



COURTESY SHERWIN-WILLIAMS

The Gentle Medley palette of freshwater blue, mint green, copper and chartreuse pastels give this kitchen an airy, yet grounded quality. They are accented with safari greens and browns to add some depth.

Homeowners will have new palette of colors for interior design in 2011

By Merlisa Lawrence Corbett
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With budget-conscious homeowners seeking affordable ways to enhance their surroundings, paint industry forecasters predict a vibrant 2011.

"We've seen reactions to the economy move from panic to acceptance, if not appreciation, because people are finding they have the opportunity to be true to themselves," said Jackie Jordan, director of color marketing for Sherwin-Williams. "Hard times call for soft colors. People are romantic about the simpler times of youth and its refreshing honesty. Because of it, we are seeing people drawn toward hues that are nostalgic, such as the colors of tinted photography and faded maps."

Sherwin-Williams' "Today's Colors" 2011 forecast groups colors into four palettes: Purely Refined, Bold Invention, Restless Nomad and Gentle Medley. Purely Refined includes muted blues, lilacs, greens and grays interwoven with understated neutrals. Bold Invention has vivid greens and intense turquoises and blues, inspired by urban scenes, including graffiti. Restless Nomad's palette includes dusky darks, hot vibrant pinks, reds and earthy food-influenced hues that evoke eggplants



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Jackie Jordan, director of color marketing for Sherwin-Williams, says people are romantic about the simpler times, which draws them toward hues that are nostalgic.

and cabbages. Gentle Medley is an eclectic mix of earthy neutral tans combined with freshwater blue, mint green, copper and chartreuse pastels.

Benjamin Moore color experts predicted a "purple reign" in its 2011 color forecast, "Envision Color 2011." Sonu Mathew, senior interior designer at Benjamin Moore, called Vintage Wine the perfect color for the latest wood finishes, leathers, linens and other textiles.

When picking colors, start with nature, said Tracy Morris, interior designer and former Benjamin Moore color consultant who blogs about color at huemuse.blogspot.com. One of her favorites is Manchester Tan, a timeless classic that works in any room. Morris suggested trying new finishes, too.

"Everyone knows what flat, eggshell and glossy finishes are," Morris said. "But they don't know about finishes in between."

Resources:

- » Benjamin Moore paints
- » Tracy Morris' Hue Muse blog
- » Paint Quality Institute
- » Sherwin-Williams paints



A matte finish falls between flat and eggshell and contains porcelain dust, which makes it easier to clean than flat paint. A pearl finish falls between eggshell and semigloss and is great for bathrooms.

"Color to me is like language, everybody speaks it, but everyone does not speak the same language," said Susan Beimler, a D.C. interior designer featured in the book "Farrow & Ball: The Art of Color."

Beimler painted her 10th-floor condo in Vero Beach, Fla., using watery blues and tones of sand and oyster inspired by her ocean views. She loves watering down colors to give them a peaceful, serene feel.

"The palette has become more

neutral, but interesting neutrals taken from nature," said Beimler, who also likes the color of quince, a lemonlike fruit with hints of greenish brown.

"Neutral colors are here to stay," said Barbara Richardson, director of color marketing in North America for Akzo Nobel, one of the largest North American makers of paints, including the Glidden, Dulux and Ralph Lauren brands. "People want colors that reflect the beauty they see in everyday life. This includes time-worn colors."

Debbie Zimmer, color expert at the Paint Quality Institute in Philadelphia, said she expects metallic colors to be hot this year, but mostly as an accent.

"If I were doing metallics in a dining room, I'd do it above the chair rail." She said a semigloss can add shine and shimmer to ceilings.

Zimmer said market research indicates the biggest obstacle to painting is fear.

"Not necessarily fear of painting, but more fear of choosing the wrong color," she said. "Paint is one of the most inexpensive ways to transform a room."

For those whose knees begin to knock at the thought of selecting a hue, the Paint Quality Institute offers tips on its Web site at paintquality.com.