturated colors in furniture, lemon sorbet is part of the Coastal palette, which includes soft greens similar to Sherwin-Williams' aloe.

Kee said mellow yellows and soft greens are more palatable to Washingtonians.

"Those are not hugely trendy, like tangerine tango or emerald green," Kee said. "I've heard that pastels are coming back, but I've not been doing any rose petal rooms."

Not sure what to pick? Kee said colors from nature always look good and never go out of style.

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Gardeners can reap fitness along with plants

By Dean Fosdick
The Associated Press

Gardens can be great training grounds for fitness buffs.

Add trails for jogging. Build benches for workouts. Use trees and fence posts for stretching. Lose even more calories by squatting or lifting while weeding, planting, hauling and digging.

You can personalize your garden to fit your energy level. Equipment such as exercise beams and conditioning ladders are inexpensive and simple to make, while portable gear like weighted rollers, jump ropes, dumbbells and Swiss balls can be eased into the routines.

"If you have children's play equipment, it is easy to add a pull-up bar or climbing frame for adults to a tree house," said Bunny Guinness, a landscape architect who runs a garden design business near Peterborough in central England.

Gardening in and of itself can be a formidable calorie burner, said

Guinness, who with physiotherapist Jacqueline Knox wrote "Garden Your Way to Health and Fitness" (Timber Press, 2008).

Regular physical activity reduces the risk of many illnesses, and gardening can provide it, said Margaret Hagen, an educator with University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension.

"Raking is like using a rowing machine," Hagen said. "Turning a compost pile is similar to lifting weights. Carry a gallon sprinkling can of water in each hand and you've got 8-pound dumbbells. Pushing a lawnmower is like walking on a treadmill, only much more interesting."

Even more calories are burned when calisthenics are included in the mix. Add push-ups, chin-ups, bridging, power lunges and dips to the workouts.

Warm up before you begin to avoid cramping and joint pain. Pace your-

self. Hydrate, especially if you're gardening out in the sun. Avoid bending by using telescoping pruners, edgers and weeders. Opt for lightweight and easy-to-grip hand tools.

Work ergonomically. Stress good posture and balance.

"As someone who has had a back issue, I do try to follow my physical therapist's advice and be careful to kneel instead of stooping while gardening, and to lift with bent knees and a straight back," Hagen said. "One of the things I like most about gardening is that because you stretch and move in so many directions, it works all your muscle groups, releasing tension everywhere in your body."

Don't forget to include mental health in your landscape design. Add tranquil herb gardens, soothing fountains and small sitting areas for meditation, relaxing and cooling off.



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