

# Inhabit

MAGAZINE

BY QUALITY EDGE®  
SPRING 2024







There's a reason we  
don't see the world  
in black and white.

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CELERIE KEMBLE



INHABIT MAGAZINE™  
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What’s trending in exteriors for 2024? We’ve kept our finger on the pulse of what’s happening, and we believe these are the colors that could dominate the next year.



# LIFE IN FULL COLOR

Do you remember the first time you picked up a crayon? What about wearing an outfit that looked more like a rainbow explosion than a carefully coordinated look? As a toddler, color is fundamental to the way we learn about the world. It's also a lot of fun. When we're kids, color isn't about rules. It's about boundless, unfiltered, personal expression.

Maybe that's why we always ask children, "What's your favorite color?" How would you answer that same question as an adult? Do you like colors that are more muted or bold? Is there a specific color that dominates your wardrobe or a certain room in your house?

For every homeowner, color showcases a sense of style and sends a message to the community. The blend of neutrals and bolds, soft and warm tones—they all come together like paint on a canvas to create a sense of excitement, calm, or energy.

In this issue of Inhabit, our team took a deep dive into the world of color. We had fascinating conversations with experts who work with homeowners, contractors, builders, and architects. We learned all about the characteristics of color, how they shape our spaces, and the ways they shift our mood. We learned why couples who disagree a lot probably shouldn't paint a room red, and how movies use color to guide us through a story, beginning to end.

Our main takeaway? The world isn't black and white.

Your home is a place where you have total control over the colors you use. Instead of playing it safe, I'd encourage you to unleash your inner child, remember what colors you loved from your crayon box, and rethink the way you apply color inside and outside your home.

**Because color is more than a style, look, or trend. It's your story.**

*Katie Ostreko*

KATIE OSTREKO  
VP Sales & Marketing, Quality Edge



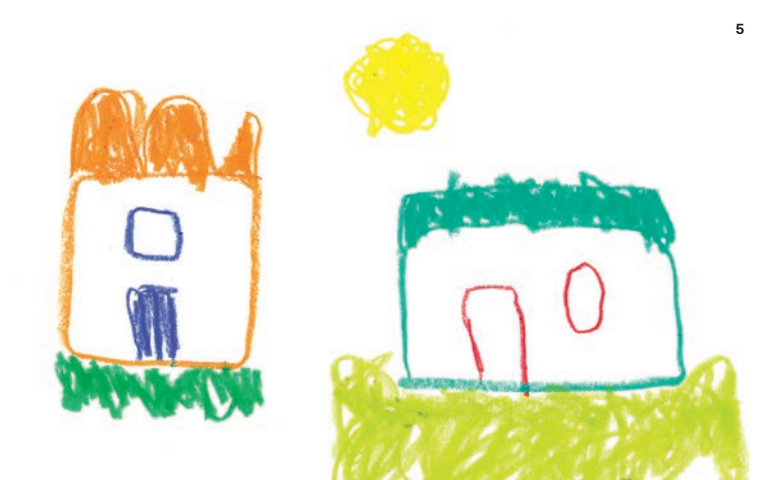
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Left: Artwork from children of  
Quality Edge team members

1 & 4: Grace Hoffhines  
2 & 5: Ford Meade  
3: Ryan Ostreko



# Meet the people behind this issue.



KATIE OSTREKO, QUALITY EDGE  
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For many years, Katie has worked at the intersection of product design and brand marketing. Today, as the VP of Sales and Marketing at Quality Edge, she oversees a range of industry-shifting products and helps tell their stories to the world.



KAREN HALLER, APPLIED COLOR PSYCHOLOGY EXPERT  
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Karen is a leading international authority in the field of applied color psychology, specializing in brand colors, interiors, healthcare, and wellbeing. She consults on color campaigns for prestigious brands such as Farrow & Ball, Dove, Fiat, and BASF.



AMY WAX, COLOR CONSULTANT  
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Amy Wax is an award winning color expert. An author of best-selling books on color and creator of the Color911 app, she creates custom color palettes for residential and commercial clients across the country.



MICHELLE LEWIS, COLOR PSYCHOLOGY EXPERT  
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Michelle Lewis is a Color Psychology Expert who helps people find their perfect color palette, grow their brands with visual connection, and turn closets into secret weapons through classes at The Color Cure.



KRISTINA ALEXANDER, BRICK & BATTEN  
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Kristina is a Lead Designer at Brick & Batten. Growing up the daughter of a homebuilder, her love for all things construction and design started early and runs deep. At Brick & Batten she collaborates with a dynamic team of designers and artists to deliver clients a top-of-the-line product that allows them to visualize their home and its unveiled potential.



DEB DEGRAAF, DEGRAAF INTERIORS  
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Deb DeGraaf has been in the floorcovering industry for over 20 years and co-owns DeGraaf Interiors with her brother Dean. She serves on boards such as WFCA, NFA, and FCEF. The vast knowledge she has from flooring to leadership and beyond has made her a leader in the flooring industry.



MICHAEL VISSER & TOM VREDEVELT,  
COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS & INVESTORS

Michael Visser is a 14-year commercial real estate veteran who specializes in investment real estate. He is a co-founder and partner at Advantage Commercial Real Estate, a leading brokerage firm in West Michigan. For over 30 years Tom has been in the commercial restate industry developing and re-developing both retail and office exteriors.



AUDRA SLINKEY, HOME STAGING RESOURCE  
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Audra is President of the Home Staging Resource—an online source for home staging and redesign training. She created the Certified Color Expert course in response to designers and stagers needing a streamlined way to specify color finishes, furnishings, and paint. Audra has helped empower over 10,000 small design businesses, and has a regular readership of over 35,000 subscribers in her award-winning blog.





# THE POWER OF COLOR

**Exploring the infinite and unexplainable effect color has on our identity, mood, and daily lives.**

Unconscious or otherwise, color can evoke emotions, inspire reactions, and radically shift our mode of thinking. It can excite or soothe our moods, raise or lower our blood pressure, and make us choose one product over another. Whether it's innate or learned, it's undeniable that color has a vital impact on every facet of our lives.

The psychology of color is based not only on its mental effects, but also its emotional effects. Everything from the color we choose to have in our space, to the very color of our surroundings, has an impact on our mood and feelings. Few know this better than Michelle Lewis, the founder of The Color Cure™ and author of *Color Secrets*. “I’m a Color Psychology Expert who helps people discover the world of color, see how it can support their intentions and start strategically implementing it in their daily lifestyle,” she says.

**There are two distinct categories of color: high frequency and short frequency.**

High frequency colors include red, yellow, and orange, which can heighten a variety emotions, sometimes all at once. In contrast, short frequency colors—green, blue, and purple—tend to have calming effects.

