



**Anthea Gerrie explores ways of incorporating this season's soothing and uplifting colours into your home**

**B**ringing warmth and comfort to a winter which threatens discontent, pundits predict we will be hunkering down in homes viewed through lavender-coloured glasses, adding pops of sunshine yellow against a background of soothing grey.

It's that time of year when Pantone, the company which assigns a number to every shade of paint on the planet, announces its colour of the year. For 2023 it's widely predicted to be a gentle but uplifting hue dubbed Digital Lavender, picked to offset anxiety over the cost of living crisis and political turmoil.

This paler shade of last year's stronger blue-violet, Very Peri, is "calm, optimistic and associated with peace and serenity," according to Lisa Peck, CEO of design firm Lulu Interiors, and it also happens to work beautifully in a colour scheme incorporating yellow and grey, crowned by Pantone as its favourite furnishing shades for 2021. This may explain why there has been a 157 per cent increase in Google searches for "yellow and grey living rooms" in the UK over the past 30 days, according to Yorkshire radiator firm Steirad, which keeps a close eye on colour trends.

Chris Harvey, Steirad's interiors expert, explains why yellow and grey create a calming synergy: "Grey has always been such a classic and elegant neutral for people to use in their home. Whilst it's calming, there's no need to be afraid of injecting additional colours to elevate your space. Yellow can do exactly this — these two colours are perfect for anyone looking to create a warm and inviting space, yet calming and cheerful, which isn't too bold for anyone who is a little more classic and introverted. As we spend longer at home as darker, colder days descend on us, it's important that your room provides a happy and serene space."

Serenity is all very well, but add in a pop of gentle purple and you get a touch more joy. Mother and daughter interior design firm Ward & Co. love the way lavender takes to velvet in particular, and have recently used it in a dressing room: "It's a lovely calm tone which works well with warm grey, taupe, pale pink, deeper purple, blues and teal," says creative director Rosie Ward, who also likes to use lavender as one element of a patterned fabric.

Whether this paler shade of purple floats your boat or not, expect to see a lot more colour-blocking in the best-dressed homes. "In the coming months we're expecting to



# Brighter shades of pale

**Below, clockwise from cushion** Vapor rectangle cushion, £115, Belvedere sconce, £595, both Jonathan Adler; Lemon Sorbet wool blanket, Atlantic, from £65; Annie Sloan paint in French Linen, £55.95 for 2.5l. **Below right** Boho Blue cushion, Stonographic, £38



see more liberal uses of a single colour, also known as 'colour drenching'," says Ward, adding: "When executed elegantly, it can give a home a wonderful sense of connection and flow which is hugely comforting and creates

a much calmer environment to live in." One way of trying out a new colour before drenching a room in it is by flinging a throw over the furniture and Harvey recommends harnessing wallpaper as a way of injecting

colour into a neutral home, perhaps pairing a bold retro floral wallpaper on one wall with shades of paint picking out one or two of the colours in the patterns on the other walls. Another way to lift a predominantly grey



**Far left, top** Mila Gold runner and **left** Masai Emerald runner, Roger Oates Design, both £149.50 per linear metre  
**Main image** Grey and yellow synergy, as highlighted by Steirad  
**Below** Sofa upholstered in Oletta by Serena Dugan at The Fabric Collective, £198 per m  
**Below left** Cluny hall runner, Roger Oates Design, £194 per linear metre



living-room is to introduce pops of yellow in soft furnishings and/or accessories. This does not have to be aggressively bright, adds Harvey: "When people contemplate yellow, they often think of sunshine, but there are many

different shades, including an earthy warm mustard," the designer points out. As for pops of lavender, think not only of introducing it in fabric but glass, as in Jonathan Adler's handsome Belvedere wall sconce.

Catharine Bjorkman, interiors expert at Swedish wood-burning stove brand Contura, suggests other ways to introduce "moments" of colour throughout the home in small doses, perhaps wallpapering a utility room or lining a wardrobe with a bright print. She also likes to use it to draw attention to details in a room: "A neutral space with a built-in bookshelf painted in a bright colour is a lovely way to highlight your collection of books, plants or mementoes; the same can be done with shoe-racks or coat hooks."

She also suggests teaming vivid wall colours with upholstery in a paler version of the same shade, painting window frames the same colour as walls and continuing the colour upwards above the picture rail "to create a space that fully envelops you".

For beautiful shades of paint, check out specialist suppliers like Annie Sloan, as well as that purveyor of 50 shades of grey, Farrow and Ball. And remember that even inexpensive paint can be matched to a specific shade if you know the Pantone number — for the shade of lavender predicted to take pride of place in our homes next year, it's the somewhat less romantically-named 15-3817 TCX.



PHOTOS: GROUNDPICTURE/SHUTTERSTOCK