

The Psychology of Colour – Violet and Green



The psychology of colour has been researched significantly and there are both positive and negative connotations to all colours. It is important to bear in mind that a person's experience of colour will be influenced by their own 'story' - the events in their life both good and bad - and for this reason an interior designer should always ask a client at briefing stage if there are any colours that are no-goes for them. You also need to be conscious of differing cultures and what the colours you are considering may mean to them.

To avoid this, care needs to be taken when thinking of; the tint, tone, or shade of the colour being used; the light in the space; and what other colours, if any, are going to be used. As you can see from the pictures below, when used together, whatever the tint, tone or shade, the result provides a sense of spirituality, peacefulness and harmony.

POSITIVES: Divinity, Heavenly, Spiritual, Truth, Quality, Decadence

NEGATIVES: Death, Depression, Introvertive

Violet has a long association with both royalty and religion. Roman Emperors wore violet togas and catholic priests can wear violet at lent, advent and for conducting funerals, and that probably explains why it can be interpreted psychologically as either decadence or death. It also has the shortest wavelength as defined by Sir Isaac Newton, which means it has low energy and may be why we find the colour heavenly/spiritual. The different tints, tones and shades used in the 2 room pictures evoke very different emotions. The bedroom picture speaks of quality and decadence in the shape of the bed and lights while also having a very calming effect. You feel as though it would be easy to sleep. Whereas the living room is light and airy and evokes a sense of openness (or truth).

POSITIVES: Balance, Earthly, Tranquil, Peaceful, Refreshment, Reassuring, Harmony, Equilibrium

NEGATIVES: Stagnation, Rotting, Inexperience, Jealousy

Green has always had connotations with the outside and nature, a feeling of 'bringing the outside in'. Being centre point on wavelength it is easy on the eye and makes most people feel safe. However, counter to that is the expression, 'green with envy' and 'green around the gills' denoting jealousy and inexperience, respectively. Both pictures selected, for me, display all the positive emotions. The first really does feel as though the outside has been brought in the dining area is almost 'alfresco', whereas the uses of more tonal greens in the living room gives more of a sense of peace and harmony. Interestingly when selecting images of cushions, the majority had nature prints whereas the violet were more decadent!

