



## COLOUR MASTERCLASS

# *Rhubarb hues*

*PART XV: Pink is a cheerful colour that instantly brings a warm, welcoming character to interiors. Deep tones with just the right hint of brown pigment ensure the colour is chic, appealing and timeless ▶*





“ This sitting room has lovely views out to the garden and across the lawns to open countryside. I wanted to use strong colour, to create a cosy feel and for the room to be in keeping with the country setting. So many people like beige, but I think it is important to be confident with colour and just use strong, bright colours to enliven a room. I don't believe in certain colour connotations; I think that idea is rather exaggerated. Pink does not have to be feminine; I find it a very happy colour that makes you smile.

The inspiration for this room was India – vibrant pinks are used extensively there. It is true that it can be very difficult to find a good strong pink, and getting the right shade is essential to the success. I didn't want anything too pale or sugary, so the fabric used for the sofas was specially dyed.

There are touches of pink and other colours all around the room, with hints being brought in on the sofas with cushions hand-embroidered by my friends. You need touches of other

colours and textures like this to add some layers of interest. Additional accents in the carpet and in the ottoman used as a coffee table – firm enough to place a tray upon, or rest your feet on, yet comfortable, keeping the softness of the room.

Pink is a colour that combines really well with others. I love orange and pink; pink and lime green is also wonderful – you can use it any which way you want. The walls were kept pale to provide a backdrop for the brighter colours. I mixed this white myself. It contains a drop of red which makes the room glow a little.

I don't worry too much about the natural light – it varies so much throughout the day and the seasons that you can't concern yourself too much with how it affects the colours. If you use colour to create a warm, comfortable and inviting room, it will look good at all times.

Bougainvillea flowers enhance and are a tribute to the watercolour of an Indian scene. The flowers grow profusely across the Far East. ”



**JOHN STEFANIDIS**  
Director, John Stefanidis

Stefanidis is a designer, renowned around the world, with a prestigious clientele. His reputation for using bold colour and creating an eclectic yet chic aesthetic has been built over 50 years since he founded his own architectural and interior-design practice in 1967.

Stefanidis has authored a number of books on interior decoration, including *Living by Design*, which features the sitting room pictured. He has also developed his own fabric, accessories and furniture collections inspired by his global travels.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
Stefanidis wanted a strong pink that was not too sugary. The fabric used for the plump, cosy sofas was specially dyed to achieve the right depth of colour.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
There are touches of pink in all the other soft furnishings, including hand-embroidered cushions, the carpet and this pretty upholstered armchair.



Todhunter advises using pattern on all walls to create an enveloping, cosy ambience.



**EMILY TODHUNTER**  
Co-director,  
Todhunter-Earle  
Interiors

Todhunter is known for her elegant country-house style. Together with Kate Earle, she heads up a team of 17 designers working on projects across the globe.

“ Pink can be a very feminine colour, however, it doesn't have to be. It is a lovely choice for a bedroom and can appeal to both men and women. I think in a guest room it makes an impact, as it is a colour that has character, making it warm and inviting. Pink is also a pretty sitting-room colour, and we find that we use pink quite a lot in our work; clients are not afraid of it at all.

I decorated this entire house, however, it had been well decorated previously and the fabric on the walls was so pretty that we left it up. I like to have pattern on the walls – whether a paper or fabric – rather than just plain walls with a patterned curtain. Here, it goes all the way around the room. Some people may just use a pattern on one feature wall, which is a mistake. You need to complete the circle and have pattern all around you to give a cosy feeling.

It is essential to get the right pink to create the right effect. A hot pink is lovely, but it gives off rather a different vibe – we have used it in sitting rooms for teenage girls with great success. Here, the pink is soft and pretty, yet it has some depth and still has a bit of punch – it's not pastely or sugary. It is a question of getting a pink with enough brown in it. I picked furniture that had a Provençal or slightly Swedish feel – relaxed and soft, in a pretty colour. Traditional brown furniture would have also been a good partner to the pink. We finished this room quite a long time ago, but it's a timeless look that still looks pretty. ”



Deep pink stimulates the mind in this library but still has a calming effect for moments of quiet reflection.



**FRANCESCA WEZEL**  
Founder, Francesca's Paints

Wezel founded her own company in 1996, specialising in lime washes for interior and exterior walls and chalky emulsions for interiors. Wezel has a contagious passion

for colour and she has travelled extensively to build upon her expertise, learning new techniques for using natural ingredients from different countries.

“ This is a library and sitting room area in The Cloudesley, a boutique hotel in East Sussex. The owner designed each room himself without an interior designer, however I worked with him to choose the colours, making some special shades especially for him.

In a room like this, I would usually pick something like a very dark green, which stimulates intellect. This pinky tone – Rebecca's Red from our Original Collection – still stimulates the mind but it is also relaxing and cosy. The redness in it is great for igniting the mind for conversation, but the colour is tempered with some brown, so it still has calmness, too. Certainly, a strong colour choice like this is much better for this kind of room

than a neutral beige, which would be very dull and you might perhaps feel lost in it.

