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HOME DESIGN

Adding personal touches

Beyond bold colours and textures. people want décor that reflects values, writes Susan Schwartz

TRENDS

Lewis to create her Beijing-based

company, Tu Textiles, which makes

vibrant fabrics and cushions using

certified-organic fabric and water-

geometric patterns used in Lewis'

in decorating. Emerald green,

Pantone's colour of the year, is a

popular choice. But other bold,

dominating, including orange

raspberry and yellow. All shades of

blue are increasingly sought after-

especially indigo and aqua, which

Lewis says are fresh, soothing and

Simple colour schemes without

much colour and lots of neutrals -

especially black and white - are also

popular, says Timothy Cheng,

modern, Alternatives include

nactole and lawered neutrale

vibrant colours are also

fabrics also reflect the latest trends

The bold, saturated colours and

here are a handful of key decorating trends this year but many consumors are also seeking individuality in the home, searching for design features that mirror their personalities and their lives. "In an age when we find

ourselves feeling disconnected, we want our home to be a restorative place to reflect our values and also be beautiful," explains Jill Lewis of JL Architecture. "I think the biggest trend in home interiors has less to do with aesthetics and everything to do with consumers being interested in making more mindful choices with their purchases."

This means consumers are interested in creating interiors that do more than just look good - they also want to know the history behind their purchases.

"If the products have a story that makes the buyer feel like they can have something beautiful, that is high quality and perhaps relate to their current context in terms of design, that will be an interior that will be deeply personal and truly resonate with them." Lewis says "They want to know the source of the wood, and be assured that the fabrics were produced in an ethical manner, and perhaps are

even organic. The importance placed on ethically sourced products led



managing director of TiRon Interior Architecture, "Orange is also in demand but green is still your new to Hong Kong, Most people wouldn't paint their wall green: instead, they would incorporate it through accessories and plants," he

says. "An example is the bamboo which I installed in one apartment. Cheng adds that art has become increasingly popular, especially with the accessibility of art fairs in Hong Kong. "A simple background

olour scheme makes it easy to pair ith collected works. Graphic prints are also still ending, especially stripes, which

can bring movement to a room an are often favoured by designers, nd animal prints and modern,

Texture is increasingly being ncorporated into interiors. especially in neutral rooms, which can benefit from an "awakening" using grass cloth on walls, tables made of stone, lampshades from ourlap and patterned rugs.

Cheng says lighting is also becoming more widely discussed, as people become more conscious of how it can change the atmosphere in a room and now tend to ask questions, such as what colour the light will be, and whether is energy-saving or dimmable.

When it comes to lighting, cent tables and decorating in

general, there is a move away from colder stainless steel towards warmer tones of brass, copper and gold. Lewis says this year's must-have

accessories are those that reflect time, location and values. "Nobody wants a home that feels like it was accessorised by a stranger - we want our home to reflect our nersonal taste which includes a nod to our home city. Chineseinspired accessories with a Western spin are what feels right," she says.

"And, more importantly, we want the products to have a story that aligns with our values, We're surrounded by so much 'stuff', and don't want to fill our homes with more useless and mindless purchases." Lewis says Hong Kong is a

particularly interesting place from a design perspective, because it attracts people from all over the world who typically are exceptionally well-travelled. Because of this, they bring with them aesthetic 'baggage' that they naturally want to incorporate into their home," she says, "I think there are many who like to explore the Southeast Asian influence with artefacts collected from regional

with Chinese antiques * Still there are others who like Hong Kong for the luxury and the international feel of the city, and likewise feel more comfortable creating their home in the style of a luxury hotel - with crisp linens. comforting textures and soothing. sophisticated colours.

John McLennan, CEO of Indigo Living, notes that instead of buying all of their furniture to match, people are waiting and gathering individual pieces over time to achieve a more curated look.

"At this time, clean lines and lower sofas are popular. I am also seeing that furniture that is raised off the floor is becoming more nonular," he says

While most of Cheng's clients eek a contemporary style without oo much fancy decoration, one ning they do tend to insist on is that their audio-visual cables are hidden the television is the correct height and that it can be seen from rious directions.

These are practical considerations, but they do tend to make life easier, especially as it is no longer necessary to include unsightly cords that can distract from the overall design features of a home

"No matter what direction residents go, it is still a very Hong Kong style and distinct from anything you would find elsewhere

travels. Others draw from the north, in the world," Lewis says.





