TRENDS
kitchen and bath
Color trends tell us a lot about ourselves as a global community. What we value and how we’re feeling collectively shows up in the colors we’re drawn to, from what we wear and what we drive to how we decorate our homes. From pale neutrals to emerald greens, there’s a thoughtfulness to the colors trending today—especially in baths and kitchens, our new surrogate living rooms where we spend more and more of our time. Here we speak to six top designers about the subject—what particular colors mean to them, how they use them, and what’s hot right now.
Pattern has always had a place in the home, but a willingness to mix it up and to play with scale in surprising ways is a new twist on a familiar theme. When designing this playful, blue-green kitchen, Julia Buckingham found her inspiration in peacock feathers—literally! But it’s the pattern play that really steals the show. In the mix is a feather-motif ceiling, a mosaic backsplash peppered with jewel-toned drops, and a quilted, blue-green banquette. So what makes it all work together? “The color of the countertop,” Buckingham says. “It’s a rich, taupey-brown with copper flecks, and because it is not the loudest piece in the kitchen, it brings it together in a harmonious way.”

Pattern play can work in even smaller spaces like bathrooms, too. In this master bath that looks truly handcrafted, the mix is bold in scale. Large ikat floor tiles are juxtaposed with oversized botanicals, and are grounded with a calming, soft blue and cream palette on the walls.

“People are, for some reason, inherently afraid of pattern and really afraid of this idea of blending pattern,” says Buckingham. But when done right, it makes for a vibrant, energetic space. “At the end of the day, that client who allows those baby steps to the big va-va-va-voom—they’re the ones who are most satisfied with the end result.”
Perfect Pairs

Velvety blues and vivid greens are gaining ground in bathrooms and kitchens today. Pair them with a complementary color and that’s when the real drama happens. So what are some dynamic duos in play today?

In a master bath designed by Peter Sinnott IV for the Kips Bay Decorator Show House, the color pairing of marine blue and blood orange is both of-the-moment and classic all at once. Peter makes the point that blues are timeless. “You’re surrounded by them every day. You look up, even if it’s a cloudy day, there are still hints of blue,” he says. And the vibe becomes infectious with the addition of blood orange—but “in small doses,” Peter notes. Highlighting traditional details of the architecture with a line, the color draws attention to the room’s tug of war between different design elements.

For another striking color play, a pairing of jewel-toned emerald and rich black brings a bit of mystery to what can sometimes be a utilitarian space. In this galley kitchen, a dark accent wall gives depth and dimension to mirroring spans of luscious emerald green cabinets, creating a luxe, moody atmosphere. It’s a bold statement indeed, but the kitchen is sometimes just where a little drama is needed.
A Softer White

Never forget: you can’t go wrong with a white kitchen or bath. “Trends come and go, but white kitchens are overwhelmingly the most popular. They feel clean and bright. Since it is typically the first place homeowners go in the morning, white makes a lot of sense. This is how you start your day,” says designer Courtney Cachet.

Nevertheless, a white room can look clinical—fast—so the challenge is to keep it crisp and clean but still make it an inviting space. One way to soften the look of a white kitchen is with warm tones like brass, gold, or bronze. In this classic galley kitchen, Courtney Cachet does just that, and gives it a modern edge by using countertops with subtle flecks of gold and brass fixtures instead of nickel or chrome. “I felt that brass and bronze elements would bring out those little flecks of gold and reflect a little bit of light and create a really nice ambience without you really knowing it,” says Courtney.

Another room where you start your day? The bathroom, of course! This elegant white bath is energized with a modern mix of metals—a bold brass chandelier paired with titanium bath fixtures. Warm wood floors ground the room and soften the look of the all-white space. It’s just enough “clean and bright” for a morning pick-me-up, without jolting you into the day.
Keep It in Neutral

If you’re looking for a way to introduce color but aren’t ready to go canary yellow, neutral shades work beautifully in both kitchens and baths. And today’s neutrals play in a more unusual palette than you might expect—think pale icy blue and blush sand and more refreshing straight-from-nature shades than your standard beige. They’re perfect for small rooms. “Just because a space is smaller, does not mean you have to use color less, you just have to use it wisely,” says designer Kim Lewis.

These more transparent pales diffuse light beautifully and lend themselves particularly well to elements of contrast. In this tiny house kitchen, a matte black faucet and an olive countertop pop against icy blue cabinets. In a small powder room on Park Avenue, however, a translucent glass sink in dusky gold and a tobacco tile border make a bold statement against a pale pink backdrop. As Lewis says, “Neutral and natural don’t have to mean soft.”
Amber Glow

Let’s face it—the living room has expanded. With comfortable banquets in the kitchen and easy chairs in the bathroom, we are “living” in every room today, so the more alluring the better. A cozy sultry palette is just the ticket, adding rich ambers and a range of metallics to the smoky grays that have been making their way into the kitchen and bath.

