



Choosing an Interior Color Palette

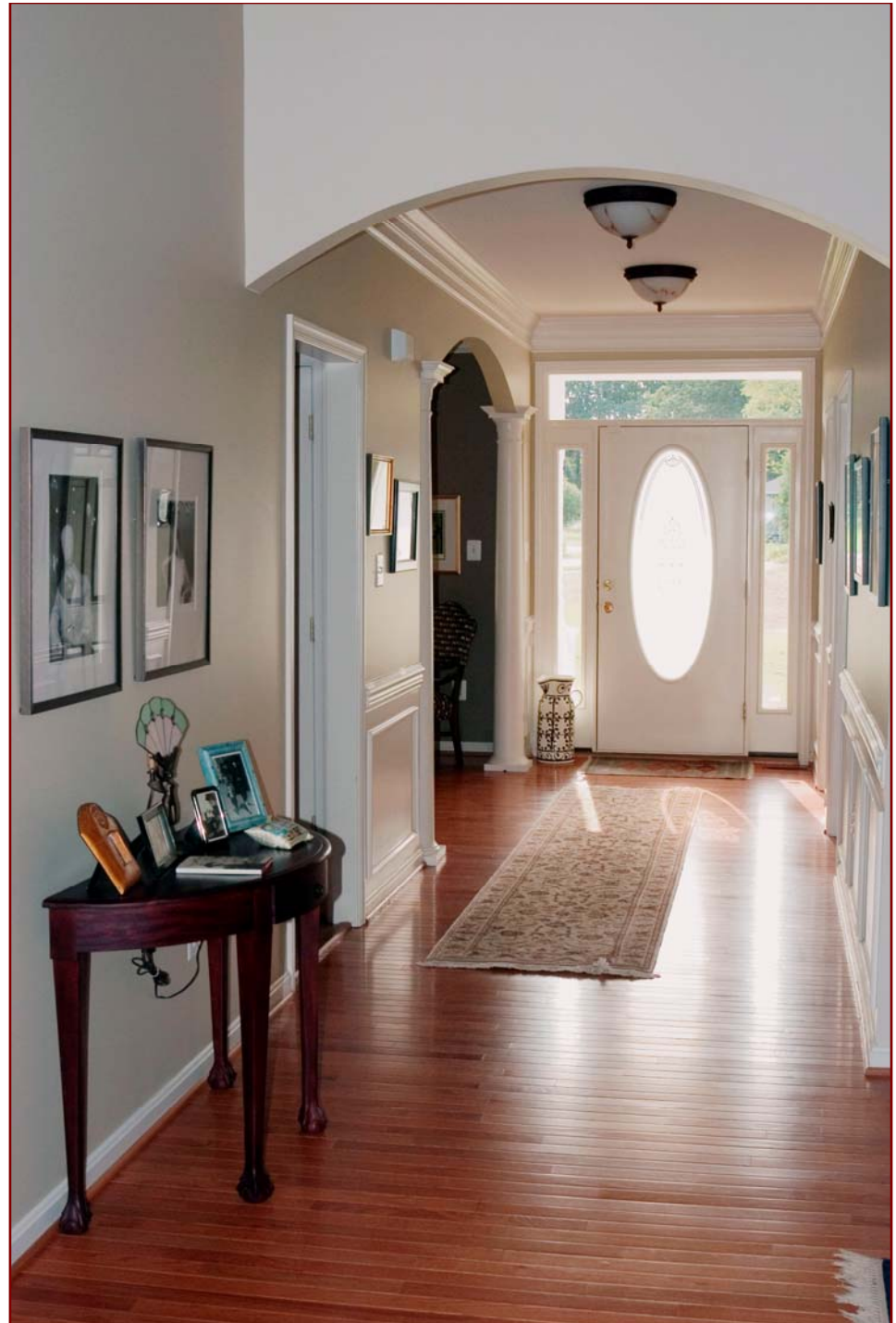
Introduction

Choosing an interior color palette can be a daunting task for both designer and client. This article describes a recent design experience in selecting interior colors.

Living in their new home for about one year, the clients had grown tired of "all white" interiors and asked for help in selecting the rooms and colors to bring their home to life.

