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Searching for Serenity

The new decade inspires colors that suggest nature & wellness

THE LAST 10 YEARS HAVE SEEN dramatic changes in culture and consumer attitude, and in response trending colors have swung from cool gray to vivid jewel tones. Moving into the new decade, the prevailing attitude is a strong desire for calm and wellness in an increasingly busy and high-paced world.

“People are gravitating toward colors that are both comforting and evoke positive emotions,” said Gena Kirk, vice president of design for KB Home in Aliso Viejo, Calif. “Today’s consumers are starting to view their home as a place to truly slow down and disconnect. Now more than ever, homes are becoming a sanctuary and a place for people to recuperate from the business of their daily lives.”

FINDING SOLACE IN NATURE

Inspirations drawn from the outside world have permeated homes for a few years now and for good reason – influences like greenery, flowing water and natural lighting are continually proven to be beneficial for physical and emotional well-being. Even with the uncertainty a new year and decade can bring, nature is a reliable source of peace.

“Our trend research has shown that while the world is full of great possibility, it is also a time of confusion where we crave meaning,” said Rob Haley, AkzoNobel color trends manager, wood coatings. “The need to have a nurturing space to reconnect calls for the use of a more earthy and natural palette.”

According to Erika Woelfel, vice president of creative services at Behr, home palettes are moving from clean and balanced to softer, warmer and

ABOVE DULUX’s 2020 Color of the Year, Chinese Porcelain (DLX1160-6), is a rich and traditional hue that combines the energy and brightness of cobalt blue with a muted, dark-navy tone, emitting a feeling of restfulness and hope.

more natural tones. Brown-based shades like buff, mocha and ivory are trending again. These insights translate to Behr’s 2020 color palette, which found its muse in elements like the sky, earth, water and plant life.

“Today, many of us are connected to our phones around the clock, and it’s hard to create boundaries between work and home because we’re all so reachable,” said Woelfel, explaining that Behr’s 2020 Color of the Year, Back to Nature, was selected as a way to remind homeowners to reconnect with the grounding properties found in the environment. “Back to Nature is a biophilic shade that imparts a fresh sense of vitality, and incorporating an ecological green in the home helps purify and promote a balanced space.”

The Color Marketing Group also caught on to this need for connecting to nature. Their four key colors for 2020 include Electrum, a complex green-influenced gold; Ver-de-Verdad, an expressive green color; Seed of Life, a natural warm beige; and Feel Real, a clay-like tone.

“Combinations of nature-based, muted neutrals will be seen gracing the kitchens and baths of the

By ERINN LOUCKS



ABOVE **PANTONE's** 2020 Color of the Year is 19-4052 Classic Blue. Suggestive of the sky at dusk, Classic Blue has qualities that highlight consumers' desires for a dependable and stable foundation upon entering the new decade. The tone also offers a sense of peace and is known as easily relatable.

new decade's consumers," said Sandra Sampson, vice president of public relations and communications for the Color Marketing Group. "These colors express consumers' needs to perceive the new decade with a fresh perspective."

FOCUSING ON WELLNESS

Nature is only part of the picture when it comes to satisfying consumer demand for tranquility and newness. Personal wellness – whether that means more relaxation, a better work/life balance or an improved environment – is growing in multiple markets, and consumers are looking for colors to match this.

"Our research unveiled that 2020 will be an empowering year of change that will focus on bringing your best self into the new decade," said Sue Wadden, director of color marketing at Sherwin-Williams. "Naval SW 6244 – Sherwin-Williams' color of the year – strikes the perfect balance between bold color and the calming and awe-inspiring power of nature, from the infinite night sky to the deep sea."

Wadden explained that design is becoming more about what makes the homeowner feel good. Along with those rooted in nature, hues that inspire mindfulness or provide a sense of grounding fulfill this requirement.

"Simultaneously embracing technology and a desire for calming elements in our fast-paced world, consumers are looking to infuse simplicity into their lives in an uplifting environment," said Susan Forint, Dulux color and decor expert. "Today's consumer yearns for stability and a sense of grounding."

According to Forint, it is because of this consumer attitude that a longing for blue tones is apparent. Blue represents safety and comfort and is associated with calm. Chinese Porcelain, Dulux's 2020 Color of the Year, combines the energy and brightness of cobalt blue with a muted, dark navy tone for a restful and hopeful appeal.

ABOVE The Color of the Year 2020 for **BENJAMIN MOORE** is First Light 2102-70, a soft, rosy hue. It represents a new dawn of idealism, design and living – a shift in mindset from the material to satisfying the core needs in life: community, comfort, security, self-expression, authenticity and optimism.

BELOW The **BEHR** 2020 Color of the Year is a meadow-inspired green called Back to Nature. It was selected as one way to bring nature into houses and remind homeowners to reconnect with the important relaxing and grounding properties found in the environment. This biophilic shade imparts a fresh sense of vitality and incorporates an ecological green in the home to help purify and promote a balanced space.

"Consumers want their homes to be stress free, soothing and comforting and are gravitating toward selecting colors that will summon those feelings," said Kirk.

