

When it comes to florals, the bolder the better

By Heidi Bitsoli

SPECIAL TO STATESMAN HOMES

Florals as part of home decor never really go out of style.

What tends to change is where they're used, the size of the pattern, the flower of choice or the color scheme. Thanks to the revamping of palettes and other such tweaks, large florals are seeing a resurgence in home interiors.

Run a search for "bold florals" on Pinterest.com or Houzz.com and be prepared to stay a while. From easy accents such as pillows and shower curtains, to larger features such as walls and area rugs, it's there, waiting to stir the imagination.

"We definitely are seeing (the trend), this year especially," said Heather Blue Harkovich, owner of Austin-based Heather Scott Home & Design (www.heatherscotthome.com), which she's run with her husband Scott for the last decade. In the past, lots of neutrals such as beige, khaki and linens were what people wanted. Not that those staples are collecting dust, so to speak, but "people are more open to patterns and color" these days, Harkovich said. "It's interesting to me that it's very bold colors." Think strong hues such as amethyst, fuchsia, eggplant and cobalt. People want more color and drama in their decor.

Allison Jaffe, owner of Austin-based Allison Jaffe Interior Design, agrees. She's been a designer for 10 years and owned her firm for nearly seven. Folks seem to be harkening back to color schemes of the 1970s and '80s, but the palette is getting a remix. Dusty roses, purples and jewel tones are all popular now.

"Florals will never go out of style; it's the color pattern or size that will change," Jaffe said.

Not everyone is adding flower power to their main rooms, both designers agree. Some are dipping their toes with bold wallpaper in a powder room or a laundry room. Those are good places to go different, Harkov-



Bold accent pillows lend floral touches to this Lakeshore Drive home. KENT METSCHAN, VIA ALLISON JAFFE INTERIOR DESIGN



Florals and other natural elements are making bold statements with not only color, but also in large repeating patterns. HEATHER SCOTT HOME & DESIGN



This Heather Scott Home & Design project at Twist Tours features bold floral touches. HEATHER SCOTT HOME & DESIGN

ich said. Those "for me" spaces - offices, master bedrooms, for example - are seeing bolder flower patterns. Area rugs, drapery panels, wallpaper, tile, accessories and accent pieces are popular spots for blooms.

"People are really pushing the limits of tile," Jaffe said. "Both traditional florals, albeit with newer color schemes, and abstract flowers are popping up in bathroom tiles, kitchen backsplashes and other spots.

Despite all of the florals, "these are not like your grandmother's roses," Harkovich said. The queen of flowers remains ever popular, and peonies also are big right now.

Such styles never go away, Jaffe added. They just see new prints, new sizes and refreshed color palettes. "You have your wallpaper classics, such as flocked and grasscloth varieties, but you also see big, bold blooms and dramatic color



This Weston Lane home's interior was designed by Allison Jaffe Interior Design and features floral accent chairs flanking the fireplace. BRIO PHOTOGRAPHY, VIA ALLISON JAFFE INTERIOR DESIGN

schemes that are more nouveau than nostalgic," she said.

Jaffe mentioned Sherwin Williams Colormix for what's in now and for what's to come. Its 2017 forecast includes a scheme labeled Noir, with Nordic blues, teals, deep greens, an assortment of grays, amethyst purples. It's a natural transition from some of its 2016 choices, where berry hues and pewter shades were right at home.

Many British companies such as Osborne and Little (www.osborneandlittle.com) and Clarke & Clarke (www.clarke-clarke.com), or New York City-based F. Schumacher & Co. (www.fschumacher.com) have enough florals to put any greenhouse to shame. Companies like Schumacher are releasing older patterns in newer color palettes, Harkovich adds, so it's a modern twist on a classic.

Designer Kate Spade, probably best known for her

handbags, has more florals in her home design lines; her new rug line is updated and has a good deal of flowery features, including rugs, bed linens and home accessories to brighten interiors.

Drapery panels are a good feature to try something different, as are accent pillows.

"There are some incredible fabrics available" should one want to have something custom-upholstered, be it pillows or a chair, Jaffe said. Just be prepared to pay extra for customization.

Or people can frame a large piece of wallpaper and hang that on the wall for bold, beautiful flair.

Jaffe also suggests visiting Houzz or Instagram for ideas, and Markovich recommends Pinterest, to help people craft a vision for their home, be it saturated with bold florals or something else that will grow on you.