This is why a lot of gyms use red, because it invigorates us. It’s also why blues are used in spaces where we live and work, because they can literally lower blood pressure and relieve tension. “I work with a lot of parents who have kids with special needs,” adds Michelle Lewis. “We work specifically on which colors will provide the most connected, calming reaction. For some, it’s orange because it’s very balancing and grounding. And for others, greens or blues can provide a sense of calm.”



Everything,  
everywhere is  
speaking to us  
in color.

#### A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE


There are countless studies, books, and general opinions on color psychology. But the vast majority ignore one of the most important truths of color as it relates to human beings. “Color itself is a language,” says Michelle Lewis. “We study languages in efforts to communicate. I would strongly say that by learning color, we could communicate on an even greater scale anywhere in the world by helping people do one thing ... feel.”

The first fundamental understanding of color happened because of Isaac Newton. In the 1660s, he began a series of experiments with sunlight and prisms. He demonstrated that clear white light was composed of seven visible colors, and that objects weren’t innately colored as previously believed by most Greek philosophers. Instead, by using an uncolored glass prism, he showed that light going through it dispersed into seven colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Newton’s work led to breakthroughs in optics, physics, chemistry, perception, and the study of color in nature.

Years later, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, a German literary figure, came along and challenged Newton’s views on color. He argued that color was not simply a scientific measurement, but a subjective experience perceived differently by each viewer. Goethe’s contribution was the first systematic study on the physiological effects of color, and his views were widely adopted by artists. Although Goethe is best known for his poetry and prose, he considered *Theory of Colors* his most important work.

And we haven’t stopped studying the link between color and psychology since. Just recently, a study corrected an important error in the 3D mathematical space developed by the Nobel Prize-winning physicist Erwin Schrödinger and others, which was used to describe how the eye distinguishes one color from another. The research has the potential to boost scientific data visualizations, improve TVs, and recalibrate the textile and paint industries.

**Between culture, nature, fashion, food, film, and marketing—everything, everywhere is speaking to us in color. In fact, millions of colors are trying to have a conversation with us on any given day—and we’re still learning its infinite, intricate language.**



Most humans  
can see a range  
of around one  
million colors,  
which means  
our bodies can  
have millions  
of reactions.

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MICHELLE LEWIS



## GROWING UP IN FULL COLOR

At the beginning of life, everything is blurry. We don't begin perceiving color until we're two to four months old—just a lot of gray. This is due to our immature retina and nervous system, which are still in the process of maturing. Then the world starts to reveal itself—first in red and green. By five months, babies can recognize more vivid colors like adults can.

Interestingly, cultural influences can also play a role in babies' color perception. Research suggests that babies raised in different cultural environments may develop preferences for certain colors based on the predominant colors in their surroundings or cultural norms.

**Ever notice the way children are more drawn to bright colors like red, yellow, green, blue, and pink?**

Research shows that children tend to prefer bright colors—in part, because saturated colors are easier for young, developing eyes to see. Such colors captivate their attention and stimulate their imagination, leading them to explore and experiment with different hues and combinations. As children mature into adults, the colors of their world get darker and more muted, a “sobering” effect of adulthood. A mix of maturity, work culture, and emotions all agitate this shift in preference.

That said, you have to wonder: Do adults truly love muted colors and different shades of white and black, or are we just suppressing the kid inside of us? “Usually when we're able to talk a little bit, the doors start opening and people realize ‘Oh, it isn't childish to love color,’” said Michelle Lewis about her experience working with clients.

# Sophistication does not have to mean neutral.

## MAKING A MARKETING STATEMENT

In a famous study titled “Impact of Color on Marketing,” researchers found that up to 90% of snap judgments made about products can be based on color alone. In fact, people make up their minds within 90 seconds of their initial interactions with either people or products, and about 62–90% of the assessment is based solely on color. This is why companies spend so much time and resources on the colors expressed by their brand in both digital and physical environments.

Although different colors can be perceived in many ways, the names of those colors matter a lot as well. In one study, when subjects were asked to evaluate products with different color names, such as makeup, descriptive names were preferred far more often. For example, “mocha” was found to be significantly more likeable than “brown,” despite the fact that the subjects were shown the same exact color. Similarly, kids can be drawn toward crayons named things like “Atomic Apricot” over generic names like “orange.”

Some color names even begin evoking an internal feeling, like the 2024 Color of the Year from Sherwin-Williams®—Upward—which the company calls, “A breezy, blissful blue. The color found when we slow down, take a breath, and allow the mind to clear.”

It has also been shown that more unusual and unique color names are preferable for everything from jellybeans to sweatshirts, proving that when color combines with different word or idea associations, it can change everything about our feelings, perceptions, and even the way we spend our money.



With red, our heart rate increases, our pupils dilate, our blood pressure goes up. It makes us want to have a physical response, whereas with purple we tend to get kind of dreamy and even a little lightheaded.

MICHELLE LEWIS

INTO THE WAVELENGTHS

The human eye sees color over wavelengths ranging roughly from 380 nanometers (violet) to 750 nanometers (red). Light within this range is called visible light—or the visible spectrum—because humans can see it. Light outside of this range may be visible to other organisms but cannot be perceived by the human eye. Colors of light that correspond to narrow wavelength bands (monochromatic light) are the pure spectral colors learned using the ROYGBIV acronym: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

Violet light has the shortest wavelength, which means it has the highest frequency and energy. Red has the longest wavelength, the shortest frequency, and the lowest energy. According to Michelle Lewis, this explains a lot. “With red, our heart rate increases, our pupils dilate, our blood pressure goes up. It makes us want to have a physical response, whereas with purple we tend to get kind of dreamy and even a little lightheaded, because it’s the shortest light spectrum color.”

Whether it’s pivoting your home environment to introduce calm and comfort, or leading a revolution for change in your industry, color is a powerful force that exists to support our intentions. It’s so much cooler than science fiction. Color is a science that will rock what you know about the world around you, down to your very core. It will even change how you speak. In fact, color is affecting you right this very second.

So then comes the question. Are you paying attention?

The wavelengths of visible light are:

- Violet: 380–450 nm (688–789 THz frequency)
- Blue: 450–495 nm
- Green: 495–570 nm
- Yellow: 570–590 nm
- Orange: 590–620 nm
- Red: 620–750 nm (400–484 THz frequency)



The Magic of Magenta

Magenta is sort of pinkish-purple, but there’s one big problem. It doesn’t exist. Red and purple are on opposite ends of the spectrum, so on the color wheel, they naturally fade into one another.

