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The Power of Color

Using color in the home expresses individuality, enhances the look and feel of a room, and creates ambiance and atmosphere. Color is a powerful tool to use in your décor; it can transform a simple room into something stylish and fashionable. For those a bit timid or unsure of what hues to choose, interior decorator Clair Ownby provides some tips so you can color with confidence.

Ownby, of Ownby Design located in Scottsdale and Kona, Hawaii, is a 10-year veteran of the interior design industry. Her firm has decorated award-winning luxury residences from Paradise Valley to Sedona to the Big Island.

When it comes to deciding on a color palette for a home, Ownby has a general rule of thumb: look at personality. For those who are lively and outspoken, she recommends neutral, warm colors. For the introverted types, she advises cool tones such as gray, blue and green.

Color also provides a strong influence in evoking mood in a room. When her clients wish to construct a Zen-like environment, Ownby keeps to a neutral palette with calming colors such as sage green and pale blues, or what she calls "spa blues." "If you lead a super-busy lifestyle and want to come home to something peaceful, this is what I recommend," she says. For an opposite effect, yellows and reds are energizing colors, but Ownby advises to stay away from bright yellows, which are too intense for Arizona with all its sunshine. "Yellow and red are also great for kids' rooms. The primary colors are great stimulators," she states. For those who often entertain, play up and add more colors to your home to stimulate conversation and energy.

As for trends in home furnishings, Ownby says, "Chocolate brown is the new black. It's really conducive in our environment and works with every interior." She suggests pairing chocolate brown with sage green or fuchsia as an accent color. Even a little color can make the home more inviting and attractive.

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