

## Comment

Designer column



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## How to use colour. When planning F&B outlets, there is more than one kind of palette to please.

During my time in the industry, I have found that correct colour choices can help convey precise brand values and strategies, while the wrong choices can repel customers. So it's vital for success to avoid making colour choices based solely on personal intuition.

Here's a short introduction to some simple colour psychology that will help you make rational business decisions about your decor.

There are four fundamental colour groups: delicate, warm yellow-based colours; delicate, cool blue-based tones; intense, warm yellow-based colours; intense, cool blue-based colours. Sometimes these groups are called the spring, summer, autumn and winter colour palettes.

Each palette contains neutral and accent colours. In the photo below, for example, all the neutrals are browns and creams and the accents are reds and oranges; this is the autumn palette.

Each colour palette stimulates the brain

in different ways and so conveys different emotions. When colours from two or more palettes are mixed, they can look disharmonious, consequently confusing our emotions and not conveying clear brand values. Harmonious designs that convey clear values should use only one colour palette.

### The Spring Palette

Spring colours are warm and essentially light tints, with the palette containing virtual primary colours that convey clarity. Spring palette greys have warmth and buoyancy, which is supportive of the delicate clear colours. The neutrals that support this palette are cream, camel and light grey.

The values conveyed here are warmth, liveliness, optimism and simplicity.

### The Summer Palette

Summer colours are virtually all tones; this means they have a high percentage of grey

in them. The summer palette is subtle; dark colours feature and are never heavy, but delicate. Supportive neutrals include taupe, cool navy, mid-grey and oyster.

The values conveyed here are relaxed, calm, elegant, graceful and understated.

### The Autumn Palette

Like the spring palette these warm colours express liveliness, but are more intense. This time the colours are mainly shades and vary between flamboyant strength and extreme subtlety. The best neutrals are warm browns. There is no pure grey in an autumn colour palette.

These colours are associated with the natural environment; values conveyed are depth, substance, abundance and maturity.

### The Winter Palette

This palette contains very strong primary colours with stark contrasts between pure hues, extreme tints and extreme shades. Winter is the only palette that contains pure white and black. Supportive neutrals are black, white, charcoal, silver, grey and navy; there are no golds, creams or beiges.

There are no emotional subtleties in the winter palette, just crystal clarity and power.

If you'd like to know more about this fascinating subject, then I recommend reading *A Beginner's Guide to Colour Psychology* by Angela Wright.

We adopted the principles of this book in my practice some years ago, and it's a choice that has benefitted both us and our clients.

Nigel Witham is an international designer and long-standing member of the Chartered Society of Designers. You can follow him on Facebook by searching for Nigel Witham Designer.



Café Leoni, a UK coffee outlet designed by Nigel Witham, employs the autumn palette.