This strong colour makes everything else in the room stand out more. What I like is that only this one colour has been used so it frames the books and makes them a feature. A deep colour will always make things stand out more – in an art exhibition, if you hang art on a dark wall it will make the painting look more alive than if on a white wall. Here, the colour looks fantastic contrasted with the black of the fireplace. This contrast and the elements of other colours from the books and accessories help enliven the pink colour further.

Although this is a strong colour, it is still comfortable to be around. This is

because of the medium we use; the paint has a high chalk content which makes it softer and changes the absorbency of the light so it is non-aggressive. If the paint had any plastic or vinyl content, it would reflect the light and the colour would be harsher and difficult to deal with, but this paint absorbs the light and creates depth. This matt finish makes any strong, deep colour much softer and accessible.

Although this paint colour is from our first collection and has been around for 18 years, it is only in the last four or five years that I've seen people become more confident in using strong colours. I think using bold colour is fantastic and makes a room so much more interesting and full of life. ”





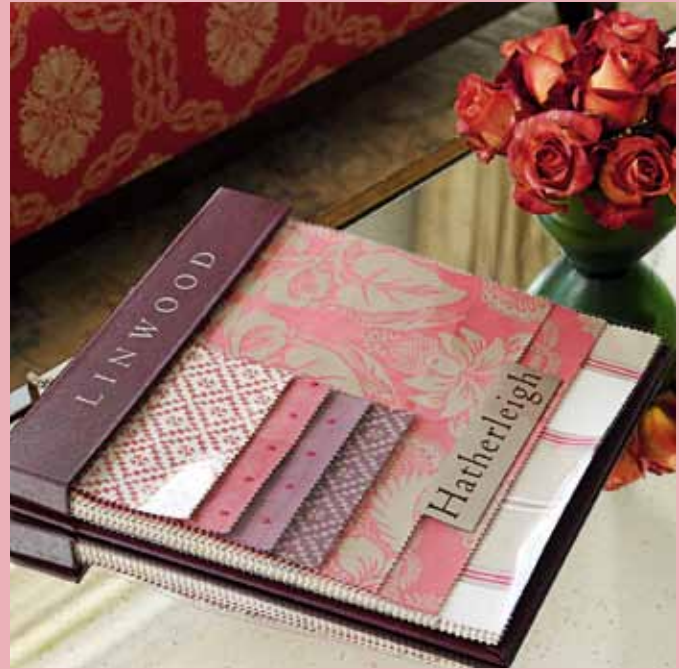
## RECOMMENDED PAINTS

**TOP** "Hibiscus is a beautiful, vibrant shade of pink that is so evocative of the flower itself; wonderful with masses of white," says Tricia Guild, creative director and founder, Designers Guild.  
£29 for 2.5l matt emulsion

David Oliver, director of Paint & Paper Library suggests using Rhubarb, "a fabulous, strong Mexican pink," as a surprise feature on the inside of kitchen cupboards. £35 for 2.5l flat emulsion  
Sanderson's Fiesta Pink is "a creamy, playful pink that would liven up anywhere in the home," says Rebecca Craig, head of design.  
£38 for 2.5l matt emulsion

**MIDDLE** "Tiger Rose is a wonderfully rich, vibrant pink, lovely used inside bookcases," recommends Vanessa Galloway, director of Konig Colours. "A pretty choice for upcycling, too; use on an old chair or even to pretty-up a child's cot. Konig paints are allergy- and odour-free, so they are ideal in bedrooms." From £59.40 for 4l low sheen emulsion  
Ian West, Founder of Ecos Organic Paints, picks out Cherry Ice. "A bright and cheerful, striking, bold pink. On its own it will brighten up any small space, but it also works well with other pinks in the Ecos palette. It is a fantastic accent colour alongside Pink Tint." £41.63 for 5l emulsion

**BOTTOM** "A fruity, berry pink, Eton Mess, is fresh and bursting with vitality. Its rich depth of colour ensures that it has a surprising subtlety that makes it easy to live with," says Rob Whitaker, creative director, Fired Earth. £34 for 2.5l matt emulsion  
"This shade (8-091) is from our 1950s range and is evocative of raspberries and cream," says Papers and Paints director, Alex Baty.  
£36 for 2.5l matt emulsion  
Holly-Anne Rolfe, design manager at Conran, advises: "Viola's Bloom works perfectly alongside lighter neutral shades, to help bring out the dark, dusky pink." £36 for 2l matt emulsion ▶



# TEXTURAL TONES

Add cheerful notes of deep rhubarb pink in fabrics, papers and tiles

**TOP LEFT** A perfect pink hue that adds a vibrant punch of colour. Pair with other hot tones for a contemporary feel, or temper with chic, moody greys. *Alvaro*, pale red, and shown in charcoal and burnt orange, £49 a metre, Jane Churchill **TOP RIGHT** Mix and match damasks, stripes and spots from Linwood's Hatherleigh Collection, in a pretty palette of Pink Gin Flamingo and Berry Crush. From £43.90 a metre **BOTTOM LEFT** Pink does not have to be used in abundance to create impact. Here, a splash of raspberry enlivens a smart cream and grey scheme. *Folium* paper, £44 a roll, Harlequin **BOTTOM RIGHT** Confidently create drama in the kitchen with a bold contrast to classic cream cabinetry. *Catwalk* Collection Tiles, shown in *Rebellious*, £99.83 a square metre, Marlborough Tiles ■