



PHOTOS: CHRIS LUKER.

# Warm Embrace

THE SEASON'S NUANCED, REASSURING PALETTES UNDERSCORE THE INNATE COMFORT OF COLOR.

WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY GRACE BEULEY HUNT

Color is personal and visceral, the perfect hue as cossetting as a cashmere wrap. Just ask designer Danielle Balanis, who swathed the walls of her office in an uplifting sage green and the ceilings in a sunny paisley wallpaper. Formerly the shadowy basement of her Mountain Brook, Alabama residence, Balanis made it her mission to imbue the newly crafted work-from-home space with optimism and inspiration, relying on garden-fresh tones and her collections of cherished artworks and antiques. "The colors are healing," she says. "It's my cocoon of creativity. I come down here, get lost and find my groove."



"Mustard is my number one, go-to color," effuses designer Danielle Balanis. As testament, buffalo check portieres, Schumacher's Katara paisley wallpaper on the ceiling and gimp fabric trimming the millwork bring a cheerful disposition to her otherwise deep green office space. [daniellebalanis.com](http://daniellebalanis.com)

# GLOBAL FLAIR

Raised between Istanbul and Washington, D.C., interior designer Sara Bengur has a unique perspective on color associations. *Luxe* caught up with Bengur in the vibrant family room of a Manhattan client to hear her hot take on hue. [sarabengur.com](http://sarabengur.com)

**Where does a palette begin?** I start by going to my clients' homes with a giant bag full of fabrics, paint samples and carpets. I tell them to choose textures and colors they like—no stress, no 'where would it go?'—just pure instinct. The pile they create becomes my starting point.

**Tell us about this room.** The inspiration was the Proportio Exhibit at Palazzo Fortuny at the Venice Biennale, which my clients had seen and loved. In Venice, you notice lots of layers and rich colors. The room faces east onto a courtyard, so I felt using warmer tones of red and orange would ground the space.

**Advice for the color-shy?** There's a big difference between vegetable and commercial dyes. One thing I've found is that if you stick with natural vegetable dyes, and combine similar tones, you don't get that unnecessary stimulation.

**What shades bring you comfort?** Growing up in Turkey and vacationing in the Mediterranean, it was layers of ochre, terra-cotta and turquoise—whereas blue and green are the calming colors of the west. I find it fascinating that different cultures have different views on what nurtures.

**Where are you drawing inspiration lately?** Anywhere! It could be an artwork or a great dress. The other night, I was watching the movie *Luxor*, and spied this Egyptian ferry painted in the most beautiful patterns of blue, red and peach. I had to pause and snap a picture. I'll probably end up incorporating it somewhere.



THIS PAGE: GLOBAL FLAIR PHOTO: CARLTON DAVIS. OPPOSITE: PERFECT COCKTAIL PHOTO: SIMON UPTON.

## UNCOMMON THREADS

Naturalistic, multifaceted color compositions distinguish the rug collections developed by Christopher Farr in collaboration with British designer Gregory Parkinson. This year, 'Intertwine,' a new range defined by space-dyed yarns yielding dimensional color effects, joins the inaugural collection, 'Woven,' sampled here in Color Weave Kilim in Mauve Straw and Beach Weave in Ocean Jade. Each rug is made-to-order in Mirzapur, India, with the ability to customize across hue, construction, size and style. [christopherfarr.com](http://christopherfarr.com)



## PERFECT COCKTAIL

"People think of our work as colorful, but if you actually look it's quite neutral and restrained in a way," insists designer Beata Heuman. Take for instance this London snug, where orange tigers prance across the walls and a theatrically canopied azure sofa stares down a moss green rug. Somehow, the tone *is* serene.

"Generally, I do neutral backdrops with flashes of color where you wouldn't expect it," explains Heuman, whose whimsical portfolio shines in her new book, *Every Room Should Sing*. "In this room, the traditional order would have been plain walls and pattern on the furniture, so we tried to invert that."

Another trick: Using the same white paint across a home's ceilings and woodwork, a move she deems "really important to tying things together."

Heuman credits her philosophy to a deep-seated passion for art, citing Vermeer's color mastery in particular as aspiration. "Think of his paintings. They're all dark and neutral, and then you'll spot these flashes—a white collar, a red lip." Similarly, "every room needs a pop of color," she says. "Here, it's the red beak of the bird on the pillow, and I have to say, that pillar box red is great. If a room doesn't feel quite vibrant enough, adding a tiny splash of it can really lift things." [beataheuman.com](http://beataheuman.com)

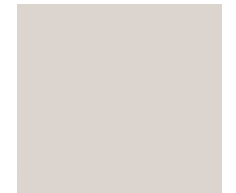
## BEATA'S COLOR NOTES



### TEAL

"Blue is a really nice way of adding color without it feeling too dominant."

Naivasha Cotton / [warrisvianni.com](http://warrisvianni.com)



### OFF-WHITE

"I almost always use this particular white on the ceilings, which has a bit of gray to it."

Strong White Paint / [farrow-ball.com](http://farrow-ball.com)



### HAY

"This fabric is a good balance of 'out there' and natural with the sandy background."

Tiger Silk / [dedar.com](http://dedar.com)



### EMERALD

"I love doing green rugs—they feel like a lawn!"

Hemp Dhurrie / [vanderhurd.com](http://vanderhurd.com)

# SWEET SUBLIME

FOUR DESIGNERS TRANSLATE THEIR COLOR PHILOSOPHIES INTO RESTFUL SPRING MOOD BOARDS.



