NEW HOMES & CONDOS

Monochromatic colour schemes in neutrals will always be timeless.

Be monochrome without being monotonous

PAUL SEMKULEY

LIVING WITH STYLE

Decorating our homes with colour can sometimes be a challenge and a daunting task for some but this year brings us a simple uncomplicated trend that is sure to be followed by many.

This trend is decorating and styling with monochromatic schemes and they can be of any colour. As much as we designers like to mix up colours to create an interesting and unique colour story, we also like to use these monochromatic themes. They can be calming and relaxing, in tints off-whites, soft creams and beiges, or more intense in tones or shades of blue.

When choosing your chromatics remember what is the purpose of the room: do you want your living room to be serene and peaceful, or more upbeat and full of energy?. Always select three colours (i.e. blue, green, or red, not turquoise or magenta) that you feel will work for your room.

Keeping it simple to these types of colour will allow you to build on them. Then start adding one shade lighter and one shade darker to create a graduated or ombre effect. This will give you a true monochromatic look with the use of only one colour.

You can also take a colour and build on it with varying colours. Beige for example can often seem boring but once you look at the varying tint, tones and shades of the base colour brown, you can start adding and using cream, ecru, golds, honey, sand, sepia, bronze, all keeping within your range of colours.

Now that we have a compelling colour scheme, take it a step further by adding texture and pattern to the fabrics, flooring and furniture in the room. This will not only add interest, but take your room from bland and boring to layered and deliberate.

Monochromatic colour schemes in neutrals will always be timeless. Choosing a more vibrant colour will give your room and home more stunning dramatic visual impact. Follow some of my guidelines and tips and your sure to have a beautiful room.

— Paul Semkuley is principal of Re:Source Lifestyle, a Toronto-based interior design firm that combines art, fashion and design to offer unique styling solutions. Visit www.resourcelifestyles.com.

5 tips for creating a monochromatic room

• When using pattern, remember to change up the scale.
• Fabrics should have variety in texture: velvet, linen, silk, wool, leather.
• Paint your walls and trim the same colour to give the illusion of taller walls.
• Use mirrored furniture or accessories to maximize the reflection of light and colour.
• Paint your wainscoting the same as your trim and add a darker shade or wallpaper above to create contrast without introducing a new colour.

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Mmonochromatic themes are calming and relaxing, and can be in tints of off-whites, soft creams and beiges.