Foremost in my approach is to engage the client in a collaborative design experience so that the interior colors, furnishings, and artwork are integrated in a vision shared by the client.

The remaining pages illustrate the color selections and some of the design concepts that were influencing factors.



The Foyer



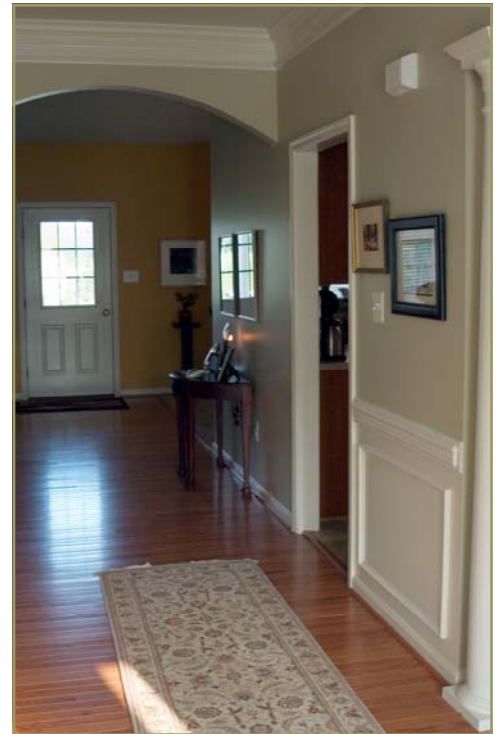
The foyer's left-side interior provides a gallery space for black and white photography. The khaki color provides enough contrast to accentuate the chair-rail and crown moulding, while providing a neutral background for the photography.

Upon entering the front door, a foyer leads to the rear of the home with an archway at mid-point that provides an interesting architectural element and creates a separation from the great room.

For the foyer walls, I thought it was important to use a neutral color that would blend with the oriental runner and provide a nice backdrop for both black and white photography and framed watercolors.

The foyer color also needed to offer enough contrast to bring out the chair-rail and crown moulding that extends the length of the foyer.

"Relaxed Khaki" by Sherwin-Williams (SW-6149) in eggshell finish was the color chosen to meet these requirements, and as you can see from the accompanying photos, works quite well.



The foyer's right-side interior has openings that lead to the library off the front door and to the kitchen at the mid-point of the foyer.



The focal point of the library is the floor to ceiling built-in bookcases and wine rack. In a relatively small space, the room offers a comfortable reading or conversation area for three people. The doorway leads into the kitchen.

The Library

This room was originally intended to be a dining room; however, the client immediately saw the opportunity to have a library — a longtime desire. Custom built-in bookcases were added to create plenty of room for books, personal photos, display of objects d'art, and a wine storage rack.

"Quiver Tan" by Sherwin Williams (SW-6151) with eggshell finish was used on the wall separating the kitchen and for the front-window wall. The dark color added the necessary contrast to create attention to the white bookcases, door and window trim, and crown moulding.



Just off the main entrance, the library is the initial room-of-notice as one enters the home. The room is entered through an attractive, double column archway as shown in the photo on the left. Both the foyer-side and the library side of the archway wall are painted the same khaki color. This gives the room a two-tone look that works well against the white columns.

The darker Quiver Tan and lighter khaki interior colors are also found in the large, circular oriental rug that covers a good portion of the library's natural wood floors.

The interior wall colors along with the complimentary colors of the rug, and fabrics of the library chairs make for a soothingly integrated space that welcomes one to spend time here.



This oversized, micro-fiber arm chair is the ideal spot for spending time with a good book. Natural sunlight, filtered by the sheer fabric of the blinds, enhances the reading experience.

The library is just off the main entrance and is immediately visible through the double column archway.

Guest Bedroom

The clients wanted a simple, elegant guest bedroom with some Old World charm. The color selected for this room was "Reva Red" by Sherwin Williams (SW-6608) with eggshell finish. The window and bed walls were painted this color while the interior and closet walls remained the original white. The clients only concern is the inviting warmth of the room may entice guests to stay longer!



The rich, mid-tone "Reva Red" was used for both the window wall and bed wall.



