interior style

how to use color throughout your home

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A Tiffany gift box

All the furniture in the main living area (opposite) is slipcovered in white cotton duck and punched up with scattered black-and-white accessories, including zebra-stripe pillows. Aside from these animal patterns, the only other accent colors come from the art and objects on the walls. Floor-to-ceiling windows flood the room with light, softening the intense background. In the small triangular entry hall (above), the bright blue used throughout the apartment darkens and intensifies.

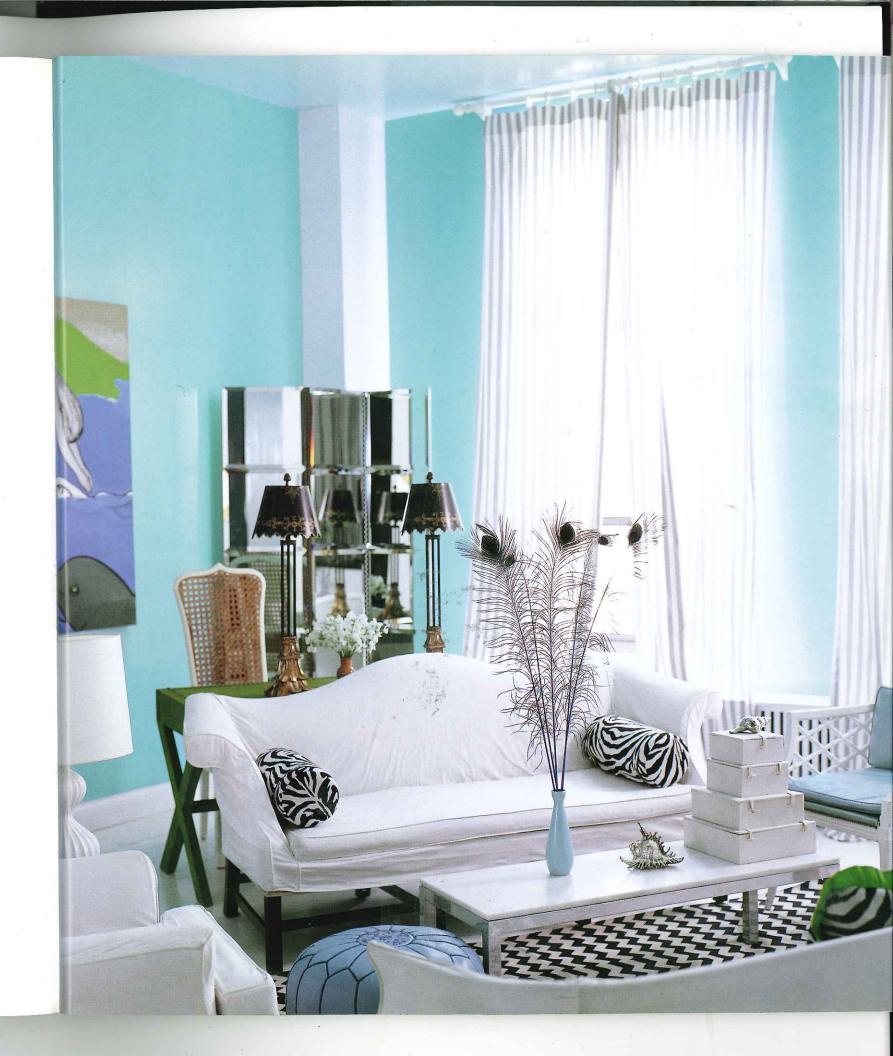**WALLS:** Tropicana Cabana, 2048-50; **TRIM:** White; **CEILING:** Crystal Blue, 2051-70.

THE OWNER OF THIS LIGHT-FILLED URBAN loft wanted a high-impact look on a low-impact budget. She turned to interior designer Miles Redd, whose love of bright color and broad streak of whimsy had served her well in previous homes. Together, they created a cool, breezy aesthetic packed with visual wit.

The bold blue that covers all the walls could be pure Holly Golightly. The designer pulled it right off the side of a Tiffany's box, then had his paint dealer match the shade to the noted jeweler's signature packaging. Floors and trim are painted a high-gloss white with cool ocean undertones, and the ceiling is painted a paler shade of glossy sky blue. The space is large and the ceilings high enough to carry the punch of such a powerful color, and the intense expanse of blue makes a surprisingly strong backdrop for the owner's eclectic art collection.

So many glossy surfaces contribute to the watery, Caribbean feel of the space, inspired by the owner's family home in Antigua. Crisp white slipcovers and black-and-white accents on fabrics and floor coverings pop out against the bright background, adding a bit of contrast and pattern to an essentially one-color environment. In a sleight of hand, the painted white floor makes the furniture seem to float like clouds in a blue sky.

"This is definitely a cooler look," says Redd, "but good lighting works to warm it up. And high gloss helps—at night, the reflection gives you a luminosity and warmth you wouldn't have in a flat color."

In a corner of the living area (left), the plain white slipcover takes on a blue tinge thanks to its proximity to the blue walls. The bubble lamp is made of mercury glass. The room's sheer striped curtains (bottom left) reach from floor to ceiling, emphasizing the verticality of the room. The play of light on the beamed ceiling—painted a uniform pale blue—gives it a coffered look.
WALLS: Tropicana Cabana, 2048-50; TRIM: White; CEILING: Crystal Blue, 2051-70.

The bedroom niche (opposite) is set off by louvered screens. A wall of closets behind the bed is painted with pale blue squares in the same color as the ceiling to break up the boxy doors.
WALLS: Tropicana Cabana, 2048-50; TRIM: White; CEILING AND DOOR PANELS: Crystal Blue, 2051-70.

how to get the look

The lesson in this playful home is that there is no such thing as too bold in a big, bright space. Such intense color could be overpowering in a small, dark room, but here, washed by sun and diluted by high ceilings, it feels airy and refreshing.

This pairing of cool blue with equally cool trim colors (minty whites with blue and green undertones) probably plays best in a warm room with a southern or western exposure.

If you do choose blue, remember that lavender blues feel more feminine, navies more masculine. Mid-tones and green blues usually read as gender neutral.