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Bring some passion to your interior design this spring with bold colours for ultimate impact

If your natural choice is neutral, the season's trend for a room full of deep hues might seem like one step too far in the desire for an interior design scheme with individual edge. Moving away from muted greys and soft creams, however, brings rewards, particularly when teamed with carefully chosen accent colours – rose gold is striking when paired with inky grey; copper tones with emerald green; crisp white on midnight blue. Knowing how and where to begin can be tricky, but interior designer Cat Dal has some advice on starting out: “Next time you walk into your favourite bar or restaurant, have a look around; the chances are that there are no overhead spotlights, and the walls are dark, perhaps even textured. This combination gives a glamorous and inviting atmosphere.”

Your starting point needs to focus on the room (or rooms, if you've been bitten by the bold bug) ripe for overhaul, where you want a mindful vibe to come courtesy of relaxed and cocooning hues. “Living rooms or bedrooms are the perfect places to create a dark and cosy space, and using deep inky colours make surroundings feel more intense, beautiful and bold,” continues Cat. “If you're not convinced, my advice would be to paint a hallway or cloakroom to see how the space feels.” There's no need to stop at walls, either: “I love the idea of painting the walls, coving and ceiling the same colour, as it removes the boundaries and makes the whole space feel bigger,” says Cat.

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cosy space, with inky colours

CAT DAL



Haze Countertop Basin,
The Elements Collection, £325
from Waters Baths of Ashbourne
watersbaths.co.uk

However counter-intuitive it might sound, colour is king in north-facing rooms – rather than fighting the harsher natural light, embrace it with bolder tones, and then choose light sources carefully to create ambience. “When going for bold, your lighting needs to complement your scheme and work to enhance your chosen colour. Create layered schemes combining pendants, wall lights and table lamps to produce pockets of light that will create shadows for a dramatic and inviting environment,” Cat advises.

This year will see rich burgundies and olive greens making a striking comeback in matte textures for a more contemporary feel. But, while they may be topping the trends table, don't worry if these aren't palettes that suit your style or your home. “Every year, paint brands bring out new colours, and in our design studio we like to explore a variety of colours when discussing a client's style – it's more about which colours will

work with the natural light within the client's dream vision, rather than what is a current trend,” says Cat. “Navy and emerald green are incredible bold colours – they can give a room a strong sense of style and identity. It's all about what you pair it with: warm metallics and dark hues are a great combination.”

Consider, too, the impact that artwork, woodwork and soft furnishings will have – white picture frames pop from dark walls, while light reflects off woodwork with a coating of gloss, and don't forget the power of carefully chosen soft furnishings whose colour can shine from a deeply coloured canvas. “Mirrored surfaces are also key in a dark room; on tables, sideboards, chests and accessories, as well as on the wall,” says Cat. “Use luxe textures such as wool and velvet for a sophisticated, grown-up feel, and for an extra touch, a sheen will really lift the look.”

Breaking away from your tried-and-tested palette can feel like taking a step into the unknown, but picture yourself sitting in a freshly decorated oasis of calm, and those fears will soon melt away. Stunning results will have you wondering why you've never tried bold before. Our advice? Be confident and go for it.

Photographer Paul Raeside captured Grenache and Lady Char's Lilac for luxury paint brand Paint & Paper Library. Be inspired at paintandpaperlibrary.com

Cat says...

Be bold. The more you explore and experiment, the more confident you will become – a wall can always be re-painted if needs be. Take time to choose your colour carefully – pick one you love, and pair it with different tones, then add contrasting splashes of colour to make it pop. Consider the entire house, and pick a palette that can be brought through the home in different ways.

