

# Earthy Appeal



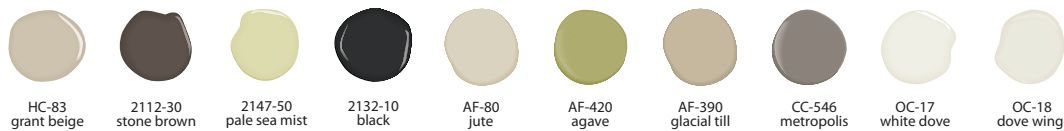
A carefully chosen colour palette, inspired by nature. By Sharon Grech

**W**hen my friends Anne-Marie and David Males asked me to consult on the colours for their beautiful new home, I was thrilled. Dave, president of his company Northern Edge Construction, has built many beautiful homes, but this project would be different. This was his family home.

They had lovingly restored their previous home – an Arts & Crafts-style house – to its original form with design elements and art history guiding the colour palette. But this time, they only had architects drawings to start with and the desire for a modern design approach. This meant we were working with a clean slate – contemporary finishes, new furnishings and a colour palette to tie it all together. And although I typically orchestrate

Photography, courtesy of Benjamin Moore

# BEFORE & AFTER



colour schemes based on existing spaces and furnishings, I was up for the challenge.

The perfect paint palette has an amazing way of pulling everything together and completing the story. For that matter, it can also make everything look disjointed when it's wrong.

First, decisions had to be made regarding the big-ticket finishes like flooring, cabinets, countertops and stone.

The flooring used throughout the main floor is a natural bamboo, colour-enhanced through a steaming process to a rich mid-brown. The kitchen is a contemporary mix of light painted cabinets, dark wood, stainless steel and granite. The family room, which is open to the large, airy kitchen, has a gorgeous floor-to-ceiling engineered stone feature surrounding the gas fireplace.

With samples of these main design elements in hand, I discovered how well the finishes would flow and was able to choose the catalyst colour that would be the main

colour throughout – Benjamin Moore's Jute AF-80. As its name implies, Jute is an earthy neutral, akin to natural canvas or linen, with a soft grey undertone.

Working with a modern open-concept plan, it is critical that the colours and finishes flow together seamlessly – but that doesn't mean they all have to be the same. Varying the colours, values, textures and scale is the key to softening the look of a modern interior and infusing it with some personality.

Using Jute as my starting point, the palette evolved into varying tones of grey and brown, with vivid green as punctuation. With big beautiful windows at almost every turn, the colours, inspired by nature, do not compete with the outside view, but complement it.

The spacious family room is this family's main gathering point, and so it deserved special attention. The warm grey-stone feature wall provides lots of textural interest and, to complement that,

I chose a soft, translucent, organic weave for the window treatments.

A heavily textured grey sectional fit the furniture plan, and a subtle driftwood finish on the coffee table finished the theme, creating a modern lodge feel for the room. But the space was calling out for colour, so I ventured away from the neutrals to a lively green. Benjamin Moore's Agave AF-420 on the wall opposing the stone provides weight and an element of surprise. To maintain a sense of harmony, this green is echoed throughout the main floor by using soft furnishings and artwork.

Situated directly off the main entrance, the living room is purposely a smaller room (the family chose instead to allocate more space for the large kitchen). We used creative license to transform this small formal room into a lounge. By adding contrast with sleek furnishings, a contemporary shag rug, and a deep grey accent wall painted Metropolis CC-546





before

## Sharon's Tips for creating a colour story from scratch

**1 DISCOVER WHAT INSPIRES YOU – CREATE A MOOD BOARD.** Start collecting visuals of colour combos that you are drawn to – anything that captures your attention and conveys the mood you want your space to relay.

**2 CHOOSE THE BIG TICKET FINISHES.** If possible, get samples of the big ticket items such as flooring, kitchen and bathroom cabinets, and countertops, and lay them out in a similar fashion to the mood board.

For the space to flow, you will want every finish to harmonize with the next, even if they are not in adjacent rooms.

**3 SELECT SOFT FINISHES, SUCH AS FABRIC AND OTHER TEXTILES.** This is where you might want to be a little more adventurous. The more decorative items – like drapes, wall finishes and paint – can be changed more often without a lot of disruption, so have some fun with it.

