Home at La Maison: Color Scheming

Written by David M. Brown

Instead of a dark therapist's sofa, add a few colorful pillows to your sofa.

Awaken your bedroom with a brightly upholstered, crystal-studded headboard, layered with multi-colored, variously-textured pillows.

"What a great tool to use in your home or business: Color and colorful accessorizing: It's so inexpensive and can create so much change," says Jamie Wilke, senior designer for La Maison Interiors, 15450 N. Scottsdale Road. Owners Davinder Chawla and Alan K. Reinken opened the full-service design showroomSeptember 2011.

Tangerine/orange are the 'it' colors of the season. Here, a vignette of accessories, including a trio of pendant lights, vari-sized and -shaped bowls, a bright abstract oil and a pillowed gray chair on a mohair throw, 'pops' against a white wall.

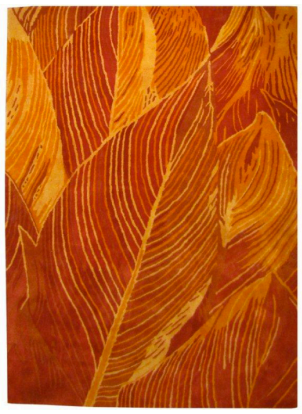
"For less money than 30 minutes on your therapist's sofa, you can add color with a designer rug or candlestick holder with bright candles to accent your space," he adds. "This could be a mood changer for you every day you come home, and only for a few dollars, and when you need another change, just replace these without changing the complete decor."

Anchored by a basic white and black table, chairs and lights, a dining room ensemble incorporates tone-on-tone drapes against a blue wall. Notice the prominence of the small fuchsia flowers.

Furniture, accessories, artwork and paint make immediate statements. "Color is usually your first impression when you enter any space — home, office, shop," says Wilke, who worked with Sherwin Williams on its 2000 paint deck collection and, as a former owner of six showrooms, routinely changed their color palettes. "Color and accessories set the tone, or pace, of what you should expect. They tell your guests what to expect or who you are."

He suggests an example: "When you walk into a home and you want to create a warm and quiet jazz or nightclub feeling, I suggest a deep

dramatic color to set the stage and complementary accessories. However, it is very important that the home or space can handle the color, and the color the space."



Various tones of orange and a leaf design make for a rug everyone will put their eyes on.

Before you turn to the professionals at La Maison Interiors for their color expertise, find out "what moves you," Wilke says. Get inspired to design. He'll go to a local car dealer, for instance, and see a color scheme that shouts: "Yes!" Within hours, a French Blue BMW with black accents inspires a La Maison showroom vignette accented with French blue: a pair of candlesticks, a hand-painted picture of France and a contemporary light fixture centered over a contemporary black dining table.

Accents should be no accident: "When using a color accent or splash, try to select a color that can be easily found in a number of items that can be spread throughout the design," he says. Take tangerine: If you use it as an accent on a major wall, then add a pair of pillows, a couple of pieces on the coffee table, an area rug, perhaps, and even a print or picture — all or partly in tangerine. "This not only reinforces the effect but brings the color down from the wall and within the room," Wilke says. "The space becomes more welcoming and involving."

Don't forget about different finish qualities such as gloss, satin, eggshell and high gloss. Eggshell is recommended for high-traffic areas, as some of the other finishes may scuff on repeated contact.

An Old World grouping of bench, mirror and urn are serenely set on a light blue/white floor and against a light green wall.

Faux finishes, although somewhat less popular right now than they were 10 years ago, also can have dramatic effect. As can variations in finish textures: "Good design in large and small spaces requires diversity and a fluid transfer of color; by changing the texturing, space takes on a different effect," he says.

The in-crowd colors right now. "Color trends vary from state to state with culture and climate, but I would say cheerful bright accent colors: tangerine, ricky lime, indigo blue, passion purple, with base colors super white or shiny black."

Choosing just the right home palette and correct accessories can be time consuming but worth the energy, Wilke says, "When you figure out the right colors, you know it!"

As always, when you think home, think La Maison.

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