

Bright and Easy

Whether we use it to create 'zones' of space, add a focal point or simply express ourselves, we're becoming more adventurous when it comes to colour in the kitchen

The psychology of colour goes back a long way: red was traditionally used for dining rooms because it was considered an appetite stimulant, while, pre-refrigeration, sky blue was often favoured for the kitchen or pantry because it was thought to ward off flies. There's no doubt that colour has some amazing abilities – not only can it lift (or depress) our mood, but it can also give the illusion that a space is bigger or smaller than it really is – extremely useful in interior design.

MOOD

"Colour influences our mood and behaviour every waking minute, whether we're aware of it or not," says colour psychologist Angela Wright. "But there's no such thing as a 'bad' colour – as in music, where one note on its own won't provoke an emotional response until it's put with other notes, it all depends how colour is used." Angela theorises that red stimulates the body, while blue stimulates the mind; yellow is the colour of emotion, whereas green is about the balance of all three of these. "A highly saturated colour is always going to be stimulating, and a

low saturation colour is always going to be soothing," she says – so whereas bright red may perhaps be too physically stimulating, a pale pink will have a less strong effect. "Green always works well in a kitchen, because it's the colour of abundance," says Angela. "It's primeval – we know we're not going to starve when the landscape around us is green."

LONGEVITY

Fashions change quickly, so think about how you use colour in the kitchen, where you'll probably be spending thousands. "With the current trend for vibrant colours such as fuchsia pink, lime green and burnt orange, it's vital to remember that your units will still be with you in ten years' time," says Alno designer Tracy Stobie from Altrincham Kitchen Centre. "It might be worth selecting more muted shades as a backdrop and confining bold statements to items that can easily be changed." If you're cautious, restrict colour to areas like the kitchen island, or do as kitchen designer Debbie Bowden, of Barnes of Ashburton, suggests, and buy painted timber units,

"If you get bored of the colour, you can just rub it back and start again. It's much more versatile."

ON TREND

"There are two main colour directions at the moment, in terms of trends," says Dulux's global colour designer Louise Smith. "Tomato reds and damsons – foodie colours – that are really warm and easy to live with; and really bold, candy brights like pink and yellow, used in blocks of colour, which comes through from fashion."

Worktops, flooring, tiles and splashbacks can indulge your love of colour without being too over the top, while appliances such as ovens and fridges can add an irreverent touch; LED lighting has also opened up new design possibilities. For a near-instant facelift, accessories such as tea towels and utensils can be switched around in seconds, but never underestimate the power of food itself to brighten things up: a bowl of oranges or big jar of lollipops are style statements that are as temporary as they are tasty. ●●●



Lago's 36e8 is made to mix and match, with 20 colours of lacquer or polished glass fronts. • Handleless cabinets make sure that the colour really does do all the talking
• From £6,000 01924 453 529 www.leeds.lagodesign.eu



Paint is the quickest and easiest way to update a tired kitchen. • Always use special kitchen paint, especially near worktops and sinks • Walls in Plum Preserve and Early Spring; cupboards in Perfect Oyster, from the Authentic Origins range by Dulux • From £20.99 for 2.5 litres. 0870 444 1111 www.dulux.co.uk



Tough and practical, coloured splashbacks are one of the most popular ways to be a little adventurous with colour. • This Perfume splashback from Original Style comes in 23 colours
 • Coordinates with Original Style's Glassworks glass tile range
 • From £89.95 01392 473 000
www.originalstyle.com

Below With its low energy consumption, LED technology has transformed the way that we can use light in the kitchen • Sensio's light strips can be linked together to create a continuous band of blue light under the plinth • From £14 for a 285mm strip 0845 034 0780 www.sensio.co.uk

A single coloured appliance can create a great focal point. • Belling Gourmet
 • A energy-rated • Available in red easy-clean enamel as well as neutrals • From £899 **0844 815 3746** www.belling.co.uk



Countertop gadgets are brighter than ever, such as the stylish new T6, which delivers filtered hot and cold water. • 12 colours including this racy red • External panels are changeable, in case you alter your colour scheme • From £399 **0845 051 7919** www.t6water.co.uk



Mixing traditional with modern, this kitchen by Barnes of Ashburton combines painted limewood cabinets with a wrap-around counter-top in cherry-red Eros Stellar Silestone. • Made to order • Prices on request **01364 653613** www.barnesofashburton.co.uk



Resilica worktops are made from recycled glass, and come in 500 colours – if you don't find what you want, the firm will create the right colour for you. • This green worktop looks particularly smart matched with on-trend glossy dark timber laminate • From £480 per linear metre **01273 511 564 www.resilica.com**

ALNO's Satina glass kitchen has a satin finish, eliminating the problem of visible fingerprints. • Use a single bank of coloured cabinets to draw the eye to the back of the room, and make it appear wider • This platinum blue colourway looks good with white or on-trend darker timbers • From £15,000 **020 7629 7711 www.alno.co.uk**



Designer Geraldine Hemingway has used a hot orange Corian for a bespoke island dining area, repeated as an accent elsewhere. • Solid-surface materials come in a very wide range of colours • Corian costs from £310 per linear metre **0800 962 116 www.corian.co.uk**