

*Feng Shui*

# Activating the colors of spring

By Michele Duffy

*Benjamin Moore's Mayonnaise is a great flow color that can go right into the living room or dining room.**Photos provided*

**N**ow that spring is truly here, are you feeling inspired by all the local color?

Nature-inspired color is the real purpose of balanced feng shui in your home – color that mirrors the barely translucent dewy sky, the persimmon fruit, the slate earth of the coast, the dancing blues of the waves, or the barky ruddiness of the redwoods. If we want the benefits of nature indoors, one key element is through the colors we choose from our interaction with nature around us here in the Bay Area.

Color influences the vibe of various rooms, infuses our senses with a backdrop for our lives, and creates necessary depth in a room's canvas. Color is meaningful and important for an energy-rich environment and life. The right colors create restorative calm in a master bedroom, a complimentary reflection for the food we

eat in the kitchen, and sets the tone for a cozy living room or intimate dining room.

But for some, color is daunting. Many clients tell me that they would no sooner be able to select a hue of their dreams for their home even if they personally dreamt it. Seriously and to be sure, color selection can be a happy journey if you are prepared to do some upfront legwork first.

First, it's a great idea to spend some time thinking about the colors that you love. What makes you feel happy and alive? Forget about trends; spend time researching and thinking about the colors that resonate with you, or certain colors that inspire you in nature. Consider the amount of natural light in your space. Is there more or less natural light, depending on the different location of the rooms in your home?

Those rooms with southern exposure can possibly handle darker, stronger hues. If rooms do not receive adequate natural light and are dark or small, choosing lighter colors will brighten and vastly enlarge the space. In addition, consider having a “flow color” or the one neutral that will be on most of the walls of the common areas, like stairwells and hallways. If the layout supports it, paint the flow color in your living room, kitchen or dining room; those decisions can also be made ahead of time.

Benjamin Moore's “Full Moon” is a bright light grey that fits the flow color task, or if you prefer a creamier hue, take a look at Benjamin Moore's “Mayonnaise” which has a lot of creamy warmth.

Deciding on a color should take you on an exquisitely straightforward journey that includes narrowing down your favorite two or three finalists. Paint brushouts on the lightest walls (opposite windows) and darkest walls (with the windows) and then look at your picks morning, noon and night. Ask your partner or kids to weigh in as well and see if a favorite doesn't begin to emerge. ... continued on page D8

*Benjamin Moore's Full Moon is the brightest grey and shines in this Orinda kitchen.*