So, if it doesn’t exist, why can we see it? Again, on the spectrum of elements, all visible colors (and non-visible rays) have specific wavelengths which distinguish them from other colors on the color wheel. Magenta, because it doesn’t exist on the light spectrum, doesn’t have one. Rather, it’s something our brain creates to fill in space in a way that makes sense.



# COLORFUL CONVERSATION

## A Q&A with Karen Haller

Karen Haller is a leading international authority in the field of behavioral color and design psychology and the author of *The Little Book of Colour*, *How to Use the Power of Colour to Transform Your Life*. Based in the United Kingdom, Karen combines Human-Centered Design and how our relationship with color, design, and nature affects and influences us every day. She was kind enough to sit down with us for a conversation.

### WHAT’S YOUR BACKGROUND, AND HOW DID YOU GET INTO SUCH A COLORFUL CAREER?

When I was studying fashion design and millinery back in my native Australia, I had my color epiphany. I was pinning chocolate-brown feathers on to a teal-blue hat, and just seeing the impact of the colors together stopped me in my tracks. I thought: ‘That’s it! It’s color!’ I didn’t know quite what it all meant, but I knew I had to find out. The class and my teacher thought I was a bit crazy, but that’s what began my quest to learn about color.

### WHERE DID YOUR JOURNEY TAKE YOU?

Well, I didn’t really know what I was looking for other than knowing there must be more to color than the color wheel. So I started asking a lot of questions. My search took me on a course in child psychology, and one in interior design, and to every color teacher I could find. It wasn’t until I came the United Kingdom, and doing my umpteenth color workshop, that I realized what I was looking for—it was called color psychology—how color can influence how we think, feel, and most importantly, behave.

I went on to study color and design psychology with the UK’s leading expert. Now I’m recognized as one of the global authorities in Applied Color & Design Psychology working alongside forward-thinking businesses and design professionals who seek new ways to positively improve our human experience in balance with nature.

Left: Images from  
Karen’s colorful Instagram  
[@karen\\_haller\\_colour](#)

©Karen Haller





# Space really should nurture us. We should love it, and it should love us back.

KAREN HALLER

## WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SURPRISING THING YOU'VE STUDIED OR FOUND AS YOU WROTE YOUR BOOK?

Color is universal like music, sport, and food, yet I could see that so many people were scared of color. They were scared of getting it wrong, scared of making a mistake. This is why I wanted to write this book. I had this big audacious goal to get the world to fall back in love with color again.

The most surprising thing I found as I wrote the book was that color is the perfect vehicle for self-expression: “For when we connect to color, we connect to what we feel. And when we connect to what we feel, we can start to connect to who we are ... If we were to switch off color, we would switch off our feelings. We would lose our most innate and fundamental means of self-expression.” (*The Little Book of Colour, How to Use the Power of Colour to Transform Your Life*)

## WHAT'S THE MOST POTENT TRUTH ABOUT COLOR?

Color is emotion. We are having an emotive experience with color whether we realize it or not. Color is very much a journey of discovery and self-expression. When we are children, we are our authentic self. We love color. And then guess what happens? Someone says, “No, that’s a boy’s color” or “That’s a girl’s color.” Or you have parent who’s self-conscious about the colors their child wants to wear, and that child loses that inner knowing, that self-trust. I love it when I see children being able to express themselves through the colors they wear. This teaches them self-confidence and to not rely on the approval of others.

## WHAT TIP WOULD YOU HAVE FOR OTHERS WORKING WITH CLIENTS REGARDING COLOR?

Behaviors are measurable, while a mood or a feeling is not. Whenever I do design work with clients—for example, in the built environment—we need to address the emotional needs whether that’s for the home, the office, education—any space.

With the framework I’ve developed, I always start by identifying the positive behaviors for each given space, department, or function, as everything leads to this point.

Right: More images from  
Karen’s colorful Instagram  
[@karen\\_haller\\_colour](#)

©Karen Haller





# EXTERIORS WORTH SEARCHING FOR

**When you Google a local business, what’s the first thing you see in the listing? Probably an exterior photo. At least one, maybe more.**

Every year, billions of people search for restaurants, gyms, banks, auto dealers, and other companies that inhabit commercial spaces. And the first impression is usually a photo saying, “Hey, here’s what we look like from the outside.”

## GOOGLE GETS IT

In Google’s Help Center article titled *Tips for Business-Specific Photos on your Business Profile*, Google recommends adding at least three great exterior photos to help customers recognize your business—right in the very first tip. Google also tells business owners to 1. Capture a photo from each direction that customers might approach your business and 2. Try uploading photos that show your business at different times of day.

If a business exterior matters this much online—in a digital environment—you can imagine how much more it means in person.



## GAINING AN EXTERIOR ADVANTAGE

When Tom Vredevelt, a commercial real estate developer and investor, and Michael Visser, the co-founder of Advantage Commercial Real Estate, teamed up to purchase a building originally constructed in 1990—one that was very much showing its age—they had a simple question for its renovation: “What’s going to give us the biggest bang for our buck?” That question led them to Vesta Steel Siding® from Quality Edge. “Bringing the building into 2024 was a value we could add as an ownership group that the previous owners didn’t,” said Tom. “That was an opportunity we couldn’t pass up.”

Whether it’s a large retail brand, a small healthcare practice, or anything in-between, tenants are looking for more than just a space for their business. Like a home, their building needs to be a place of pride. And that’s what Tom and Michael helped create. “You’re selling an image of what your business is,” says Michael. “And we took that to heart.”

You’re selling an image of what your business is ... and we took that to heart.

MICHAEL VISSER,  
ADVANTAGE COMMERCIAL  
REAL ESTATE



The exterior investment gave tenants a place to grow their business and a way to tell their story, but for Tom and Michael, it was also about the raw numbers. “The cost of maintenance has never been higher,” said Tom. “What really sold us on Vesta Steel Siding was the one-time investment due to the durability and low maintenance. Not having to spend dollars down the road on paint and maintenance was very attractive.”

At their core, Tom and Michael are investment-driven. When they invest in a space, they’re looking to revitalize the building and create a sense of community—not just monetize an asset. It’s about the impact it makes in people’s lives. Yes, it’s about curb appeal. But really, it’s about so much more.

And it shows.

ADVANTAGE COMMERCIAL  
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DEGRAAF INTERIORS  
degraafinteriors.com



### A FIRST IMPRESSION THAT WILL FLOOR YOU

Deb DeGraaf and her brother Dean own DeGraaf Interiors. “We specialize in flooring, countertops, and ceramic tile,” she says. “We have just over 50 employees and about 25 of them work out of our corporate office.”

