

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 08 Issue 9 Wednesday, July 2, 2014



Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for July ...read on page D13

Stylish Solutions

Decorating with Red, White and Blue

By Ann McDonald



Red, white and blue are quintessential summer colors. Let's be honest, your first thought about decorating the living room doesn't automatically go to the American Flag. When you start to train your eye and see color combinations, however, you will be shocked at how often this classic color combination pops up. These colors are actually incredibly easy to work with. Red, white and blue can be placed into almost any color story.

The good news: I will teach you a few tricks so you can think outside the box with my Top Stylish Solutions for red, white and blue decorating.

1) Get to know your undertones. An undertone is the foundation of the color or reduced color. You can mix any color with another, as long as the undertone is the same. This is one of those color theory truths many homeowners don't understand. It is single handedly responsible for sending us to the funny farm when trying to choose a basic white.

The easiest way to find the undertone is to look at the paint sample with variations of color from light to dark. Is it pink at the bottom and deep red at the top? The undertone is pink. Find a similar color of red where the light color at the bottom is yellow? The undertone is yellow. If you are mixing red with blue, you can match any tone as long as the undertones are the same. Look for a blue and red that stem from the same undertone and they will work together.

In a current Moraga family room project, we brought in deep cranberry reds in the boucle (for a large custom ottoman), a woven blue and white square pattern (side chair) and then a graphic bright red and white pattern with the same undertones (custom bench). What could have been loud and overdone became accessible and easy to live with simply by using and understanding tone.

The floors are a gorgeous deep brown hardwood and the custom chesterfields a rich felt grey menswear fabric from Scotland – all with the same undertones.

... continued on page D4

Here we used two contemporary pieces in a traditional living room: a graphic blue lamp, white lacquer table and mixed stacks of design books, but added the tassel in red with the same undertones as the antique cabinet in the back. We also looked for books to stack that had varying tones of red and blue in their bindings.

Photos courtesy Couture Chateau llc, photos Faryn Davis Photography