In a new kitchen vignette designed by Alison Victoria is particularly warm and inviting. “I wanted it to feel like I lived in Paris in a little flat, so how would I try to make my kitchen less of a kitchen and more of a hangout?” she asked. She decided on antique brass upper cabinets that have natural, inherent warmth, and added a bronze mirror backsplash, from top to bottom, that reflects the striking Jean de Merry chandelier. The trick to this look is keeping the space from getting too dark or heavy, so a little glow goes a long way. “The main thing is the reflection, making sure that it didn’t feel bogged down by the color and the texture,” says Victoria.

And, of course, a moody atmosphere is perfect for a powder room or a master bath. Here in this Victorian-inspired bathroom, smoky grays and dusty browns are paired with a metallic wallcovering and warm bronze light fixtures, giving a glow that radiates through an already welcoming room.
Noir

Classic black is a perennial favorite in interior design. Once a staple in bathroom design, black has made its way back into this private space and is making its presence felt in the kitchen more frequently, too, especially with the recent debut of black stainless steel appliances.

But it’s the emphatic pairing of black and white that is the real showstopper of late. Think high contrast: strong color-blocking, big heavy stripes and even more unexpected patterns. In this master bath, bold chevron floor tiles offset the glossy white tub with a matte black exterior. Highlights of bronze, brass, or copper work particularly well layered into the overall design—here bronze adds a touch of warmth to this dynamic space.

In this striking black-and-white kitchen by Veronica Valencia, a wash of bright white counters cover the island and punctuate the grand room sheathed in black cabinets. “When you’re an eclectic person, having your kitchen be a solid black and white is important because you may have bright colors that you want to incorporate,” says Valencia.

The space combines timeless quality with a perfect modern mix. As Valencia notes, it’s “hip but still homey and welcoming.”
Kim Lewis

Kim Lewis, “The Little Lady with Big Ideas”, is best known as the Lead Designer behind ABC’s “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” and founder of Kim Lewis Designs in Austin, TX. In six years with Extreme Makeover: Home Edition, Kim designed over 120 homes in 43 states and saw how truly design CAN change lives. So in 2013 she partnered with Touch A Life in Ghana, West Africa to build a therapeutic art center for children, later volunteering to design art centers in Cambodia for Rapha House. Her new brand, Kim Lewis Designs, centers design inspiration around global inspiration and local collaboration.

Julia Buckingham

Julia Buckingham has earned a reputation for her award-winning interiors that are a window into the past and a bridge to the future. Her design signature is artfully weaving together a tapestry of antiques, artifacts and her own custom designed pieces to create a modern updated style that reflects today’s lifestyle. This aesthetic, which she has coined Modernique®, is blending the old with the new to reveal the beauty and delight in unexpected pairings. She believes that passion for the objects used together becomes the “glue” that binds the modern with the antique.

Courtney Cachet

Celebrity Designer and TV personality, Courtney Cachet's sense of style has caught the world's attention from New York to Dubai. This New York based design and style dynamo is constantly working on her multiple product lines, international projects, producing content on the latest luxury hot spots and must haves for several TV and media outlets.
Peter J Sinnott IV

Peter J Sinnott IV brings a fresh approach to interior design with his educational and lifestyle background. Graduating from Georgetown University in 1989 Peter joined his family’s fourth generation real estate and construction company. As a project manager on several large high-rise residential towers in New York he learned all facets of construction. However, it was the model apartments and lobbies that truly piqued his interest and where he excelled. He transitioned into the interior design world by joining Home Works in 2002. Home Works is an eight-person interior design firm of which Peter is a Principal, Senior Designer and Creative Director. Over the course of 26 years Peter has designed for show houses, country clubs and countless private residences in eight states.

Veronica Valencia

By trade Veronica Valencia is a Television Design Producer, Interior Designer and Stylist, by nature she’s a Creative Director and Florist, but since that’s far too many titles for one 31 year old to fit on a single business card, she goes by the title Design Hunter instead. For her, it sums everything she is about. Today, in addition to TV production for such networks as OWN, NBC, ABC, FOX and Nat Geo, Veronica has the job of running her uber successful Interior Design, Styling & Creative Development Company, The Design Hunters. Veronica and her team have collectively produced and styled well over 200 home renovations, photo shoots and events across the country.

Alison Victoria

Alison Victoria, a Chicago native moved to Las Vegas in 1999 to attend the University of Nevada Las Vegas, where she graduated and embarked on her professional career as the youngest designer at Christopher Homes in Las Vegas. Two years later, Alison launched her own consulting firm, Alison Victoria Interiors. Today, as the first female host of the popular Crashers series on DIY Network, Alison Victoria surprises homeowners in Las Vegas and Chicago with extravagant kitchen redesigns completed in a few short days on the new show, Kitchen Crashers. Alison hunts in stores across America for weekend warriors who could definitely use some help bringing style, beauty and simplicity together to create harmony in their kitchens.