Clean lines and low seating are popular, according to Indigo Living. A bamboo installation adds a touch of green



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family and friends. In response, kitchen trends are

uelled in part by the

changing to follow the demands for professional-style spaces, with efficiency previously only available

to professional restaurateurs. Winston Lam, founder of K+I (formerly Kitchens+Interiors), says kitchens are becoming part of the

living space - moving beyond a

functional room to include features

that encourage socialisation, such as

dining tables or bars for a light meal.

hub of the household, hiding the

designer touch and make it appear

handles help to achieve this look.

Timothy Cheng, managing

kitchens are becoming popular in

completed an open-plan kitchen in

Happy Valley, featuring a computer

workspace area and island bench

often used as a gathering place for pre-dinner drinks. Clean, angular

doorknobs, while a custom-made

employed to warm things up and

walnut bookcase and flooring

crafted from oak have been

lines are achieved by hiding

appliances and foregoing

Architecture, agrees that open

director of TiRon Interior

Hong Kong. Cheng recently

more streamlined. Cabinets without

appliances will give the area a

Lam says as kitchens become the

explosion of television cooking shows, cooking

has regained popularity, with an emphasis on good food and having fun with

Hi-tech touches add fun to cooking

Area develops into hub of the household, moving beyond functional space to become heart of socialisation, writes Susan Schwartz



Modern kitchens, such as this one by Kohler, incorporate clean lines, natural materials, chef-inspired sinks and hi-tech tapware

the spectrum, kitchens with pops of colour are also trending.

provide a textural counterpoint. Kohler has teamed up with More homeowners are choosing American designer Jonathan Adle natural materials for their kitchens to inject colour into kitchen sinks. from rich wood to textured stone Adler has taken the traditional white and the soft hues of nature. While farmhouse or apron-front sink and granite countertops remain popular made it available in yellow, green, there is growing interest in natural

quoise and navy. "I think in every room in the house there should be surprises and punctuation marks, and there's

Man-made, natural-looking materials such as concrete and quartz composite continue to be in demand. While concrete countertops can crack and stain if left unsealed, their patina and texture can add character to a kitchen. Countertops can be comprised primarily of recycled materials, such as ground-up glass or metal shavings, making them lighter in weight and more environmentally friendly.

materials such as wood, marble.

limestone and soapstone.

Hardwood floors work well with open-floor plans, Exotic woods, such as walnut, mahogany hemlock, cork and bamboo, are a popular way to add a more natural feel.

This trend towards naturallooking, eco-friendly materials has led to earthy, neutral-looking kitchens. On the opposite scale of

to bring a kitchen to life," Adler says, The great thing about the palette of sinks that we've chosen is that they will look good with different surfaces – from marble, to granite and white – and I thought about that when

designing them." Despite pops of colour in the kitchen, Lam warns against going nothing better than a coloured sink

overboard. "Some colour accents or highlights, or even a simple drawing is fine," Lam says, otherwise there is a risk it could fail to be on-trend.

An open-plan kitchen by TiRon

of accessories to complement your ooking style. Moveable cutting boards, rinsing baskets and various trays and receptacles make preparation tasks easier and more un. Kohler's chef-inspired Stages sinks feature accessories tailored to

each stage of the cooking process. Sinks with an integrated wet surface increase available workspace and simplify preparation and clean-up. When you're done, the stainless steel wet surface is easy to clean, and drains right into

"A timeless kitchen is one where

more emphasis is put on function

and on style," Lam explains. "Style

Lam recommends renovating

'Changing the tap or sink [provided

Look for a sink that offers plenty

it is an above-counter version] can

be done every three to five years to

freshen the look of the kitchen."

kitchens with the rest of the house

ypically every eight to 10 years.

by definition is not timeless.

For kitchen sinks and appliances, Lam says stainless steel is the first hoice of many professionals and nome cooks because it is easy to naintain and gives an effortlessly clean look. Swing-away spouts can move out of your way as you put

larger pots in the sink. Sidesprays are excellent for washing fruit and vegetables as you prepare them. And pot fillers - a real chef-worthy amenity - serve as extendible taps, and can be installed next to your stovetop or preparation sink for easy water access

Kohler's Smart Divide sinks lower the divider between sink bowls, and make it easier to clean

large, bulky items. Following on from trends in the bathroom, plumbing fixtures have become the jewels of the space. Soft tap finishes, from antique brass to brushed nickel, are very popular. Also trending is tapware that lights up or changes the colour of the

running water, Lam says. As appliances become more intelligent and energy-saving, Lam advises clients to keep it simple. "People want the latest technology because it has a high novelty value. But I would advise people to keep it basic because electrical gadgets have a high maintenance cost.

Lam advises doing something novel, yet environmentally friendly. and incorporate potted plants in the kitchen - these can be in the form of useful herbs or varieties that help

