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Color Hints From Gay October

By RUTH SPENCER, Household Art Department

BLUE smoke, scarlet leaves of trailing ivy, golden corn shocks—and October is here in all the glory of her warm rich colors. The homemaker stands on her doorstep wishing and longing. Would that she could save it all, preserve it, put it up in cans as she did with the other good things of nature. Would that she could transfer to her plain drab rooms the brightness and warmth of the glorious outdoors. Would that, during the cold bleak months of winter her family might be cheered by the sight of a little of the wondrous color with which nature was now so generous and then so stingy!

So wishes the homemaker, and into the woods she may go to gather armfuls of golden leaves and bright red berried. Bittersweet hides under the long vines and leaves of the grape and ivy. One can trawl its vines from a piece of pottery or a beautiful brass bowl. Its snappy orange color breaks into red and yellow as the berries burst.

Everlasting flowers may be dried and colored and arranged in baskets for the hall table or the dining room buffet. Placed in the window, their outlines give interesting silhouettes against the snow covered ground. Where nature stops the art of furnishing begins. Drapes that repeat the flow- er color or contrast with the berries will nut warmth into a room. A bit of color may be introduced with chain or cross stitch in the corner of the drapes. Again the material may be figured, the size of the figures being determined by the size of the room. Large figures need the distance that a large room will give them. Indistinct designs form better combinations with flowers or berries, for too color many objects of interest detract from each other.

Draperies, because of the area they cover will always give the dominant color to the room. Therefore it is important that they be selected with great care. Even tho the colorful they may so blend with the background that they enhance the other details which give the room its distinction.

In planning for draperies remember that the primary use of windows is to let in light, air and sunshine. They are best hung over the woodwork to increase the window size and admit all the light possible. Or, if the woodwork is beautiful in proportion and finish they may be hung inside. But the simpler the window is dressed, the better the effect will be.

Draperies are used to soften construction lines and to change any lighting defects. Tan, cream, buff or ecru adds more to the effect and blends in with the other colors in the room.

In considering possibilities for addition of cheerfulness do not overlook the lowly pillow. Good contrast or repetition may be made by the right color on the pillows, or cushion for the window seat.

The lamp is also a valuable aid and may repeat in its design the color from a beautiful print on the wall. If other things in the room are strongly figured it should be rather plain, but of good proportion and line. For luminosity warm colors as rose, orange and gold are best for the shade. Cooler colors may be used but they are for effect only and do not serve the purpose of utility to which every object in a room should be measured.

To buy a complete lamp is not necessary. With an accessory as beautiful as it is, there should be some originality and that expended in its selection. Consider first the dominant color of your room. Is it blue, or mulberry? Then why not a lovely Chinese jar covered with effective little designs and wonderful for color repetition? A jar or a vase may easily be wired and gives an excellent base for a lamp. Often a bowl or piece of pottery will give the necessary color.

As to the shade. One must be very careful to choose the right size and shape to accompany the base. You may make it yourself from bits of lace and fringe, chiffon and China silk. Or the frame may be stretched tightly with fine cheesecloth and the edges covered with gold braid. Shellac the whole thing and transfer a piece of embroidery, or design, in alcohol to be sure that the shellac will dry evenly. Then a design taken from a cretonne may be sketched on and painted with water color. Finish with a coat of shellac or varnish.

Upon little tables, big tables, on the bookcase or the mantel, place pieces of well selected pottery. They are indispensable to the room and for the accent quality. Good color and line are the important assets and oftentimes the inexpensive peasant bowl is far more suitable for the place than the expensive one.

Pictures for a home should be chosen with great care. Have but a few and learn to know them. A landscape or an architectural print in color is very good. Hung in relation to a table or a chair they give a formal feeling and add dignity. A piece of rich embroidery or a textile may also be hung as a background for furniture.

For all this collection of colorful furnishing accessories a neutral background is necessary in order to show them to the best advantage. By neutral is meant something that will blend with every color that is in combination with it and will stay in the background. Of course the background should not be too grayed, too dead, but enlivened by using the complimentary or opposite color.

Gray is excellent for walls, but it should be a warm gray. Blue gray gives a cold background against which warm colors will not harmonize. Tan, cream and buff are very good and may be used in combinations with many colors.

These colors may be used in wall paper or in very indirect design. In plaster may be water colored or painted. Plaster gives a good texture and may be washed. Colors in the room may be keyed to a certain color. It does not follow that every individual accessory should repeat that color. The background may be neutral but different shades of that neutral color may be employed. And for the accent use different hues that enhance and bring out the dominant color. Too much sameness results in monotony.

It is by attention to the details of a room that an effect is brought out and those details help each other in their relationship of size, color and arrangement.