## TROPICAL CALM

"I've been known to decorate in blues and whites with natural touches, but lately, I'm in a whirlwind of devotion to pinks, greens and corals. I'm working on a London flat in those tones—dreaming of it now!" —**AMANDA LINDROTH**

Southfield Green Paint / [benjaminmoore.com](http://benjaminmoore.com). China Moonshell Fringe / [samuelandsons.com](http://samuelandsons.com). Melon Batik Fabric in New Jungle on Tint / [quadrillefabrics.com](http://quadrillefabrics.com). Cyprus Faux Wood Wallcovering / [nobilis.fr](http://nobilis.fr). Violet Snail Pull in Antique Gilt / [charlesedwards.com](http://charlesedwards.com). Terrazzo Tile in Verde / [balineum.com](http://balineum.com).



## DEEP DRAMA

"I'm governed by haute couture, and by the jewel tones and geometric energies found in nature. Admittedly, I'm an unapologetic maximalist, but I don't believe in going bold 'just because.'" —**COREY DAMEN JENKINS**

Hidden Sapphire Paint / [benjaminmoore.com](http://benjaminmoore.com). Game Show Fabric in Teal by Mulberry Home / [leejofa.com](http://leejofa.com). Custom Inlay / [cbhardwoodfloors.com](http://cbhardwoodfloors.com). Birds Tapestry Wallcovering / [fshumacher.com](http://fshumacher.com). Zuqualla Tape in Multi/Gold / [leejofa.com](http://leejofa.com). Cotswold Thumb Latch in Burnished Brass / [armacmartin.com](http://armacmartin.com).



## NEUTRAL CONTRAST

"I'm drawn to masculine colors and materials juxtaposed in surprising yet classic combinations. I love deep browns and blues, and rarely use cool tones. If I bring in a gray or a white, it has to be warm." —**DAVID FRAZIER**

Tanner's Brown Paint / [farrow-ball.com](http://farrow-ball.com). Reclaimed Longleaf Heart Pine in Chalk / [thehudsonco.com](http://thehudsonco.com). Venimeuses Fabric in Nuit / [pierrefrey.com](http://pierrefrey.com). Toscana Braided Leather Cord in Hazelnut / [samuelandsons.com](http://samuelandsons.com). No 6071 Flush Ring Pull in Polished Nickel / [nanz.com](http://nanz.com). Horsehair Wallcovering in Clydesdale / [phillipjefries.com](http://phillipjefries.com).



## SOFT SATURATION

"I love integrating color, but prefer to work within a more muddy palette. I gravitate toward tones with a bit of brown in them, as they read more neutral and play well together, often in unexpected ways." —**HEIDI CAILLIER**

Setting Plaster Paint / [farrow-ball.com](http://farrow-ball.com). Marble Field Tile in Lilac / [artistictile.com](http://artistictile.com). Dolino Linen Fabric in Kaki / [pierrefrey.com](http://pierrefrey.com). Hollyhock Hand Block Fabric in Aubergine/Mint / [jeanmonro.com](http://jeanmonro.com). Zellige Tile in Weathered White / [cletile.com](http://cletile.com). Ball Cabinet Knob in Unlacquered Brass / [rejuvenation.com](http://rejuvenation.com).

THIS PAGE: SWEET SUBLIME PORTRAITS: COURTESY AMANDA LINDROTH, COURTESY COREY DAMEN JENKINS, COURTESY HEIDI CAILLIER, COURTESY DAVID FRAZIER. OPPOSITE: GRASS ROOTS PHOTOS: BJORN WALLÄNDER.



## GRASS ROOTS

DESIGNER BENNETT LEIFER SHARES THE QUARANTINE COLOR JOURNEY THAT MADE HIM LOVE HIS APARTMENT AGAIN.

AS TOLD TO GRACE BEULEY HUNT

My dad worked in finance, but he was very artistic. When I was a child, we'd spend weekends at the tiki bar in my grandparents' basement painting and drawing. In college, I studied art history (as well as business), and I've always admired landscapes in particular. There's this pensive, thoughtful quality to oil paintings that I love staring at—something about those rich, botanical greens.

Which brings us to Covid. I had become a bit of a workaholic, rolling out of bed, crawling into sweatpants, going to the computer, and before I knew it, the day was done. I was looking for a hobby, and I thought, 'Why not try oil painting?' I did a ton of research, ordered my materials, and set out for the park near my apartment. I have to tell you, it was ... truly embarrassing. There I was setting up the easel with an instruction manual, dabbing at my painter's palette. At first there was this fear of judgment, but pushing through that fear to the other side was really wonderful.

As the weather grew cold, I came inside and realized I needed a dedicated space for my hobby. Rekindling my love of botanical green, I began refreshing my apartment, starting in



the living room where I got rid of my enormous dining table (since I haven't been entertaining at scale), adding a tea table for meals and artwork in its place. Then, I began pulling in threads of green scattered through my home. My favorite decorative screen—a gift from deGournay—used to sit in the foyer where I never saw it. Now, it anchors the space. Similarly, I had a beautiful Tai Ping carpet in my bedroom, where it's wonderful, sweeping pattern of green and blue was hidden under a mattress. Now, I enjoy it every day. I added plants and reconceived my art collection.

You know those moments when you just feel chic at home? The other night, I was FaceTiming with a friend, drinking from a green Baccarat glass, and I thought, 'I feel chic!' And I think it's because I'm living in color. Green is amazing: It's that perfect lagoon water, that perfect emerald jewel, that perfect eye color. There are these few tones of green that just make me smile. [bennettleifer.com](http://bennettleifer.com)