A large, double-sided window with archway provides interesting architectural detail and focal point as you enter the guest bedroom.

The Great Room, Kitchen, and Dining Area

The great room is the primary living area used for entertaining guests, relaxing around the gas fireplace, listening to music, and TV viewing. Two oversized arm chairs, a love seat, and a kidney-shaped chaise provide comfortable seating for six. As shown in the photo on the right, the left interior wall has a 16-foot ceiling sloping downward to 10 feet on the opposing wall.

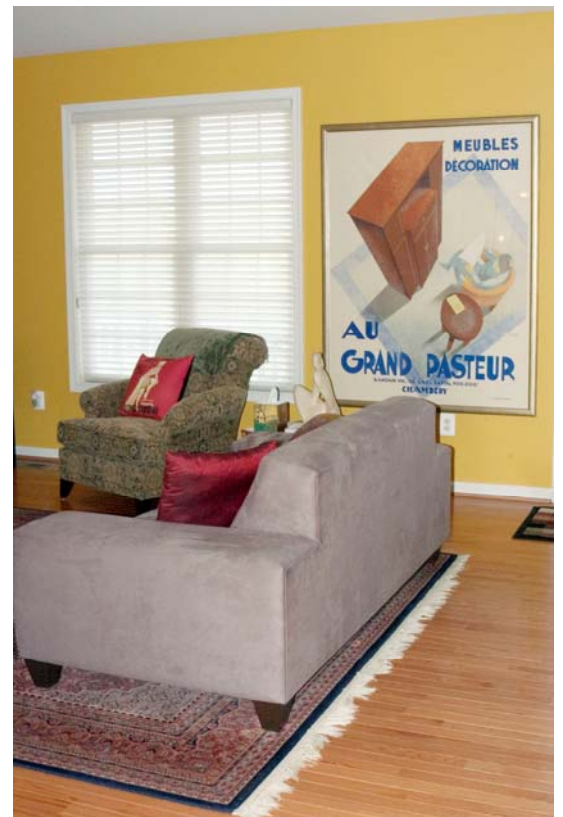
The three, mixed-media works of art hung on left wall inspired the color selection for the great room. This wall remained white to showcase the art work, while the dramatic, "Glen Ridge Gold" by Benjamin Moore (BM 301) was chosen for both the front wall and the exterior-connecting wall on the right that extends the full length of the great room and dining area. This color compliments the artwork and furnishings while providing high contrast to the white fireplace and mantle alcove.



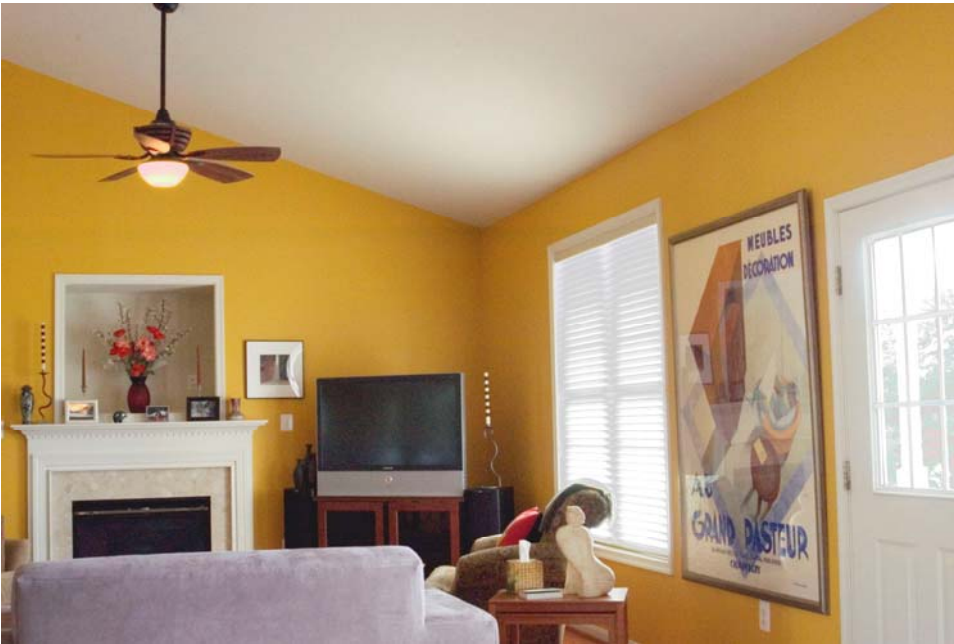
This view of the great room highlights the dramatic contrast of the white interior wall on the left against the rich gold color of the fireplace wall. The interesting chalet-style slope of the front wall is even more dramatic with the contrasting colors of these adjacent walls.



