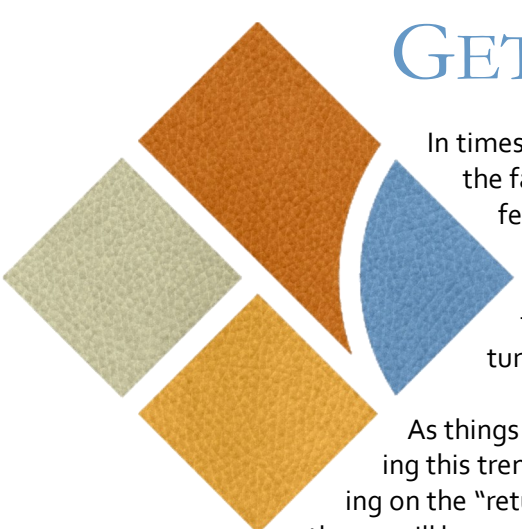


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GETTING INSPIRED, WITH COLOR



In times of economic uncertainty, it is human nature for one to gravitate towards the safe, the familiar, the less “dangerous” or less risky. We have seen this hold true over the last few years where it comes to leather specifications; we definitely saw an uptick in orders for safer color choices – namely browns and neutrals – and overall, a less adventurous attitude towards using unexpected colors. Does this make good sense from a practical standpoint? Sure! But at the same time, we are ready for the return of color and we’re ready to get inspired by color again.

As things begin to stabilize, we are gearing up for this return of color and we are already seeing this trend happen across markets and territories, slowly but surely. This year, we are focusing on the “return of color as inspiration” as a recurring theme here at Townsend Leather and this theme will be carried out through our trade show exhibits and in our overall messaging to customers.

So, as we embrace the re-emergence of color, we wanted to share with you some of the places we draw inspiration from where color is concerned and see where you find your color inspiration.

As a company making a natural product and located at the foothills of the beautiful Adirondack Mountains in Upstate New York, we are often inspired first and foremost by nature. Many of our leather collections, such as our new earth-tone-inspired Perfectly Pebbled embossed cowhide, have been pulled from colors found in and around the scenery and wildlife that surrounds us. Nature also inspires texture for us; often texture and color must go hand in hand. The beautiful hand-rubbing of our Antique Glaze Lambskin colors, for instance, highlights and accentuates the natural markings and organic color palette of this leather.



Townsend Leather uses nature as an inspiration for color; this Adirondack foliage helped inspire the Perfectly Pebbled Collection

“Color inspires and motivates when used to its fullest potential”

Fashion is also an influence on what colors we look to create and release into the market. Working with Home Furnishings & Residential Markets, as well as boutique hotel designers, we often see very early on, new color trends that have been influenced by fashion, or conversely, we get glimpses of the fabric and leather color trends in these markets that are the precursor for future fashion trends. For instance, we saw a trend about 2 years ago for smoky greys & charcoals and this trend continues today. Our Cosmopolitan Collection was heavily influenced by a subdued yet sophisticated color palette of light golds, creams, greys, and a steely blue, pulled directly from the runway at its time of creation.

Continued on back



Using fashion trends as more color inspiration, Townsend is able to be ahead of the game on current color ideas (pictured on left is a design from Zac Posen’s Spring 2009 Collection, on the right is Townsend’s Cosmopolitan Collection)

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Townsend Leather uses a full wall to share color ideas by theme to find inspiration.

Another inspiration, probably our most often-referred to, is: you, our customer! Working with designers in various industries around the world, we are fortunate to have the opportunity to see in real-time what colors and finishes are being asked for and our craftspeople then translate these trends into strike-off samples. Producing thousands of strike-offs a year that we catalog, we see very quickly what colors are trending. The picture shown above is of our new color board in our Design Center. Based around color themes categorized by Home Accent Today's 2012 Color Forecast, we pulled samples from recent strike-off requests and grouped them according to the themes of Global Adventure, Indigo Inspirations, Earthly Fortitude, and Speaking Vintage.

Use of, or pops of, color keep designs (and life!) interesting. Color influences emotions and feelings and color allows one to express oneself on a personal level; in short, color inspires and motivates when used to its fullest potential.

Where do you draw your color inspiration from? What colors are you currently honing in on and letting influence your work?

Are you ready for the return of color, too? Are your clients? Share these and other thoughts about color and color trends with us at info@townsendleather.com.

