

Why Color Trend Predictions Are Passé, According to Carleton Varney

"The color of the year is what *your* color of the year is," says the designer.



BY MARY ELIZABETH ANDRIOTIS MAR 10, 2022



Celebrated interior designer Carleton Varney is best known for his love of color—after all, "color is magic" is essentially his catchphrase. And while many paint companies are keen on predicting what hues will be on trend each year, Varney finds this practice...well, pointless. "The color of the year is what your color of the year is," the design icon declared during a lecture at this year's Dorothy Draper Decorating Weekend at The Greenbrier.

Varney is not alone in his anti-trend stance, as it turns out. Megan Hersch of Room Lift has found that the main problem with predicting what will be en vogue is that "trends will change in a few years," and, this, of course, means "if something is really trendy, it's going to really look dated" sooner or later. This potential predicament is reason enough to instead search for colors—and furnishings, for that matter—that you love and feel inspired by. "That should be more important than what's on trend," she declares.



By the same token, Brittany Farinas, CEO and Creative Director of House of One, has found that "there are so many brands that release new and trending colors; it would be unrealistic that all the colors could possibly be popularized at the time in a given time frame." After all, she adds, "nobody has a crystal ball, so it's best to stick with classic color schemes that fit with your personal design aesthetic or whatever the client is requesting."

Of course, it's just not sustainable to adhere to every year's trend predictions when decorating your home, as that would mean redecorating every year—and that sounds both exhausting and expensive. But, if you do have the urge to incorporate a sliver of a certain trend, Camila Pavone of Effortless Style Interiors suggests incorporating small pieces that feature the trendy color of choice (as opposed to, say, painting an entire room this shade), through accent pillows or other home accessories. And if the trend comes and goes, at least you'll be "happy you only spent a small part of your budget on accessories for a passing moment," declares the designer.



Unsurprisingly, there is a reason why we gravitate towards certain colors—different hues are deeply connected with personal emotions. In the appropriately-titled "Color: Your Magic Wand" chapter of Dorothy Draper's book *Decorating Is Fun!*, the color-obsessed designer waxed poetic about the significance of color in the world of design, stating, "I wish there were one word in the English language that meant exciting, frightfully important, irreplaceable, deeply satisfying, basic and thrilling, all at once. I need that word to tell you how much your awareness of color means to you in decorating." She went on to say that color "is the rock on which your house is built. Without a keen sense of color, without the ability to get real enjoyment and excitement out of lovely colors, we might as well quit right now. I firmly believe that nothing contributes so much to the beauty of this world as color."



And while we love learning what colors the experts at paint and color companies think will surge each year, at the end of the day there's no better barometer than following what you love, as Draper and Varney both espouse. Suffice it to say, so long as a color speaks to you, you can't go wrong.