

colour calling

Trend forecaster Bree Leech shares the hottest colour directions of 2009 and the forces behind them which inspire her every day

WORDS BELINDA JACKSON STYLING WENDY BANNISTER
PHOTOGRAPHY SHARYN CAIRNS

Ask trend forecaster Bree Leech what the year's hottest colours are and you are guaranteed to receive an up-to-the-minute answer – purple and berry tones, greys with personality and neo-pastels, to be exact. "I talk about what colours are fashionable, but also about the different ways colour is used," she explains.

To craft her esteemed insights, the director of interior design and trend forecasting company Texture has scoured fashion catwalks, walked the biggest furniture fairs and tuned into the freshest design philosophies on the globe. Even her downtime is spent flicking through style journals and surfing the internet "like a madwoman!" she says with a laugh, in search of the next big thing.

If you're passionately in love with one colour, Bree suggests 'colour blocking', adding different shades of that colour to everything in a room, from the walls to linen, lampshades and artwork. "It's a modern way to use colour and definitely makes an impact," she says. Instead of the painted feature walls of yore, Bree suggests adding colour to interiors with a piece of artwork or a throw. >



Spending her days immersed in the latest colour trends, it's not surprising that the hottest looks seep into the home of Bree Leech, pictured here at her desk (top left). Of her bedroom's serene atmosphere (left), she says, "I always seem to have some form of blues and greens in there, grounded by earth tones. The neo-pastels of the moment (above) are perfect for that."



< The biggest colour 'stories' at the moment are, according to Bree, very pale and powdery lilacs and mauves, while strong purples and berries are also big. "I have a passion for purple and collect objects in shades of berry and jewel tones," she says.

Also hot on the radar are neo-pastels; think revitalised apple-greens and blue-greens muted and infused with grey, making them easy on the eye and easy to incorporate into our homes. These shades work well with the dark woods and rich chocolate tones that have dominated interiors for the last decade.

Grey has undergone a renaissance every decade, from the pale greys of the 1980s and the cold, minimalist greys of the 1990s to today's more complex neutrals in warm or cool tones. "Now, greys are much softer, more natural. Grey is going to hang around for a while now," Bree predicts.

Surrounded by colour swatches throughout the working day, Bree's own home is swathed in neutrals, like a sorbet between meals. "When you work with colour all day, it's nice to have a space to relax in that refreshes your palate – or 'palette', in this case," she says. Bree has opted for shades of white and pale timbers in the dining area and a monochromatic palette of charcoal, grey and silver in the living area. "Both palettes rely on lots of texture and contrast of materials to create interest, such as the use of glass, timber, ceramics and even paper."

Fashions may continue to evolve, but to Bree, trends in design will always be relevant. "A lot of designers say they're inspired by nature and the past, but designer Arik Levy says design is about relationships," she says. "Arik's philosophy is that the world is really about people, and people make things for other people. That sums up design for me!"

For more information, call trend forecaster Bree Leech on 0418 318 441 or visit www.texturedesign.blogspot.com.

Bree Leech's inspiration list

1. Christian Lacroix Fall-Winter 2008/2009 collection.

"One of the key trends in the home for '09 is 'global weave' – an urban tribal style that fuses punk and ethnic influences. The look is inspired by a fusion of global cultures and the world's boundaries disappearing."

2. Autoban Built By De La Espada 'Walking Man' bench.

"A slab-like construction held up by what resembles two legs. It indicates a return to raw materials and simple construction, but with a quirky twist. Little twists in design signal our need for humour in our lives."

3. Jean Paul Gaultier Fall-Winter 2008/2009 collection.

"The latest couture collection relates to another key trend: geometry and optical illusion, shadows and light. The intricate web-like detail follows interior cues of layers, layers, layers!"

4. Pierre & Charlotte's 'Lantern' wall light.

"I love the simplicity of their designs. The catchword is 'simplification': sophisticated clean lines, minimal colour, a very high-quality product with rustic, country-inspired elements."

5. Bernabeifreeman's lighting range.

"Their latest 'Seams' range has a delicate geometric look that will be on trend this year. They have a great design sensibility. Their products are produced locally and with quality in mind."

6. Arik Levy 'Geological Landscape' bookshelf.

"Arik believes that the excess that has led the world into economic crisis has sparked a return to integrity in design. This refined, futuristic look reflects the current fascination with the angular lines and facets of precious stones. The inspiration from nature is mineral-based rather than organic."

7. www.style.com.

"Whenever I am on the net, I have style.com in the background to watch fashion trends."



2

PHOTOGRAPHY (LIVING ROOM WALL, BOTTOM LEFT) BERNIE GRIFITHS/GREGORY'S PHOTOGRAPHIC ART



3



4

"I love THE NATURAL SIMPLICITY OF PIERRE & CHARLOTTE'S DESIGNS"

"A delicate GEOMETRIC LOOK WILL BE ON TREND THIS YEAR"



5



6

Top 5 tips

FOR USING COLOUR IN YOUR HOME

- + Always do what you love if you plan to live in your home long-term. You can always change it later if it comes time to sell.
- + If you're not confident with colour, use a consultant. Even a one-hour consultation can really help to develop your ideas into something you can work with.
- + Lacking direction? Choose one thing you love as the inspiration for your room and build from there. A room with direction has more impact.
- + If you are updating your decor, don't just buy new. Revamp existing pieces or mix in a few vintage finds to add your own character and personality.
- + Find a colour you are passionate about and try colour blocking – creating a tonal palette based on the one colour – for a room with real 'wow' factor.

Opposite, top left: Bree can't help but be on trend; her kitchen displays the purple hues (her favourite) which just happen to be some of the hottest in design right now. Elsewhere, neutrals dominate; in her monochromatic living area (top left), they provide a calm backdrop for colour boards (opposite, bottom right), which display paint chips, fabrics and inspirational photos of the latest fashions in interiors.