

Bonnie Krims

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Better Homes and Gardens

Simply Perfect Color Schemes

Summer 2005



“Good color should wrap around you.”
—COLLEEN O'BRIEN

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Diamonds might be a girl's best friend, but when it comes to interiors, you'll better off with rubies, sapphires, and emeralds, homeowner Mary O'Brien says. The art lover chose rich jewel tones to add sparkle to her Chicago condo and to showcase her paintings, prints, and posters without overpowering them.

After painting her first apartment's dingy off-white living room a dramatic navy blue, Mary discovered color and its ability to transform a space. As her collection of bold paintings, lithographs, and exciting green, she and her husband, Dennis, displayed them against equally vibrant walls.

When choosing their personal palette, the O'Briens looked to their collections for color cues. An antique plate inspired the living room's deep sapphire blue. The crimson dining room matches the ruby-red roof in a painting.

Color consultant Bonnie Besser Krims, author of *The Perfect Palette*, says the O'Briens' use of bold colors should inspire other homeowners tired of the humdrum.

"Jewel tones are excellent for small rooms that don't get much light or for rooms that have very little character of their own," she says. "They give a room instant personality and are an especially good choice for bedrooms, hallways, dining rooms, and rooms that you don't use frequently."

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LIVING ROOM
FAMILY ROOM
SITTING ROOM
dramatic jewels snip & shop COLOR GUIDE
DINING ROOM



THE RIGHT WHITE:
Warm whites can make jewel tones sing. Use white on adjacent walls or trimwork to emphasize the bolder colors.

While bold hues distinguish many of their rooms, the O'Briens used white or soft neutrals for frequently used spaces such as the family and sitting rooms. Mary also upholstered large furniture pieces in economical and washable white cotton duck to keep bright color from being overwhelming.

Letting the eye rest with white molding or other accents is a common practice, Krims says. If you find white too plain an accent, check out a color wheel for the wall color's opposite or near-opposites. Krims recommends cinnamon on walls with sage-green trim or yellow walls with cool blue woodwork for a pleasing balance.

Krims encourages homeowners to face their fears when it comes to color. "I've heard it all ... that color will make the room smaller, that it will seem too dark, or that other people will think you're crazy," Krims says. "The truth is, most people will tire of a boring beige room much faster than a vivacious violet." ●

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 116.
For more tips about decorating with deep colors, see www.bhg.com/sipdeptoners



COLOR YOUR WORLD: Even a small detail can suggest a color scheme for a room. The wall's rich red came from a roof in this painting.