

# Comfort is top '11 trend

Priority is placed on creating relaxing, sheltering spaces



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Homes are still not selling, new jobs are not forthcoming and money's tighter than tight.

Do you want to read on?

Please do. Because if the world outside is confusing, chaotic, extraordinary and disheartening, we can always close the door on

it.

And that's why our homes are becoming even more important: nests, security, and places to be happy amid the turmoil and uncertainty.

Interior design trends are mirroring this. Next year we'll want bright and happy, but we'll also want affordable. We'll accessorize, reupholster and continue to be economical with space and décor.

We'll buy wisely, if at all, and we'll want our pieces to be meaningful - whether hand-crafted locally, basket-woven in Nepal, or passed down from our grandparents.

We touched base with some of Tucson's design movers and shakers along with some national experts to find out exactly what to expect.

## Not "ooh" but "aah"

It's all about comfort, say our experts. People want a home that's a great home rather than a great house, says interior designer Florencia DeRoussel.

"One of my clients told me 'I don't want an 'ooh' house, I want an 'aah' house.'"

James Martin, president of the Color Marketing Group, an organization of design professionals who identify design color and trends, echoes the sentiment when describing the spring color CMG's named as it's hot spring choice.

It's a neutral with roots in orange called Barefootin'. "When was the last time you slipped off your shoes ... Ahhh. It is just that feeling," says Martin.

## Recycle, re-use

Homeowners short on money are looking to what they have already: pieces from the bedroom

that can be used in the living room; furniture that can be adapted, hand-me-downs, and great antique pieces they may not have found a use for until now.

They're reupholstering, adapting, making do - and enjoying the comforts of older styles, perhaps popping with a bright, modern fabric.

"We're really appreciating what we have and not necessarily seeking the fresh and the new but what's comforting and what we love," says DeRoussel.

"When it comes to purchasing, it's very very selective. Many people are re-using," says interior designer Larry Deutsch.

Morgan Trevers, manager at Tucson's three Table Talk locations, says even with new purchases, Tucsonans want a used look like shabby chic or distressed painted wood.

### **A new sort of shopping**

We're shopping estate sales, yard sales, salvage yards, our neighbors' sidewalks, our parents' and friends' homes, and our own rooms.

We're getting über-savvy about what we buy and the (little) money we spend. So pity the retailers who want to lure us back, says Deutsch. He isn't seeing much new or quality in furniture unless it's very high-end and one-of-a-kind. "They've pretty much already stretched the limits of plastic and metal and weaves."

Trevers says consumers have "freed up the credit card a little bit" this holiday season, but they're still cautious: buying one or two items at a time, deciding exactly what they're going to buy, saving up first and taking advantage of layaways.

### **The new ruralism**

Buying local isn't just about produce; the farmer's market craze has snowballed to locally made gifts, clothing and home items.

Tucson color expert C.J. Volk calls it "new ruralism". "People are searching for things that are truly authentic, from farmers' markets or homegrown or home-made, or purchasing things from local artists."

### **It's not complicated**

With less stuff, less money for stuff, and less desire for extras, people are no longer just filling walls, room corners and shelves for the sake of it. Instead they're thinking more about what they buy and accessorize with, and investing a little in art and framing rather than rushing out to buy a print that matches their rug.

And it's spilling over into color, too. Watch for a color palette Pantone, the global authority on color, has tapped for next year called "Clarity". Made up of pure whites, cool blues and greens, and ethnic splashes of mauve, violet and Tibetan red, it's straightforward with no extraneous details, says Pantone - just like our lives have become.

### **Formal, flashy R.I.P.**

The formal dining room has been finally laid to rest, and instead we're spending time and money in our kitchens and family rooms and - even in larger homes - creating a more relaxing space.

The days of having TVs in every room may be disappearing, too, says DeRoussel. She's seeing clients put a TV in a designated space or room, and opening up family rooms for family time again: board games, reading, hanging out.

### **Confidence emerges**

Old plus new, traditional shapes covered in bold new fabrics, quiet neutrals and pastels with splashes of bright color and ethnic prints add up to a sense that as homeowners we're growing confident enough to develop our own mash-up of styles.

Maurice Brantley, interior designer at Copenhagen Imports, sees fabrics influenced by graffiti and pixelated images, and clashing patterns.

"It's very experimental, it's artsy, it's expressive. And at the other end we're also seeing understated and neutral and very calm."

### **What our experts say:**

"People are still looking for multipurpose functionality. It's across the board - bedroom, kitchen, dining room, family room."

- Morgan Trevers

"(Clients) want their purchases to mean something, because they're spending the money."

- Florencia DeRoussel

"There's a bold, inventive movement of color. It's very experimental, it's artsy, it's expressive."

- Maurice Brantley

"People are looking to their home to be reflective of who they are. It's about a mix of styles and self-expression."

- C.J. Volk

"There's very little that's new (in design) except for limited edition furniture. The resurgence in design is not to a great extent going to take place until the marketplace turns around. It's not going to turn around until the real estate market turns around."

- Larry Deutsch

And there's more

- Home is where the happy is: Look out for spirit-lifting accessories in bright reds and purples that can lift a neutral sofa or wall color, and seasonal changes to give decors regular boosts.

- Long live quality: Consumers want good workmanship and consistency in these inconsistent times. Hand-made, one-of-a-kind, traditional craftsmanship will be in demand, as will solid wood pieces.
- Multifunctioning: Furniture that's multipurpose will continue to be popular: coffee tables that store; sideboard/TV stands; modular furniture you can take apart and rearrange.

#### Our experts

- Larry Deutsch of Deutsch Parker Design, 323-8100 or [www.dpddesign.com](http://www.dpddesign.com)
- Florencia DeRoussel of Within Studio, 465-2582 or [www.go-within.com](http://www.go-within.com)
- C.J. Volk of Citron Paint & Interiors, 886-5800 or [www.citronpaint.com](http://www.citronpaint.com)
- Maurice Brantley of Copenhagen Imports, 795-0316 [www.copenhagenliving.com](http://www.copenhagenliving.com)
- Morgan Trevers of Table Talk, 219-8232 or [www.tabletalk.com](http://www.tabletalk.com)

And if you want to have a little fun

In addition to introducing a color palette suitable for general decorating, Pantone is calling Honeysuckle its 2011 Color of the Year.

In contrast the Color Marketing Group's neutral Barefootin', this reddish pink is stimulating, intense and perfect for warding off stress, say Pantone's experts. And what homeowner doesn't want a pick-me-up amidst the global gloom? Pantone sees it appearing on bed linens, small appliances, tabletop accessories and walls, as well as women's apparel, cosmetics and men's clothing.

And while Tucson's C.J. Volk sees Honeysuckle appearing in fashion and cosmetics, she says it will be limited to accents and accessories in the home.

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