



Color in Action

Mixing and matching a backyard color palette is tricky. In the second of a two-part series, *Pool & Spa News* asks an expert to review seven ambitious aquascapes.

By Shabnam Mogharabi We've seen it all too often: The pale blue pool with murky brick coping, garish pots of stop-sign red geraniums and plain green grass.

For years, this was the standard American pool, completely devoid of an artist's touch. But the reality is that pool building — like landscaping and architecture — has become design theory in action.

“One of the interesting things I've seen over the last 20 years is people now doing so many color relationships that used to be considered bad taste — and doing them well,” says Sandra Austin, a landscape designer in Burke, Va., and featured expert opinion on color (see “Meet the expert”).

Still, the fundamentals of color theory tend to elude many designers, especially when water is involved. Understanding the definition of tint or tone is helpful, but that may



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Meet the expert

For an expert opinion on color, *Pool & Spa News* turned to Sandra Austin. The author of *Color in Garden Design* (The Taunton Press, 1998), Austin has been a landscape designer for nearly 20 years. She is a former director of the landscape design program at George Washington University and now teaches private classes about using color in gardens near her home in Burke, Va.



end up minimizing the project's ultimate appeal if used improperly. In addition, a construction site is not a blank canvas. "That's the difference between painting and garden design," Austin says. "If you look out in the world, there's never any [backdrop] that just has one color."

Here, *Pool & Spa News* showcases seven projects that demonstrate a variety of color schemes and principles. Our color expert explains what works to make each project "red hot" and what gives it "the blues." In essence, you'll understand the designer's philosophy and learn how theory translates into art.



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CHAD ROBERT

Principal/Owner
Exteriors by Chad Robert Inc.
Phoenix

Principle in play:

Warm colors draw the eye away from unsightly environs.

In the designer's words

"Something as simple as paint can be what creates the drama in a backyard," Chad Robert explains. "We wanted a bold color to act as a backdrop to the project [to] focus attention on the waterfeature and detract from the neighbor's home."

"The tile is a light blue that blends in with the plaster."

Expert opinion

Red hot: The strong forms and masses of warm pinks, along with the sculptures, provide the eye-catching basis of the garden. The accents of green are a contrast to the white paving.

The blues: The tile should not be blue, but some variation of the warm pinks. It could take the whole project one more step away from being a traditional pool.

