

COLOR CODED

Bright color adds cheer to this kitchen.

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Feeling uninspired and unenthused by your kitchen's unmoving atmosphere? Perhaps it's time to punch up your space with a bit of lively, dazzling color. The early to late 2000s favored neutrals in kitchen design. Homeowners and brokers concerned with improving or maintaining a home's resale value played it safe in remodels by incorporating understated color palettes consisting of beige, brown, gray and other muted colors. And though neutrals continue to remain popular among the masses, an increasing number of people are starting to experiment more with their color and design choices. The trick to doing it correctly, however, is to find smart ways to add color without completely overwhelming the space.



This kitchen successfully combines a traditional aesthetic of ceramic tiles and built-in banquette with a touch of vintage in the kitchen table and mid-century modern in the side chair. The complete color palette comes together in a piece of whimsical wall art. Gorgeous hardwood flooring adds design unity.



The sunny yellow and turquoise color palette is tempered by white cabinetry and touches of stainless steel in the appliances and range hood.

[Color 101]

Discover the psychology behind color.

- **Red** is vibrant and associated with hunger stimulation, which might seem appropriate in the kitchen; however, too much red may over-stimulate guests. Instead, create one red focal point or incorporate bits of red into a backsplash or accessories.
- **Blue** is known to have soothing qualities and appeals to men and women equally. Because blue is thought to suppress the appetite, be sure to pair it with a bright color.
- **Green** invites the relaxing qualities of nature to your home; it also stimulates good conversation. While green might add warmth to your kitchen, keep in mind that it tends not to resonate well with potential homebuyers.
- **Yellow** adds instant cheer to a kitchen. But it can also overwhelm the eyes and cause short tempers if the hue is too bright. Warmer tones of yellow or deep golds are best for a kitchen pick-me-up.
- **Palettes from the past.** If you aren't committed to a color palette yet, try incorporating colors that were in your kitchen while you were growing up. The colors will trigger fond memories and make your cooking experiences all the more enjoyable.



(Left above) Ceramic knobs complement the wall color and help unify the entire kitchen design scheme.



(Left below) "The client really wanted to use blue and wanted a Mexican/Spanish tile backsplash," says Mary Jo. Incorporating color into the backsplash is "how we got the most bang for their buck."

"I go fairly classic and safe on the big ticket items," says San Francisco interior designer Mary Jo Fiorella, owner of Fiorella Design. "I'll go whimsical and trendy with furnishings and paint; even decorative lighting can be changed quite easily and really change the look of a space." There are many easy ways to incorporate color into a kitchen's design:

Keep cabinets white. The combined turquoise and yellow paint palette works in this kitchen because it isn't competing with the cabinets and countertops. When using bold color on the walls, cabinets and coun-

tertops integrate into the space better if they're white or neutral.

Add a backsplash. These days, a backsplash is essential to a kitchen's design. A backsplash not only gives a space character, but also comes in a wide variety of materials, sizes, textures and colors. They're sophisticated and provide a means to incorporate color into a design. Don't be afraid of bold colors, but stick to a minimal color scheme so you can pair the backsplash with bright wall paint in a complementary shade.

Experiment with hardware. Don't overlook cabinet knobs and pulls as useful

accessories for adding color. They can increase your kitchen's style quotient instantly. Choose ceramic hardware in colors that complement your backsplash and walls.

When all else fails, go stainless. Stainless steel appliances are timeless and they complement a variety of color palettes.

If you commit to a daring color scheme and find smart ways to incorporate it throughout the space, you will transform your kitchen into a cheery, colorful escape that stands out from the rest of your home.

See Shopping Guide, page 94.