Mixing Colour Trends with Existing Decor

It's always exciting to see new colours appearing in the stores at the change of each season. But who decides which colours are the "in" thing and how do we translate that back to our home which we decorated three years ago?

By Jennifer French

Cars are amongst the most expensive consumer items manufactured. Because cars are frequently viewed as extensions or expressions of individual personalities, the design and colour of them is crucial in attracting buyers. Interior and exterior colours for cars are identified 2 to 4 years in advance. You can be pretty sure that when you notice a new colour car on the streets, you will see the same colour in the fashion industry the following year and the year after that it will be the "it" colour of décor.

Remember a couple of years ago there was a profusion of grey cars. Last season we saw a move to grey clothing and this year we are seeing it in paint colour palettes and soft furnishings. Apparently it has to do with the digital age in which we now live. All that fast moving technology is epitomised in grey, silver and steel.

But we all know that grey won't work with the lattes, mochas and espressos that have been gracing our homes for the past 10 years. September 11 was the catalyst for us going into our cocooning phase and brown is seen as a comfortable, cosy colour. So various shades of brown were used in clothing, furnishings and paint. A colour that bridges the gap between brown and silver has to be Taupe.

Taupe is a vague, unscientific colour term, which may be used to refer to almost any grayish-brown, brownish-gray, or warm gray color. It often overlaps with tan and even people who use colour professionally (such as designers and artists) frequently disagree as to what "taupe" means.

Taupe is a great neutral colour - not too warm and not too cool. It is a peaceful colour. It creates a calm in a room, which helps balance ones mind and allows the occupant to escape their busy lives.

Taupe looks great with pure white paint, natural stone like basalt and bluestone, metals such as silver, chrome and stainless steel as well as accents of purple, red, green or navy. All of these colours are popular for winter decorating too.

So if you are wanting to update your décor but don't want a complete overhaul, grab some colourful cushions and mix them with some taupe to soften the chocolate brown leather sofa. Change the coffee table from the dark wenge timber to one with a greyed or whitewashed finish. Paint the walls in a warm grey but remember, the most important rule is to choose colours that YOU love rather than going with the trend. You will feel more at home if you do.

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An easy way to update your colours is with soft furnishings - such as cushions, throws, rugs and blankets.

Chocolate & Chartreuse

From top to bottom. Sheridan – Hamish chunky knit throw (180cm x 150cm) in Chartreuse, $179.95; Avenue Joffre – Divine pure cashmere throw or wrap, $795; Bed Bath n Table – Diamond Knit Chocolate throw (wool mix), $149.95; Collage – Alapca throw rug, $225; Collage – Chocolate lustre cushion, $25.99; Sheridan – Hamish chunky knit square cushion cover (45cm x 45cm) in Chartreuse $39.95. Inserts are included.

Red & stone

From top to bottom. Bed Bath n Table – Diamond Knit Dove Grey throw (wool mix), $149.95; Sheridan – Haden 100% cotton knit throw (180cm x 150cm) in pomegranate red, $199.95; Avenue Joffre – Pure wool hand knit throw, $395; Sheridan – Haden 100% cotton knit square cushions (45cm x 45cm) in Malt and Pomegranate, $49.95; Sheridan – Hamish Large European cushion cover (65cm x 65cm) in Granite, $79.95. Insert not included. European pillow inserts

Latte, Moccha or Espresso

From top to bottom. Collage – Microfibre Hotel LMG throw rug (130cm x 150cm) in pebbles, $32.99; Sorrento Homewares and Gifts – Madra Link Cushion; Bed Bath n Table – Chelsea throw rug (acrylic) in zinc, $39.95; Sorrento – Berlin navy and coffee cushion by Madras Link, $48.95; Sorrento – Faux Fur throw in Latte, $72.95; Sorrento – Trish Fraunfetter Design (Australia) cushion (with insert), $59.95; Collage – Asla cushion in biscuit. $19.99: Sorrento – Aston cushion in