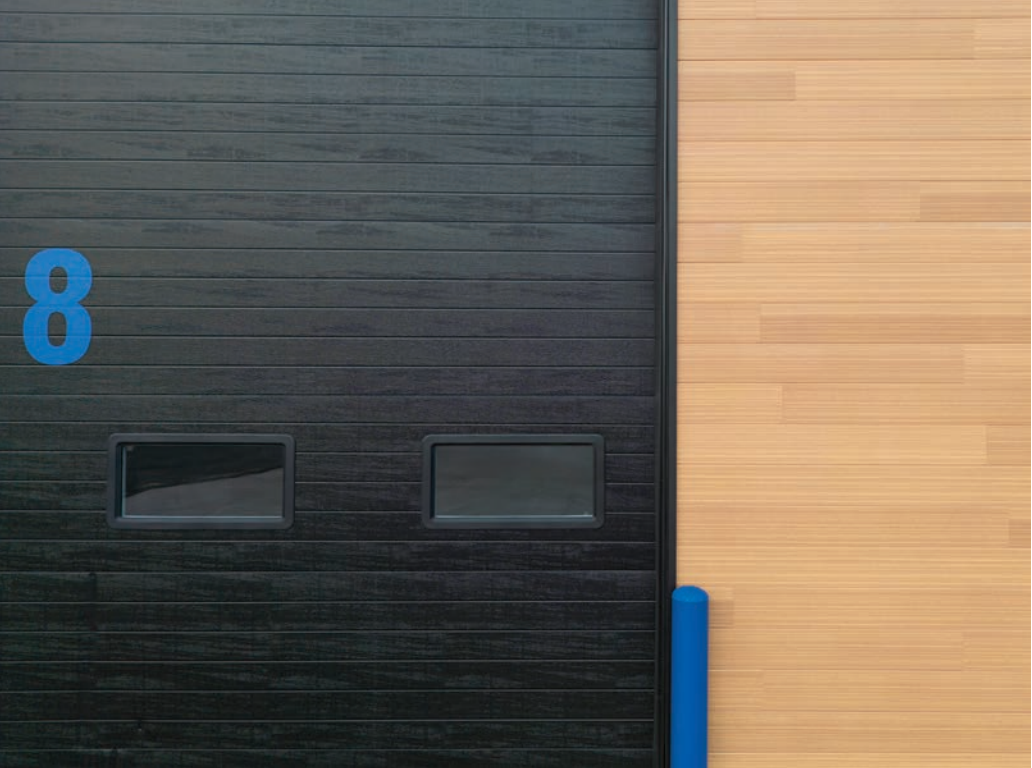
DeGraaf Interiors has a number of beautiful showrooms that display everything they can do from a design perspective. Each one is full of inspiration for you to imagine the space of your dreams. But their main hub in Jenison, Michigan—where many customers pick up products—wasn’t as visually impressive. “It was not a building we were proud to direct people to,” Deb says. “It didn’t reflect the same image of our retail locations.”

Knowing the building didn’t match their image, Deb and her team decided to remodel the entire facility—inside and out. A few months and many decisions later, their headquarters had a whole new look—featuring the rich woodgrain look of Vesta Steel Siding on the exterior. “It brought a residential element to our commercial space,” Deb says.

The newly renovated space also sparked a new use for the building. “It has allowed us to offer trainings for installers now that we have the space to further train and teach their craft. And that’s just great for our industry,” Deb adds.

Between the siding, the interior design, and even the brand’s signature blue that shows up everywhere—from the meeting rooms, to the loading docks, to the front overhang—everything came together to tell a better story of DeGraaf Interiors and showcase how much it cares about its business, customers, people, and future.

“The comment that most people make is that we finally grew into ourselves,” Deb says with a smile. “If somebody looks us up online, DeGraaf looks the way I always envisioned it.”





# THE SECRET INGREDIENT

## Exploring the beauty of Kynar coatings.

Ever see a building’s coating beginning to fade, chalk, crack, or show dirt and mildew? Over time, sunlight, air and water will break down any construction material. It’s just how it goes. But thanks to one of nature’s strongest chemical bonds—the carbon chlorine bond—a coating doesn’t have to degrade over time.

That’s the secret of Kynar 500® FSF® PVDF resin. Technically speaking, Polyvinylidene Fluoride (PVDF) is a semi-crystalline thermoplastic fluoropolymer. But that’s a mouthful, so we’ll call it a resin. Introduced in 1965, Kynar combines high mechanical strength with good processability. It’s the reason iconic buildings from the Sydney Opera House in Australia to the Empire State building in New York don’t need to be recoated every few years, which would end up costing millions.

The primary function of resin is to act as the “glue” in a paint formulation, binding all different the components together. Once applied and dry, all you see is a nice finish, but the chemistry of the coating is the magic that keeps that exterior looking great for a long time.

## A Recipe for Success

Paint is comprised of four principal ingredients: pigment, solvent, additives, and resin.

**Pigment** changes the color of reflected or transmitted light as a result of wavelength-selective absorption.

**Solvents** provide a vehicle for the pigment and binder to get from the can onto the surface.

**Additives** provide additional property enhancements to enhance certain aspects of the paint.

**Resin** binds all the components together.

PIGMENTS

RESIN

SOLVENTS

ADDITIVES









## A Space-Grade Solution

Kynar has been used in aerospace applications and has received approval from NASA for use in various spacecraft components. Its exceptional durability and resistance to harsh environmental conditions make it suitable for demanding aerospace environments. So you can imagine how well it performs on a home.

## Top Rated Resins

Kynar paint resin delivers long-term durability that is unparalleled in the industry. Here’s how different solutions stack up:

### Polyester

Generic polymer system with limited weather performance. Can achieve a wide variety of colors because of the organic pigments used.

### SMP (Silicone Modified Polyester)

A blend of polyester and silicone intermediates. Silicone acts to improve the gloss retention and weather resistance of polyester coatings.

### Kynar 500® (70% PVDF)

The current state-of-the-art coating, featuring one of the strongest chemical bonds known. A slippery finish that enables pollutants to wash away.

RATING: + LOW | ++++ HIGH

	KYNAR 500®	SMP	POLYESTER
<b>CHALK</b> Won't give off a chalky appearance from UV exposure	+ + + +	+ + +	+ +
<b>FADE</b> Ability to resist fading from environmental factors	+ + + +	+ + +	+ +
<b>WEATHERING</b> Resistant to sun, moisture, and temperature fluctuations	+ + + +	+ + +	+ +
<b>FILM INTEGRITY</b> Film quality remains intact	+ + + +	+ + +	+ +
<b>GLOSS RETENTION</b> Ability to maintain sheen	+ + + +	+ + +	+ +
<b>DIRT RESISTANCE</b> Resistant to dirt and debris	+ + + +	+ + +	+



According to a national study, the average ROI for home remodeling projects is 69%. In other words, homeowners will recoup 69% of the money they put into home improvements. But there's a different type of return that can't be measured by metrics and hard numbers. Something that every human needs more of in their lives. Something you can't put a percentage on.

