

colour decoded

Our expert Amy Moorea Wong talks us through this room's surprisingly rich palette, which is all about the slow reveal



The scheme by Australian interior designer Amelda Wilde comes to life the longer you look at it.

Can we dig into the colour of a room that's built upon neutral surfaces? It wouldn't appear so at first glance – but let the eyes rove around and the senses become accustomed to a milder palette and suddenly colour is jumping out from every which way.

It just feels so inviting. The earthy ginger carpet creates a rich, cosy base with a hint of spice, while the puce-rose-blush hue of the sofa adds to the balmy sunset palette. Stir in natural tones and materials, such as the woven wicker table lamp, ceiling colour, animal-patterned cushion and the sprinkling of red here and there, and you have a space that you want to invite friends into yet equally want to quietly curl up and hibernate in.

Are you feeling that overarching sense of nostalgia? 'When' is this room exactly?

A passing sweep of the space says 'the olden days', with the traditional timber ceiling, the brick walls and the muted-ness of it all. But whoa, that is not the case when you stop for a little longer. Modern colours and pieces reveal themselves one by one – oh, it's a contemporary artwork, that sofa's avant-garde, where did the pink spring from?



There's one odd object standing out. We've all been sneaking looks at it. The banana yellow stool, peeking out from behind the surrounding subtle shades a bit like it got lost on the way to a brighter room. What a wonderful, unexpected twist in this space, and a testament to the power of a small object. Its presence is hugely impactful, anchoring the room in the contemporary and playful. It's an Easter egg, a cheery message that tells us nothing's too serious. 'I use colour to garnish and add surprises and layers,' the room's creator Amelda Wilde, of Australian firm Amelda Wilde Interior Design, told me. 'The dosage of colour is a delicate alchemy – the yellow pop from the

Polspotten Zig Zag stool is just the right amount of razzle-dazzle to bring out the ebullience.'

It's the details that make it all click. The artwork is a mix of very varied vibes, but somehow the collection works. An abstract landscape, a manga illustration, something surreal, all tied together by coordinating frames, neutrals and warm, golden tints. Notice the toying with scale? The wicker lamp is monolithic and the quilting on the sofa oversized – it makes us feel encompassed and safe.

Textures emerge slowly as the space comes into focus the longer you look at it.

Contrasting materials – brick, timber, rattan, wool, leather and stone – meet weave, knot, gloss, matte, soft and hard, creating the desire to touch. The decorative stone of the coffee table grounds us, a direct link to nature with its cool smoothness and beautiful veining, while the wicker weave of the light combines the natural with the artisanal. The modernised tiger-and-leopard print cushion and semi-lifelike art pieces are where the creative takes over, and from there blocks of colour step in to fill the gaps, nodding to nature to stop things from getting too complicated.

We are well into the era of the painted ceiling – and what a time to be alive. How did we ever not notice that big white square over our heads? Yes, it can feel like a bad idea to add colour to a low ceiling (and yes, white brings in the light) – but painting the 'fifth wall' makes such an impact, transforming cold cubes into cool, comfy dens. Go for a light shade to add a sense of height, or something darker (here we have putty-tinted green Resene Arrowtown by New Zealand brand Resene) to pull the walls together and create a snug hug-in-a-box.

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BLUSH, LITTLE GREENE

PASSIONATE YELLOW,
YES COLOURS

ORANGE 04, LICK

PAPYRUS, CRAIG & ROSE

CLOVE, EDWARD BULMER
NATURAL PAINT

TRERON,
FARROW & BALL

GARGOYLE, ZOFFANY