



2020 Color of the Year – Classic Blue

Pantone, a company with world-renowned authority on color, each year selects a Color of the Year. Living Coral, a vibrant warm coral hue with a golden undertone was the featured color for 2019, but for 2020 they have selected Classic Blue, a calming deep blue.

Pantone forecasts global color trends and their Color of the Year is a symbolic color selection, representing a snapshot of our global culture that serves as an expression of mood and attitude.

Industries such as fashion, cosmetics, interior design, housewares and many more, follow Pantone color trends, so rest assured you will see plenty of blue this year. Even at the garden center, although true blue flowers are less common in plants than other colors, there are some plants with deep blue flowers.

Pantone describes this year’s color as “suggestive of the sky at dusk. Instilling calm, confidence and connection, this enduring hue highlights our desire for a dependable and stable foundation on which to build as we cross the threshold into a new era.” Classic Blue is an elegant, restful color providing a sense of peace and tranquility. With hectic lives, technology advancing at a staggering pace and ongoing political discord, we all need the peace and tranquility offered by a restful and reflective color like Classic Blue.

Using Classic Blue in the Garden

How can you create gardens using this year’s color, aside from the classic blue and orange combination? Here are some quick color tips from Pantone, which can be viewed on their website, <http://bit.ly/2020classicblue>. They have created five potential color palettes, each with a different look and feel.

Use your imagination to decide how you can pair these colors, using both plant material and hardscape elements like containers, gazing balls, trellises and patio furniture. Remember to consider you house color as part of the total effect.

- Ponder – create a warm and soothing effect by using Classic Blue with medium and light blue tones, combined with mellow medium or light peach hues.
- Snorkel – evokes a tropical underwater paradise by combining Classic Blue with vibrant coral, chartreuse, lime green, light blue and Pirate Black.

- Desert Twilight – recreate the early evening desert sky with Classic Blue, gold, violet and dark rose paired with glittery earth-toned hardscape elements in silver taupe, metallic dark gray and black.
- Exotic Tastes – an adventurous potpourri of colors reflective of natural seasonings, condiments and blue foods. Combine Classic Blue with cinnamon, mango, honey gold, deep green, violet-pink and dusky-rose paired with medium gray.
- Untraditional – an unusual and unexpected blend of colors. Use Classic Blue as the foundation, then pair it with deep medium green, purple grape or reddish-bronze and hardscape elements in medium gray, soft white, bronze or faded chartreuse.

Plant Suggestions

What plants bring Classic Blue to your garden? Below are suggestions to jump start your ideas. But remember, it's always critical to choose plants based on the characteristics your site has to offer, especially soil type, pH and drainage, sun and amount of water available, otherwise you'll end up with unhappy and unhealthy plants.

Annuals are the easiest way to add punches of color, but there are perennial options, too. Here are a few examples available through Proven Winners, <http://www.provenwinners.com>. Check out the Proven Winners website for more details. Even if you can't find these exact cultivars at your local nursery this spring, this may get you started with some ideas. This isn't a complete list of plants with dark blue flowers; also consider blue pansy, plumbago (*Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*) or .

Annuals

- Evolvulus 'Blue My Mind'
- Lobelia 'Laguna Dark Blue'
- Lobelia 'Star Cobalt'
- Salvia 'Black & Blue'
- Veronica 'Moody Blues Dark Blue'

Perennials

- Caryopteris 'Beyond Midnight'
- Delphinium 'Diamond Blue'
- Delphinium 'Million Dollar Blue'
- Gentiana 'True Blue'

If you can't work Classic Blue into your garden with plants, think about adding it with patio cushions, outdoor furniture or container colors. Blue is always a classic.

Your Suggestions are Welcome!

Is there a lawn and gardening topic you would like to learn more about? Sarah Browning is an Extension Educator with Nebraska Extension and can be contacted by phone 402 441-7180, by mail at 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, NE 68528: or by e-mail sarah.browning@unl.edu.

Images from Pixabay

1. Dark blue pansy - Pansies are a great cool weather annual for containers or ground beds.
2. Dark blue lobelia - Lobelias drape down the sides of containers or hanging baskets, with their small clusters of blue flowers adding accents of color.
3. Dark blue delphinium - Choose a garden location with morning sun and afternoon shade, good soil with plenty of organic matter and well-drained soil for your delphiniums to thrive.



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