That thing is joy.

# The Return on Joy







Once I knew what to look for, I was seeing it everywhere. It was like these little moments of joy were hidden in plain sight.

INGRID FETELL LEE



#### Hidden in Plain Sight.

Ingrid Fetell Lee studies joy and wrote a book titled *Joyful: The Surprising Power of Ordinary Things to Create Extraordinary Happiness*. In 2018, Ingrid gave a TED Talk where she says, “Broadly speaking, when psychologists use the word joy, what they mean is an intense, momentary experience of positive emotion—one that makes us smile and laugh and feel like we want to jump up and down. And this is actually a technical thing. That feeling of wanting to jump up and down is one of the ways that scientists measure joy. It’s different than happiness, which measures how good we feel over time. Joy is about feeling good in the moment, right now.”

This got Ingrid thinking, “Where does joy come from?” She researched, asked around, and investigated her own life before realizing that though the feeling of joy is mysterious and elusive, we can access it through tangible, physical attributes, or what designers call “aesthetics”—a word that comes from the same root as the Greek word “aisthōmai,” which means, “I feel, I sense, I perceive.”

“In the wake of this discovery, I noticed something as I walked around,” Ingrid says. “I began spotting little moments of joy everywhere I went—a vintage yellow car or a clever piece of street art. It was like I had a pair of rose-colored glasses. And once I knew what to look for, I was seeing it everywhere. It was like these little moments of joy were hidden in plain sight.”



### Laughter in the Laundry Room.

Amy Wax, an internationally recognized color consultant, was working with one of her color clients, choosing the shades that spread across the woman's home. The colors were mostly subdued, elegant, and luxurious, so when the two began talking about the laundry room, Amy asked, "What is your giggle color? What makes you smile?" From that conversation came a beautiful lavender room—a colorful contrast compared to other areas of the home. A year later, Amy got a letter for that client. "It said how much she loves doing laundry because it makes her feel good to walk in the space," Amy says. "That's the power of color."

Another one of Amy's clients had a similar, mostly uncolorful home. "We probably used 14 shades of beige throughout all the different rooms in the house," she says. But then, the client explained how their six-year-old daughter had a good sense for color. "Maybe we should let her choose a color," the couple suggested. Amy was hesitant, but happy to play along. "What we did was the back door of the house, which no one could see from the street," Amy says. "It was purple with pink urns and a lime green frame around the door. And it just became the daughter's Wonderland—the place where she felt so happy to come home to."



## Avoid a Color Emergency

Along with her role as an award-winning color expert, Amy Wax created the Color911 app that received national recognition as a must have for anyone looking for color inspiration and guidance. In the app, users get color help at their fingertips—exploring color themes and palettes for inspiration to use in their own interior and exterior spaces.

**Color911 is available to download in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.**



Right: Exterior colors by Amy Wax







#### Seeing for the First Time.

Ingrid Fetell Lee's search for joy led to some inspiring revelations, but others were more sobering. "We all start out joyful, but as we get older, being colorful or exuberant opens us up to judgment," she explains. "As I started to trace back our love of color, I found that some researchers see a connection to our evolution. Color, in a very primal way, is a sign of life, a sign of energy."

For many people, the COVID-19 pandemic awakened this realization. Desperate for a sense of joy, people began personalizing their home, unafraid to make a statement that would make them smile. "I mean, we were looking around saying, 'Wow, has my home always looked this cold and sterile? I need this to feel better,'" Amy says. "It's very interesting the way people are, in many ways, seeing their homes for the first time."

Like Amy Wax, Audra Slinkey is a color consultant and the creator of the Certified Color Expert (CCE) program, which provides the credibility, tools and expertise to help professionals expand their design and staging business. "Color is the first thing we notice in a space," Audra says. "It touches all the benefits when done right—harmony, warmth, mood."

For the average person, choosing color can be daunting. Even a single color like blue can have hundreds of thousands of shades. "A huge percentage of paint is do-overs," Audra warns. "Paint purchases are made because people are choosing a chip and when they paint it with a wrong undertone, they get a blue house when they thought they bought gray paint." This is one of the countless reasons Audra is passionate about helping people get it right. It's also why she stresses the importance of builders getting it right, too. "Builders can become 'yes' people and aren't warning homeowners about issues or concerns," Audra says. "When a good builder and designer work together, clients are much happier in the end."

Amy Wax feels the same way, adding the importance of choosing a memorable color scheme. "I've worked with a lot of builders and architects, and I think it's really important to have something memorable, something that feels like it's unique, something that feels like the person who is building this home cares about it," she says. "Right now, I'm working with a builder and we're looking all the different ways we could personalize the space—whether it's putting a metallic sign on the butler's pantry door, doing something sculptural in terms of the lighting when you first walk in the front hallway, something to make it memorable, personal, warm, and inviting."

Above: Exterior colors by Pacific Home Design

# Color is the first thing we notice in a space. It touches all the benefits when done right—harmony, warmth, mood.

AUDRA SLINKEY







### Widening the Neutral Umbrella.

Not that long ago, neutral used to be a sea of beige or gray. There was a very limited idea of what a neutral should be. “But now, neutral is green,” says Amy, “because green goes with every other color in the spectrum. I feel like the greens, blues, and browns are staples you almost can’t go wrong with because they’re not jarring. They don’t feel trendy. They’re colors that you can find restful and peaceful, and how could that not be appealing to everyone?” Audra Slinkey has also seen a huge emergence of green in her world. “It will be the color of this decade,” she says.

While off-white is still prevalent in homes everywhere, color consultants like Amy and Audra are encouraging builders to widen the neutral umbrella. “It could be light salmon or a creamy yellow. It could be a warm white instead of a sterile, stark white,” says Amy. “Almost regardless of whether they’re going for luxury cottage core or historic, those colors will have more of a universal appeal. And I think that’s really what the builder needs to focus on.”



Each moment of joy is small, but over time, they add up to more than the sum of their parts.

INGRID FETELL LEE



#### Beyond a Monetary Return.

“How did we end up in a world that looks like this?” Ingrid Fetell Lee asked from the TED stage, showing pictures of drab-looking buildings—including schools, nursing homes, and hospitals. “Deep within us, we all have this impulse to seek out joy in our surroundings,” she says. “Joy isn’t some superfluous extra. It’s directly connected to our fundamental instinct for survival. On the most basic level, the drive toward joy is the drive toward life.”

