



DESIGN TRENDS

Colour your world ... beige?

Why not try red, green or blue, designer suggests

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Special to QMI Agency

If Jane Hall had her way, the new 'builder's beige' would be green. And although new homeowners might balk at the idea, the Toronto-based artist and designer says not to worry because green goes with everything.

"For me, the number one neutral is green," says Hall, who refers to her Queen St. home decor store as a beige-free zone. "Mother Nature did not get it wrong ... Statistically, it is a colour that people respond positively to," she says.

Positive or not, it's difficult to imagine new homeowners jumping on board with the idea. Even Hall knows from experience that most people are afraid to use colour, especially after years of being told that neutrals like beige are important for resale, a notion she "fundamentally disagrees with."

So just how do you go about selecting a paint colour for your new home or condo? It's nearly impossible to select vibrant colours from a builder's palette because there's no way to visualize how the light will fall in a room or how the colours will flow.

"We suggest that people pick



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white so that it's easier for us to go and repaint a nice colour on top of it," says Yanic Simard, principal, Toronto Interior Design Group, noting that homeowners are more likely to tire of white, prompting them to paint colour sooner.

Nevertheless, the basic idea is to

match your cabinetry and flooring, he says. If you've chosen white cabinets with darker countertops, you should stay with white or grey walls.

If your cabinetry is cream and your floors are espresso, lean more towards the creams and beige. "And

yes, paint the whole house the same colour to carry the story," says Simard, whose personal favourite is Classic Grey from Benjamin Moore.

Once your home is built, you can begin to introduce stronger colours and both Hall and Simard agree there's no need to wait a year, although it's a good idea to wait a few months before applying the second coat.

According to leading Canadian paint brand Sico, colour trends for 2011/2012 are "all about using colours that celebrate the simplicity and beauty of everyday living."

Sico's international team of colour experts has divided the palette into three themes: inviting, authentic and dazzling. Inviting colours, like Lunar Month blue and Red Jujube give off a homey, comfortable vibe; authentic colours, including Seashore Pebble sand and Avocado Soufflé cream, ooze peace and contentment; while dazzling colours are energetic and fun, such as Splashdown turquoise and Pastis lime green.

Simard, who works closely with Benjamin Moore, says the 2011 forecast is about giving a sense of structure to the "crazy, chaotic world" we live in and that there's no right or wrong when it comes to deciding on a colour for your home. "It's like a piece of clothing; it's so personal," he says.

Meanwhile, Hall encourages people to be inspired by their gardens or by a trip to the tropics. "We're there to reenergize and we feel wonderful, but then we come back to our beige boxes," she says. "There's no such thing as purple is in or purple is out; if you love the colour purple, it's in."



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