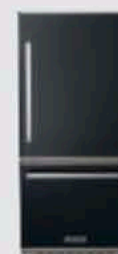
TOUCHABLE FINISHES

Along with a resurgence in natural, grounding colors, consumers are looking for tactile experiences such as matte or textile finishes. Replacing high gloss, these more organic finishes are inspired by nature and offer a softer touch.

"In 2020, we will see less physical wire brushing and sand blasting and a movement toward incorporating other textures, such as linens and shagreen effects," said Haley.

Natural wood finishes are making a comeback in cabinetry for both kitchens and bathrooms. Brass, copper and earthy stone materials are pairing with matte finishes on surfaces like countertops, floors and walls. Meanwhile, fixtures like faucets and lighting are appearing in brushed gold and black.

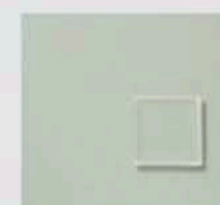
Other metallic finishes are also being used to add a punch of contrasting color and



BIG CHILL has unveiled two new tiers of finish offerings in either Standard or Premium across all three of the brand's product lines – Classic, Pro and Retro. The Standard Collection is curated to provide the best in basics, while the Premium Collection provides superior color finishes for those seeking an elevated twist on classic appliance offerings. Shown here is the Pro Collection in Slate Blue, a Standard Collection offering.



KITCHENAID's new commercial-style ranges bring the tools of restaurant chefs into residential kitchens with features like app connectivity, voice control and Even-Heat True Convection. Outside of the classic stainless-steel finish, the range is available in eight trending colors, including Imperial Black, Milkshake, Passion Red, Ink Blue, Misty Blue, Yellow Pepper, Scorched Orange (shown here) and Avocado Cream.



Tranquil Dawn is the 2020 Color of the Year from **AKZONOBEL**, and it features all four of the accompanying color palettes: Upcycle, Hybrid, Classical and Evolve. A delicate shade somewhere between green, blue and gray, Tranquil Dawn has an effect that changes tone depending on the colors with which it is used.



Inspired by cast-iron cookware, **MAYTAG** is releasing Cast Iron Black, its newest kitchen appliance finish. The finely textured, matte finish is engineered to stand up to daily wear and tear and helps resist scratches while helping hide fingerprints and minor dents. The Cast Iron Black appliance finish is available on select Maytag models, such as the Top Control Dishwasher with Powerdry options and Third Level Rack (shown here).



BLUESTAR is expanding its customization offerings with a new matte finish collection, available across its entire line. Now, each of the company's standard colors will be offered in five different finish options, including the new matte, the existing gloss and three textured options, to go along with more than 1,000 color choices. Shown here is Water Blue.



The Dekton Chromica Collection has officially launched as **COSENTINO's** latest collaboration with renowned architect and designer Daniel Germani. The collection is comprised of two deeply saturated hues, Baltic and Feroe. Baltic (shown here) references the nuances of the ocean in a deep and strong blue. Feroe combines a sophisticated and subdued character in a dark green.



LEFT Naval SW 6244 – **SHERWIN WILLIAMS'** 2020 Color of the Year – is a rich navy that creates a calm and grounding environment infused with quiet confidence. Naval balances the bold opulence of Art Deco with the awe-inspiring power of nature. This deep shade evokes a prominent sense of confidence that fuses timeless color with a fresh mix of natural materials.

BELOW **GRAHAM & BROWN's** Color of the Year 2020 is Adeline, a rich shade of bottle green that draws its name from one of Britain's most celebrated authors, Adeline Virginia Woolf. The hue references a deep leaf green and channels country gardens and whimsical interiors.

shine into a space. In particular, matte-black and gunmetal-gray finishes are replacing traditional stainless steel on appliances.

"These finishes can give any kitchen or bathroom a sleek look while still maintaining functionality," said Kirk, adding that brushed nickel is another top seller in faucets. "It is a versatile finish that goes well with a wide array of colors, especially the trending palette of tones."

A NEW DECADE OF COLOR

While striving for wellness and security, consumers are also looking to 2020 as an excuse for a fresh start. They are boldly facing the future – whatever it may hold – and that means more vibrant and personal colors will appear on design boards.

"Inspired by Instagram influencers, homeowners are feeling more confident using colors in their home," said Hannah Yeo, Benjamin Moore color marketing and development manager. "From warm to cool, from playful to sophisticated, all colors in the spectrum can be spotted in bathrooms and kitchens."

The trend for personalization will continue to push homeowners toward exciting hues; these more individual colors will likely show up on ac-



cent pieces, like a focal wall or an island. Colorful tones will appear in homes that embraced the all-white kitchen and overall gray palette for a touch of character and warmth. Whether the consumer finds solace in the nature-inspired tones or the more grounding, earthy neutrals is up to them – the end goal is still a happier and healthier homeowner.

"Someone with a sense of comfort in the traditional and predictable will draw from a more soothing color palette," said Haley. "And for others who want to be more expressive, rich, deep and robust colors such as green, gold and rust will be used. The result – stunning designs for every taste." ●