Ingrid finishes her talk by saying, “Each moment of joy is small, but over time, they add up to more than the sum of their parts. And so maybe instead of chasing after happiness, what we should be doing is embracing joy and finding ways to put ourselves in the path of it more often.”

Our homes hold the power to bring us immense joy. So, maybe we shouldn’t be making home renovations strictly about the monetary return they can bring. Maybe we shouldn’t paint a room dull white just because the home might sell more easily years down the line. Maybe we should live for this moment, add personality to our spaces, and find that elusive feeling of joy that our tangible spaces can spark in our lives.





What's trending in exteriors for 2024?  
We've kept our finger on the pulse of what's happening, and we  
believe these are the colors that could dominate the next year.

COLOR



CUES



# Au Naturel

Frank Lloyd Wright once said, “Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you.” Frank was clearly onto something.

For home exteriors everywhere, people are gravitating toward natural looks and features. And while nature lends a pleasing aesthetic, this trend is about something deeper. Studies show that wood and wood-toned accents can create calmer, more welcoming spaces. And as society seeks a stronger state of wellbeing, many are finding solace not just inside their homes, but outside as well.







Study nature,  
love nature,  
stay close to  
nature. It will  
never fail you.



Using materials  
that connect our  
homes and our  
lives with nature  
promotes a calming,  
restorative effect.

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KRISTINA ALEXANDER, BRICK & BATTEN



"We know that connecting with nature profoundly impacts our well-being," says Kristina Alexander, Lead Designer at Brick & Batten. Exterior design company, Brick & Batten, helps visualize homeowner's exteriors, providing guidance and creative direction to clients looking for simple—yet impactful—exterior updates.

"Using materials that connect our homes and our lives with nature promotes a calming, restorative effect. Natural materials such as rustic flagstone walkways and warm wood accents add depth, soul, and intrigue to a home. They help to ground the home and bring it back to nature."



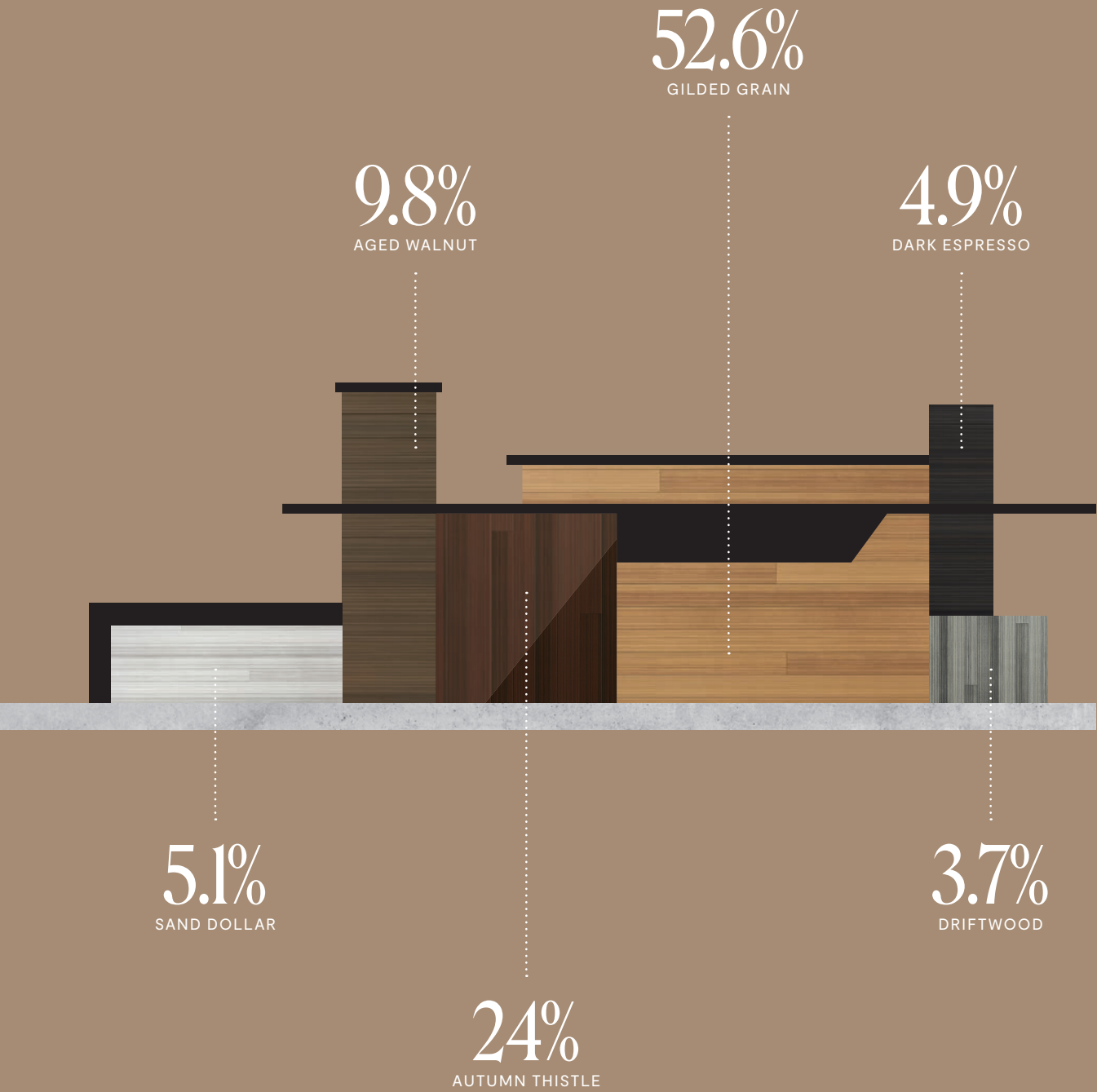


# Continuity Over Contrast

Nature isn't just for landscaping anymore. Natural looks are making their way onto features like garage doors and other accent features. And instead of a stark contrast, homeowners are seeking more blended looks where architecture and nature have seamless visual harmony.

## 2023 Top Vesta Woodgrains

Vesta Steel Siding® is available in six woodgrain colors. Here is how they ranked this past year, from the ever-popular Gilded Grain to newcomers Aged Walnut and Dark Espresso.

