

Carpe Diem – Seize the Day Blog

Editor's Note: Content presented in the Carpe Diem – Seize the Day Blog is for awareness and informational purposes only, and it is not meant to be a diagnostic tool.

This is part 3 in a 4-part series on the power of color. In today's blog we look at how color affects the place where we eat and how our appetite can be influenced by color.

A restaurant's color is not just an arbitrary choice. It should be chosen with thoughtful deliberation, as it is the foundation of the entire marketing and branding for the restaurant. It is important to consider how you want your guests to feel while eating at your establishment. It is equally important to think about the kind of restaurant concept you are working with and the kind of ambiance you want to create for customers.

When determining a restaurant's design, color is an important consideration, as it can influence the way people eat. Choosing the right colors for a new restaurant is especially important because they represent the restaurant's brand. Along with colors, selecting proper textures, lighting, and other elements can create an inviting atmosphere for customers.

The Best Restaurant Colors

Warm colors including reds, yellows, and oranges have the most impact on increasing a person's appetite. Red especially is noted for creating a rich and luxurious environment for diners and increasing impulse eating, such as ordering an appetizer and a glass of wine.

The Worst Restaurant Colors

Colors that do not work well for restaurants are blue and purple. Actually, blue is the most liked color in the United States and promotes a calming atmosphere, but it does not translate well to most restaurant concepts. This is, in part, because there are not a lot of naturally blue foods. Most blue foods are artificially dyed to appeal to children, such as ice pops, blue yogurt, and cotton candy. The same is true of purple. Blue and purple could serve as accent colors but should be used sparingly.

Almost all experts would say that red increases your heart rate, blood pressure, and stimulates impulse eating. While it does provoke hunger, we mistake red for being a prosperous feng shui color for food—it is not. The reason why red works so well for fast food restaurants is because their goal is volume. “They want to get diners in and out quickly. The faster the people eat and move along the quicker they can get new diners in their establishment. Health food restaurants have been focused on green and wood. Green works less well in bars and naturally dark places.

Blues are not common in restaurants because they do not evoke a feeling of hunger, but more thirst. Blue provokes your kidneys, so it has “more to do with elimination than digestion,” says Wendell, who also notes the lack of blue-colored foods other than blueberries. She also mentions

that even though blue doesn't make food look appealing (the reason why it's not a popular restaurant color), "moving water is associated with cash flow in a business and thus you'll often see a fish tank in front of an Asian restaurant." It also propagates a sea theme in sushi and seafood restaurants.

At the end of the day though, "there's really no "one size fits all" recipe for doing color design in restaurants. It's really all about balance." Sometimes people have a favorite color they like but the real key is to study a bit about color theory to make sure it relates to the concept. It is about the guests' feelings, not about the owners' favorite color. If the vibe is energetic, use bright colors, if it is casual, use warmer more relaxed tones. Color is a great way to help invoke a mood and create a complete customer experience.

Editor's Note: The Carpe Diem – Seize the Day Blog will be distributed and posted weekly.
Always remember – **CARPE DIEM – SEIZE THE DAY!**

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