A triptych of "Dresses on Sale" by Munich artist Sean Richards — dominated by a palette of red, yellow, and gold — inspired the choice for the interior color of the great room. However, the wall for this art work remained white so as not to detract from the strength of these mixed-media images.



An additional inspiration for choosing the great room color was the 1935 Art Deco poster "Au Grand Pasteur" by Villot. The deep gold color of the wall provides the perfect back drop for showcasing this large scale poster.



The “Glen Ridge Gold” color wraps from the front wall to extend the full length of the exterior-facing wall of the great room to the dining area. The doorway opens to the back porch and deck providing a benign separation between the great room and dining area.

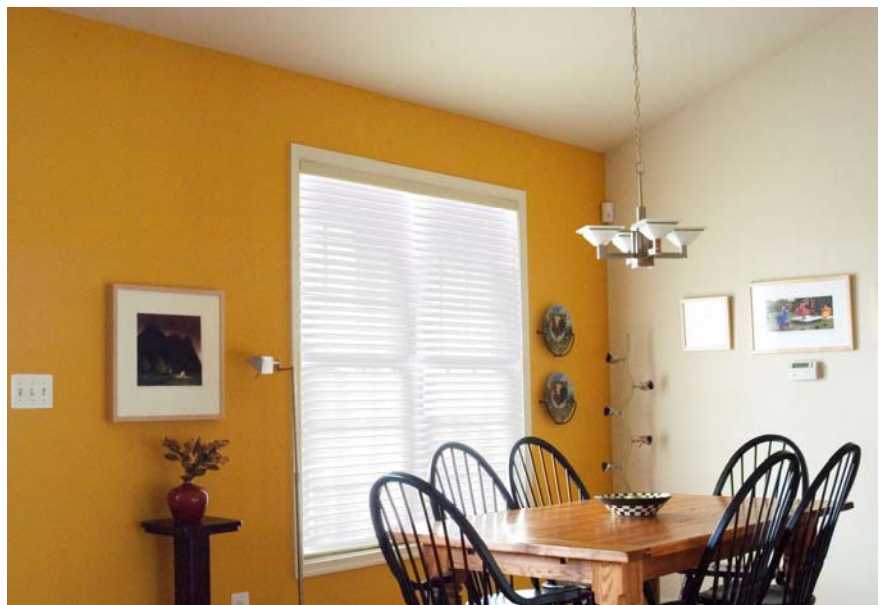
The photo on the left completes the panoramic view of the great room. The large, double-window lets in plenty of natural light, especially brilliant in the late afternoon. The hue of the “Glen Ridge Gold” continually changes based on the daytime intensity of natural light and the interior lighting options of the room in the evening.

The doorway, which opens to the back porch and deck area, is in-line with the front door and foyer, becoming a boundary element of the great room. However, the gold color extends the full length of this exterior-facing wall creating a natural flow from the great room into the dining area as shown in the below-right photo.

The centrally-located kitchen, as shown in the below-left photo, is a hub that may be entered from the library, the foyer, and the dining area. The array of cabinets and appliances cover most of the kitchen wall so it was unnecessary to introduce color in this room.



The kitchen is centrally located with doorways that lead to the library as seen in this photo, the foyer, and a pass thru counter to the dining area. An extensive array of cherry cabinetry, appliances, double sink, and pantry door consume most of the wall space; consequently it was not necessary to introduce color to the already white walls of the kitchen.



The dining area opposes the great room, sharing the 32-foot exterior-facing wall. Similar to the great room, the adjacent corner wall of this area remained white. During daytime dining, the large window offers a pastoral view of the horse farm that borders the client’s property. This area is also adjacent to the kitchen providing easy access for serving guests.