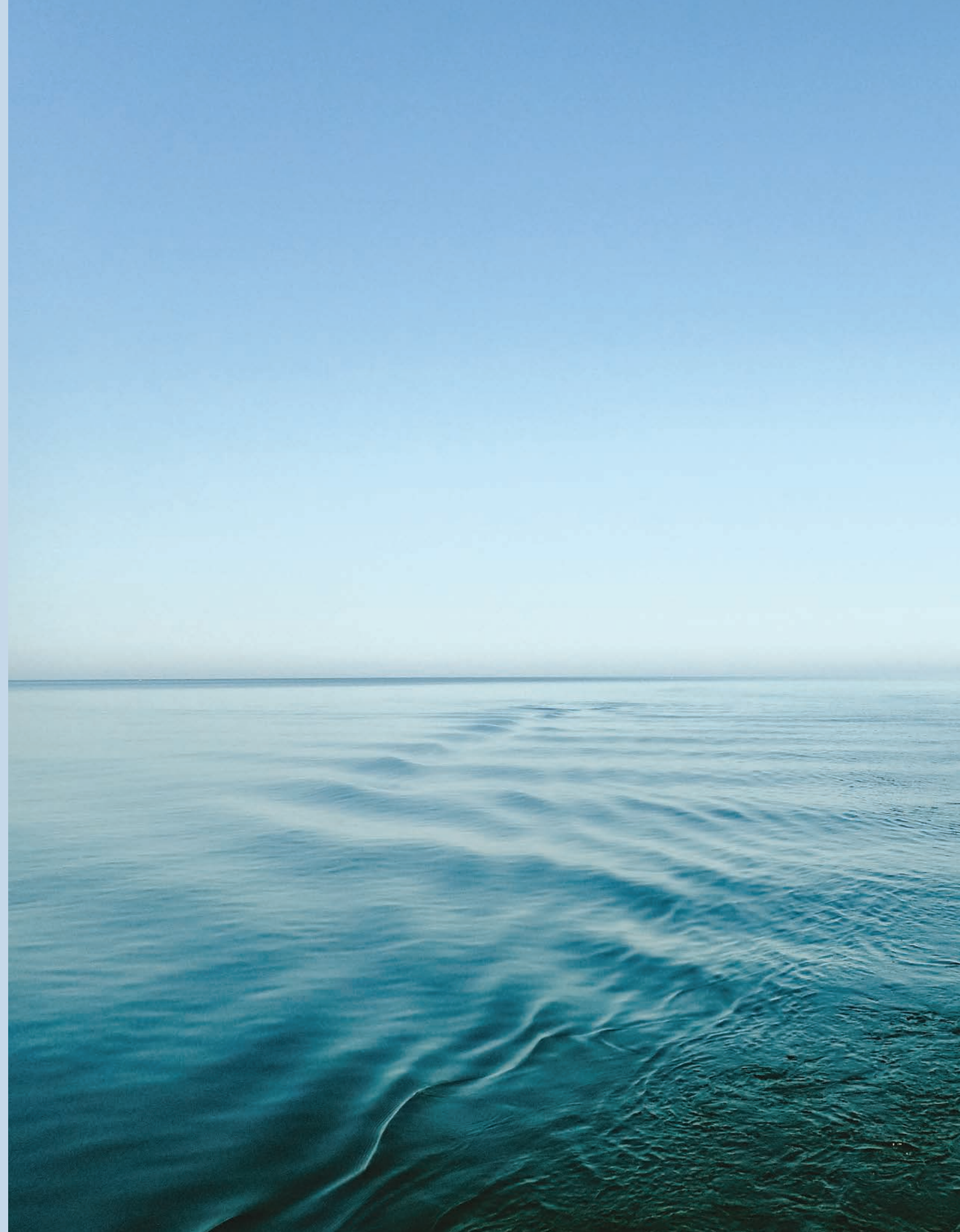




# Feeling Blue

Sitting by the ocean or looking into the sky creates an undeniably tranquil feeling. Maybe that's why blue is seeing such a surge in popularity. Benjamin Moore® and Sherwin-Williams® both selected a blue hue as their 2024 color of the year (Blue Nova and Upward, respectively) and we're seeing the same trend on home exteriors.

In an interview with Builder Magazine, Sue Wadden, director of color marketing at Sherwin-Williams, said that, "Colors inspired by nature have been everywhere since 2020. In the first half of the decade, greens and earthy tones took over the home design space, and now we're seeing a shift into ethereal tones and blues that still fall into the nature-inspired trend, which is why we chose to highlight a blue color."





Blue is  
associated  
with wisdom,  
creativity, and  
spirituality.





## BASK IN THE BLUE

Blue is associated with wisdom, creativity, and spirituality. Research shows that using blue in the physical environment can actually lower blood pressure. We're not sure a doctor would recommend replacing medication with a new paint color, but it wouldn't hurt to ask.







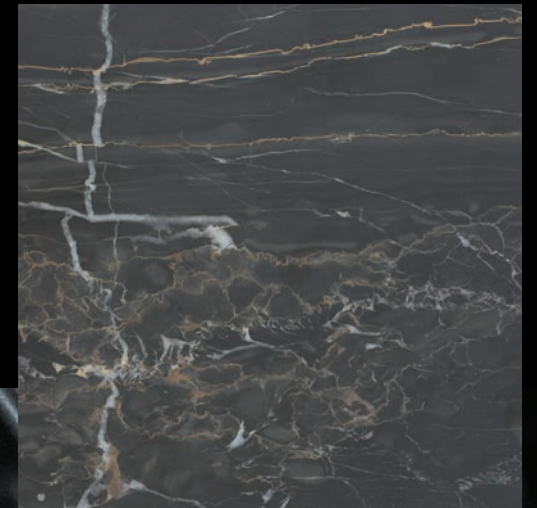
# Dark & Dramatic

When deciding between colors, it turns out indecisive homeowners can have them all—since black is the combination of all colors.

Black exteriors send a strong message of prestige and sophistication—like an always-classic little black dress or black suit. Dressed to impress, these homes create an alluring energy, drawing people in and enveloping their visual senses. They also subtly nod at the night sky where all the wonders of the universe exist, inviting us to explore ideas beyond our comprehension.



Black exteriors send a strong message of prestige and sophistication—like an always-classic little black dress or black suit.







## MONOCHROMATIC MEANS ONE. KIND OF.

In addition to extreme monochromatic exteriors, more homes are combining multiple color hues within a single-color tone. Picture various shades of black, gray, or midnight blue—still monochromatic, but more layered and nuanced.



# Warm & Inviting

Unlike black and white pairings, muted tones send a soft message, and we're seeing them more and more. These hues create a grounding effect for the home—a neutral and natural structure that works well with the surrounding nature. The world is fast, chaotic, always moving, always busy—and quiet, understated colors offset our frenetic world, inviting us to slow down, enjoy a cup of coffee, or just ... be.

