



**COLOUR IN CONTEXT**

*'22 DWELLINGS' HOUSING BLOCK*

*Contrast is key in this hallway, where a very modern palette creates a playful look*

Dynamic and unexpected interactions between form and colour have been an animating force in architecture and design since the Bauhaus. This entrance hall, designed by architecture firm MAOI for the '22 Dwellings' apartment building in Barcelona, is a case in point. Shapes – a skinny ovoid, pyramid and beheaded cone – crowd in on top of one another like a heap of children's toy blocks. Adding to this playful air are the colours. The deep forest green of the ceiling and back wall, the pale marble floor and lift area, the brash peachy pink of the stairs and a splash of warming yellow.

The rich, intense green used here has been symbolic of the natural world since the Middle Ages. More recently, it has developed an old-fashioned, masculine bent too: forest green leather is a staple in gentlemen's clubs and libraries. Peach, on the other hand, is whimsical and retro: a poster-colour for the 1950s shiny household appliances, cosmetics and a determinedly pretty brand of femininity. Like so many other blush hues, it's been enjoying a fashionable resurgence in recent years, ever since millennial pink trailblazed its way into the public consciousness sometime around 2016. Marble white, in contrast, brings an air of Palladian rigour to the space. Architects and designers use expanses of pale stone to convey an ageless elegance, particularly in public areas.

The contrasting spirits of these colours make them work so well together, like throwing on a blazer with a pair of well-worn jeans and brogues. Dark versus vivid; sober against playful; natural and synthetic; gentlemen's club versus boudoir. It's hardly surprising, then, that this scheme – green and pink picked out with white – has become something of a design trope over the last few years. It was used to great effect in Millie's Lounge at The Ned in London, and at Ladurée in Geneva by the brilliant colourist India Mahdavi. It's a palette with pedigree, but with a sense of fun, too.

**PAINT PALETTE**



'Dayroom yellow', £46.50 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball ([farrow-ball.com](http://farrow-ball.com))



'Aloha', £38 for 2.5 litres, Graham & Brown ([grahambrown.com](http://grahambrown.com))



'Dark Lead Colour', £45 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene ([littlegreene.com](http://littlegreene.com))

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