

VIBRANT *summer hues*

Colour consultant Samantha Bacon looks at the characteristics of some favourite colours and explains the best combinations of paint, wallpaper and fabric to add impact to decorating schemes.



Samantha Bacon MDIA

Everywhere we turn at the moment, wherever we are, we can't help but be struck by the intensity of the strong, vibrant colours that are in fashion right now. Summer dresses – which seem to contain almost every hue in the spectrum at its highest possible saturation level – adorn models in shop windows and girls walking down the street. Last year saw the introduction of these beautiful bright hues, all mixed together in a wonderful jumble of colours that appear to break every design rule and yet, seen collectively, simply work. This year sees a continuation of this theme and, if anything, the colours are even more intense. Where last year they were more tentative, now they are bold and bright and, it appears, here to stay.

Lime has really been a winner in the colour stakes recently with designers rushing to use this wonderful zingy hue. Teetering right on the edge of green on the colour wheel, its high yellow content makes this a beautifully cool crisp green, reminiscent of a crunchy apple and, of course, its namesake fruit. Purple is a classic partner for lime, but if you move around the colour wheel a little you come upon bright raspberry hues, hot fuchsia pink and ripe rich rhubarb. It is these colours that are teamed so successfully with lime this summer. And don't underestimate the value of crisp white in this palette as it brings definition to the bright colours and prevents them becoming too overpowering.

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Contemporary textile designs really highlight the beauty of these colours and incorporating these wonderful hues into a room is easy with the addition of a stunning bright upholstered chair or a daybed filled with a jumble of cushions in vivid colours. Tricia Guild, founder of Designers Guild and renowned for her brilliant use of colour in design, has some fabulous hot pink and lime green textiles in her Whitewell Spring/Summer '09 collection. Porter's Paints also has a great array of sharp limes and hot pinks to choose from. The really adventurous will use them on all walls with crisp white woodwork, but for those who prefer to show more restraint, these hues make wonderful feature walls.