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SUZANNE KASLER
ON COLOR

Decorating with
New Blues

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on color

New blues: cool, crisp and oh, so elegant.

Of all the colors you can use to decorate a home, interior designer Suzanne Kasler particularly enjoys using middle tones of blue that have silver, gray and green mixed in—picture robin's egg, a Tiffany & Co. box, summer sky and the ocean (Caribbean, that is). "There's been a resurgence of beautiful light blues that have a lot of depth and richness, and come in gorgeous finishes," she explains. "When people used to think of blue in home design they thought of baby blue, which wasn't appealing for adult spaces, and navy blue, which is classic but typically casual. With these new options, rooms can look very sophisticated." On this page: Kasler's expert advice and fantastic decorating resources.

—TRAVIS NEIGHBOR WARD



DESIGNER'S BOARD Above: Nowadays you can find stunning examples of lighter blue in linens, taffetas, silks, ribbon, trim—even plaid. To find out exactly what Suzanne Kasler picked for this board (and what she used in the loggia shown below), see the **Resources** guide at the back of the magazine.

the lighter side of blue

Think of light blue as a background color and an accent color.

Unlike some colors that work best as accents, these timeless lighter blues can also be a main player in the design of a room. "Blue can be a stronger part of a space than other colors," Kasler says. "You can use it on the walls, in the tiles, on the pillows and upholstery. It's also pretty when you're looking through a sequence of rooms and you see it. That always has a striking impact."

Don't restrict it to bedrooms. "Light blue used to be just for little boys' rooms," Kasler says, "but you can use these new blues in any room." She's applied a French gray-blue glaze on walls of libraries, cabinet doors, bathroom tiles and on doorframes with beautiful architectural details. She also recently replaced the gray-green paint on her kitchen walls with Restoration Hardware's "Atmospheric Blue," one of her all-time favorites. (Two of her others are

ICI's "Grand Manor" and "Limoges Blue," which are available through Home Depot.)



For the ultimate in sophistication, pair blue with neutrals. Kasler prefers bone, cream, off-whites, taupe and dark brown. "I try to use it more classically, so that it doesn't look so decorated or get outdated quickly," she notes. In the loggia shown here (left), Kasler used blue throughout—including in the ceiling fresco and custom mosaic tile border. "Because the window trim is painted a bone color and most of the floor is limestone, the blue looks bright and sophisticated."

Be creative with the finish. In her kitchen, Kasler added a wax finish over the blue to make it grayer; on paneling she likes to add a glaze, tinted with a light gray or brown. "The glaze makes it more reminiscent of old European villas," she says. "Without the glaze, it can look very contemporary." ■