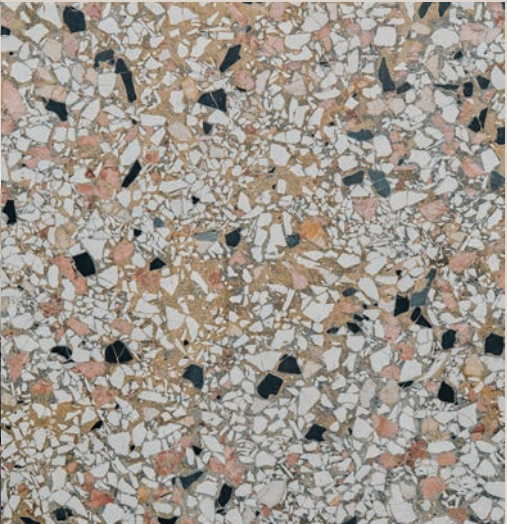
“In response to the busy, chaotic world in which we live, more people are looking to create homes that encourage relaxation and rejuvenation,” Kristina says. “Using a neutral, earth-tone color palette fosters a sense of harmony and serenity. Muted exteriors that bring into play a more tonal approach seem free of overwhelm and clutter. They feel intimate and comfortable, generating an environment that is simple, modern, and warm.”





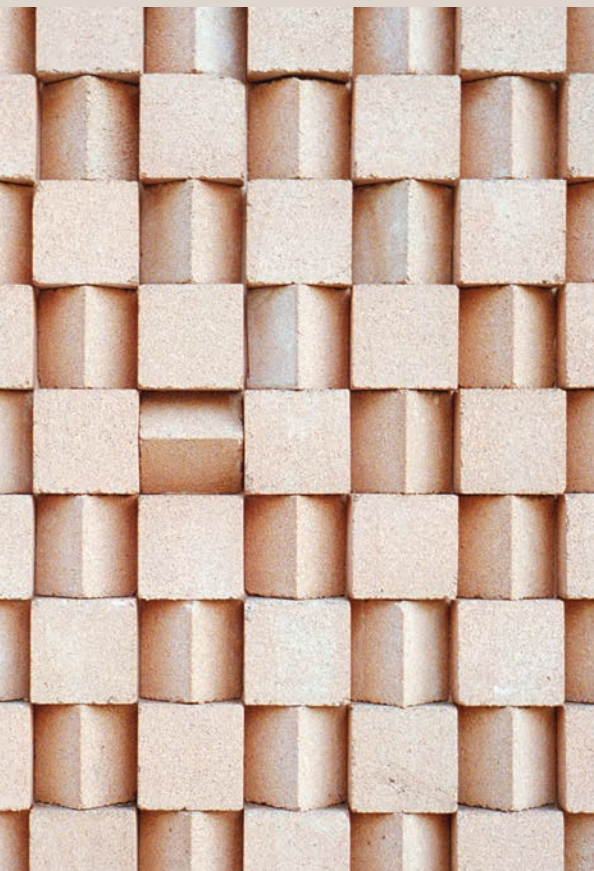
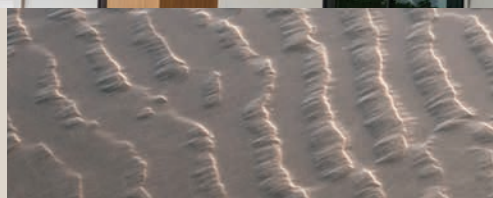
A Warm Welcome

According to Houzz, porch ideas rose 500%+ in searches compared to the prior year. More than ever, people are investing money in their front porches, embracing warm colors that welcome people and draw them in.





Using a neutral,  
earth-tone  
color palette  
fosters a sense  
of harmony  
and serenity.





## RETURN OF THE FRONT PORCH

For countless homeowners, the porch isn't just a landing spot for Amazon packages anymore. It's an outdoor living room where neighbors can come over and visit. It's a way to celebrate the seasons with eye-catching décor. In 2024, we expect this trend to rise, bringing in color, siding wood accents, and wood porch ceiling looks to create more defined spaces.





ON THE COVER



FRONT COVER  
Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Gilded Grain and Coal



INSIDE COVER  
Quality Edge® TruCedar® Siding in  
Cider Mill



BACK COVER  
Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Autumn Thistle and Eggshell

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COLORFUL CONVERSATION

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18



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EXTERIORS WORTH SEARCHING FOR



22

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Gilded Grain | TruLine® Full Vent  
Soffit and Fascia in Black



24

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Gilded Grain and Midnight Blue



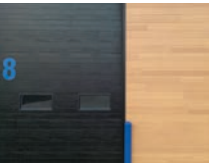
25

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Dark Espresso, Aged Walnut,  
Gilded Grain, and Ironstone



26–27

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Gilded Grain | TruLine® Full Vent  
Soffit and Fascia in Black



27

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Gilded Grain

THE SECRET INGREDIENT



31

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Coal | TruVent® Hidden Vent  
Soffit and Fascia in Black



32

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Autumn Thistle

THE RETURN ON JOY



34

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Coal | TruVent® Hidden Vent  
Soffit and Fascia in Black



36

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Gilded Grain



38–39

© Amy Wax



39

Quality Edge® TruCedar®  
5" x 5" Board & Batten Siding  
in Ripe Olive | Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Gilded Grain



40

© Pacific Home Design



42

Quality Edge® TruCedar® Siding  
in Eggshell



42

Quality Edge® TruCedar®  
5" x 5" Board & Batten Siding  
in Ripe Olive



44–45

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Dark Espresso and  
Aged Walnut

COLOR CUES



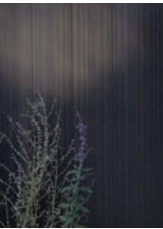
50

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Dark Espresso and  
Aged Walnut



51

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Dark Espresso



52

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Dark Espresso



54

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Dark Espresso and  
Aged Walnut



58

Quality Edge® TruCedar® Siding  
in Foothill Blue | TruVent® Hidden  
Vent Soffit and Fascia in White



59

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Midnight Blue



60–61

Quality Edge® TruCedar® Siding  
in Weathered Wood



64

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Coal



65

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Coal



66–67

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Coal | TruVent® Hidden Vent  
Soffit and Fascia in Black



70

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Autumn Thistle and Eggshell



72

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Gilded Grain | TruCedar®  
Siding in White | TruLine® Full Vent  
Soffit in White



73

Quality Edge® Vesta Steel Siding®  
in Fawn



74–75

Quality Edge® TruCedar® Siding  
in Napa Vine



