

# LIVES



5 PERSPECTIVES

## Using Color

A little pigment goes a long way when it comes to boosting your mood, your mind, and your home's curb appeal. Embrace the wonders of color with these ideas to saturate the soul.

BY SHARLENE BREAKEY

## 1

### Don't be afraid to be blue.

Blue is known for its stress-reducing effects. That phenomenon is rooted in our biology. When we're surrounded by the color in nature—a body of water, clear skies—we know we're safe. We have water to drink, and the weather is good. My family tapped into this emotion when we moved into a new home and took down the drapes to let the windows frame the water outside. You can get the same benefit from large photos in which blue dominates, especially personal ones that remind you of a joyful day at the beach.

**WALLACE J. NICHOLS, PHD**, IS A MARINE BIOLOGIST AND THE AUTHOR OF *BLUE MIND*.

## 2

### Mix and match without hesitation.

Our annual color of the year reflects the current zeitgeist, and this year we're putting out two supportive colors. Gray is a color attached to the earth—pebbles, stone, granite—and it symbolizes solidity and resilience. We paired that with a luminous yellow—a soft color everyone associates with a shining sun—to capture the feeling of going outside on a clear day. So wear a comfortable gray sweater with a set of yellow beads or a yellow linen scarf. Or paint a wall yellow, then add a floral arrangement that includes pebbles at the bottom of a clear vase. Look for a creative project—painting a landscape, decorating a weathered piece of driftwood, dyeing an old white shirt—that features these colors. These things can help you feel safe and sunny.

**LEATRICE EISEMAN** HAS BEEN THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PANTONE COLOR INSTITUTE FOR 36 YEARS AND WRITTEN 10 BOOKS ON COLOR.

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## 3

### Go big on the little details.

After I came out, I moved into a small house. I made the interior colorful, but because painting exteriors is an investment, I was arriving home to a bleak black-and-white structure. I fixed that by painting the front steps in a rainbow pattern I'd seen on a staircase in Italy. The result is a reflection of the pride flag and my kids' love of rainbows. My partner did the painting, so I see her deep love in each spot of color.

**KAT VAN DER HOORN** IS A PHD CANDIDATE IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY AT OREGON HEALTH & SCIENCE UNIVERSITY.

## 4

### Focus on the connection between color and texture.

Like an animal, you need to build the den you love. It's important to remember that color can be sensed in ways other than visually. I'm a tactile person, so the gray carpet I chose feels nubby and soft under my feet. When I buy gray or white sheets, I make sure they're percale because I'll connect the color with how crisp and cool they feel against my skin.

**CHRISTIANE LEMIEUX** IS A DESIGNER, THE FOUNDER OF DWELLSTUDIO, AND THE AUTHOR OF *THE FINER THINGS*.

## 5

### Look outside for inspiration.

These days, I've gotten better at noticing details right under my nose. For a long time, I've had pink and orange bougainvillea growing in my backyard, but I was always too busy to really see them. Now, every night for dinner, I bring in a few stems of whatever pleases me and use them to add color to my home in different ways. It's not just flowers. If I notice a color I like in the garden, on a bird, on a branch, or wherever else, I find ways to bring it inside. Lately that's meant painting simple parts of my house a deep emerald green. Embracing all that color brings me energy.

**MINDY WEISS** IS AN EVENT PLANNER AND THE AUTHOR OF *GOLDIE THE HANDPICKED FLOWER GIRL*.