**4 COMPLETE THE STORY WITH THE ADDITION OF PAINT COLOUR.** Overlay your colour options on your floor plan to see how one colour flows with the next. Also overlay your colour options onto your finishes board to ensure the colours coordinate. Add accent colours where appropriate. Don't forget about ceilings – they can also be a great place to add colour. Pick up a sample of the colour to test it at home and view it at various times throughout the day to see how lighting affects the colour.

we changed the atmosphere. For continuity, a touch of agave green is evident in the artwork.

The dining room, unlike the other rooms on the main floor, is tucked away on its own. This provides a formal respite for the diners. Here, a warm, sandy-grey Glacial Till AF-390 fills the backdrop and balances the depth of the heavy-wood dining table and buffet. Chairs upholstered in natural linen and a large area rug provide texture, while the mirror and other glass accessories add sparkle and a touch of glam.

The colour harmony on the main floor continues up the stairs and into the master bedroom where we married the modern architectural details with the existing traditional bedroom suite. A dark accent wall in Stone Brown 2112-30 gives the bedroom's sitting area a strong presence, punctuating the contemporary floating fireplace.

When we moved to the kids rooms, however, we let loose. Trinity, 6 at the time, was excited to have the freedom to choose her own colour scheme, and was

adamant that she wanted pink and black. The only condition was "Please, not all four walls!" The solution then was a colour block painted black, which creates a striking backdrop to her existing white bed, anchoring it amongst the field of white. Using Basic Black 2132-10 and White Dove OC-17 for the walls, we then had loads of flexibility for bedding choices and accessories. The butterfly wall decals and the chandelier add a personal touch, and eases the transition from little girl to big girl room.

## BEFORE & AFTER

For little Ava, I channeled all my inner “girly-ness” and created a magical garden theme, inspired by the oversized wallpaper decal that Anne-Marie found online. Never one to forget about the ceiling, I finished the room with a painted cloud effect.

When it comes to the kids spaces, I don't concern myself with a seamless connection to the rest of the house. Their room is a space to express their personality and unique flair, so let the creativity flow. And, remember the worst case scenario is that you can always close the door! ■



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### SOURCE GUIDE:

**ALL PAINT COLOURS:** Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.com; **CEILING COLOUR THROUGHOUT HOME:** OC-17 White Dove; **TRIM COLOUR:** OC-18 Dove Wing; **ALL WINDOW TREATMENTS:** Levelor, levelor.ca; **FAMILY ROOM:** **PAINT:** WALLS: AF-80 Jute, ACCENT WALL: AF-420 Agave; **AREA RUG, SECTIONAL CHAIRS, TABLES:** elte.com; **ARTWORK:** canvasgallery.ca; **FLOOR VASES:** casalife.com; **THROWS:** revelle.ca; **KITCHEN:** **PAINT:** WALLS: AF-80 Jute; **BREAKFAST ROOM CHAIRS:** horsefeathershome.com; **DINING ROOM:** **PAINT:** WALLS: AF-390 Glacial Till; **AREA RUG:** modernweave.com; **MIRROR:** casalife.com; **ARTWORK:** canvasgallery.ca; **LIVING ROOM/LOUNGE:** **PAINT:** WALLS: AF-80 Jute, ACCENT WALL: CC-546 Metropolis; **ARTWORK:** canvasgallery.ca, harbourgallery.com; **AREA RUG, LOUNGE CHAIRS, TABLE, DRINK SET:** elte.com; **GLASS VASE:** williamashley.com; **TRINITY'S BEDROOM:** **PAINT:** WALLS AND CEILING: OC-17 White Dove, ACCENT: Black 2132-10; **WALL DECALS:** walljuice.com; **ARMCHAIR:** kidsathome.com; **BLACK & WHITE LAMPS:** casalife.com; **AVA'S BEDROOM:** **PAINT:** WALLS: 2147-50 Pale Sea Mist, **CEILING ACCENT:** CC-848 Mineral Springs; **WALL DECAL:** muralunique.com;

