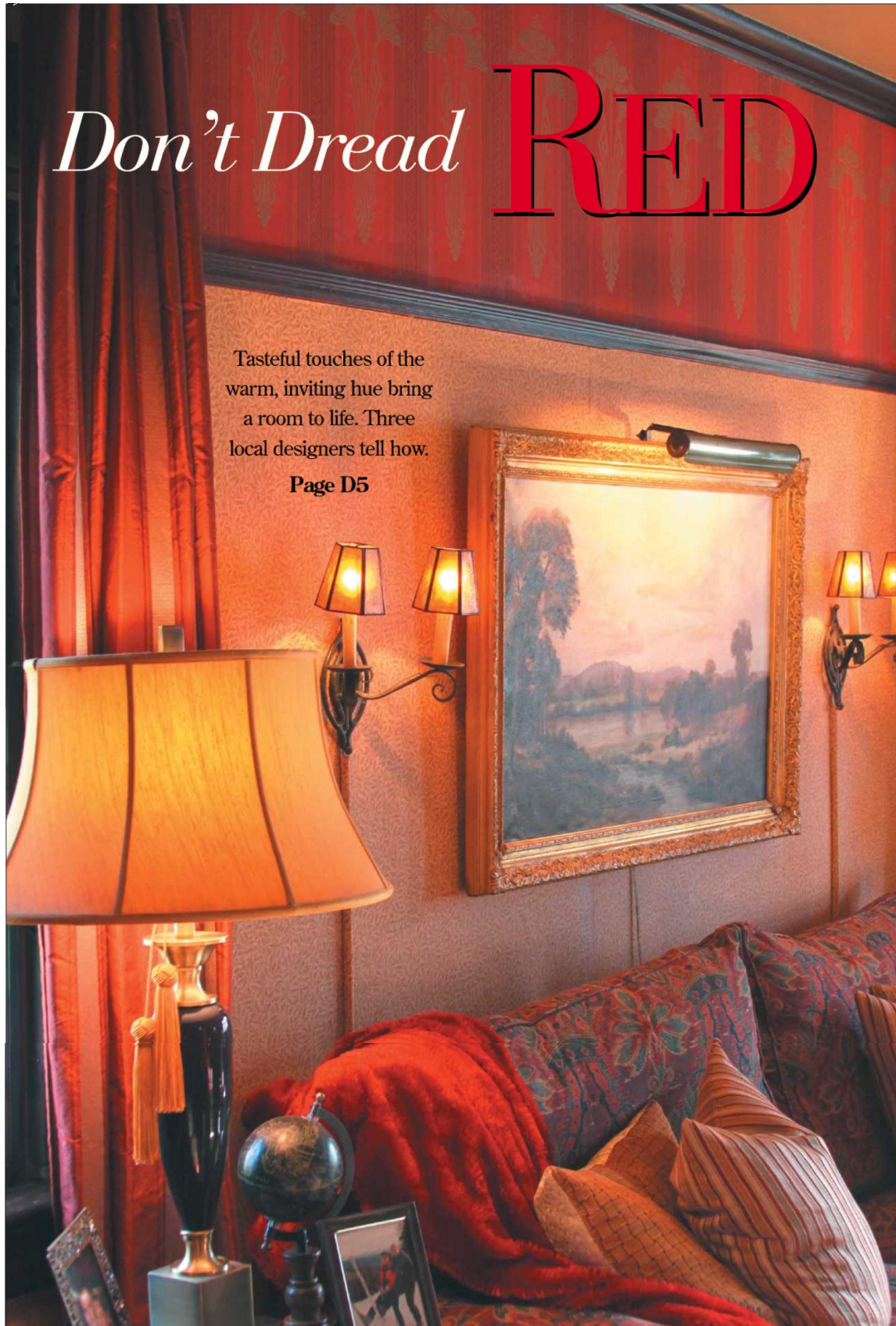


## *Don't Dread* **RED**

Tasteful touches of the warm, inviting hue bring a room to life. Three local designers tell how.

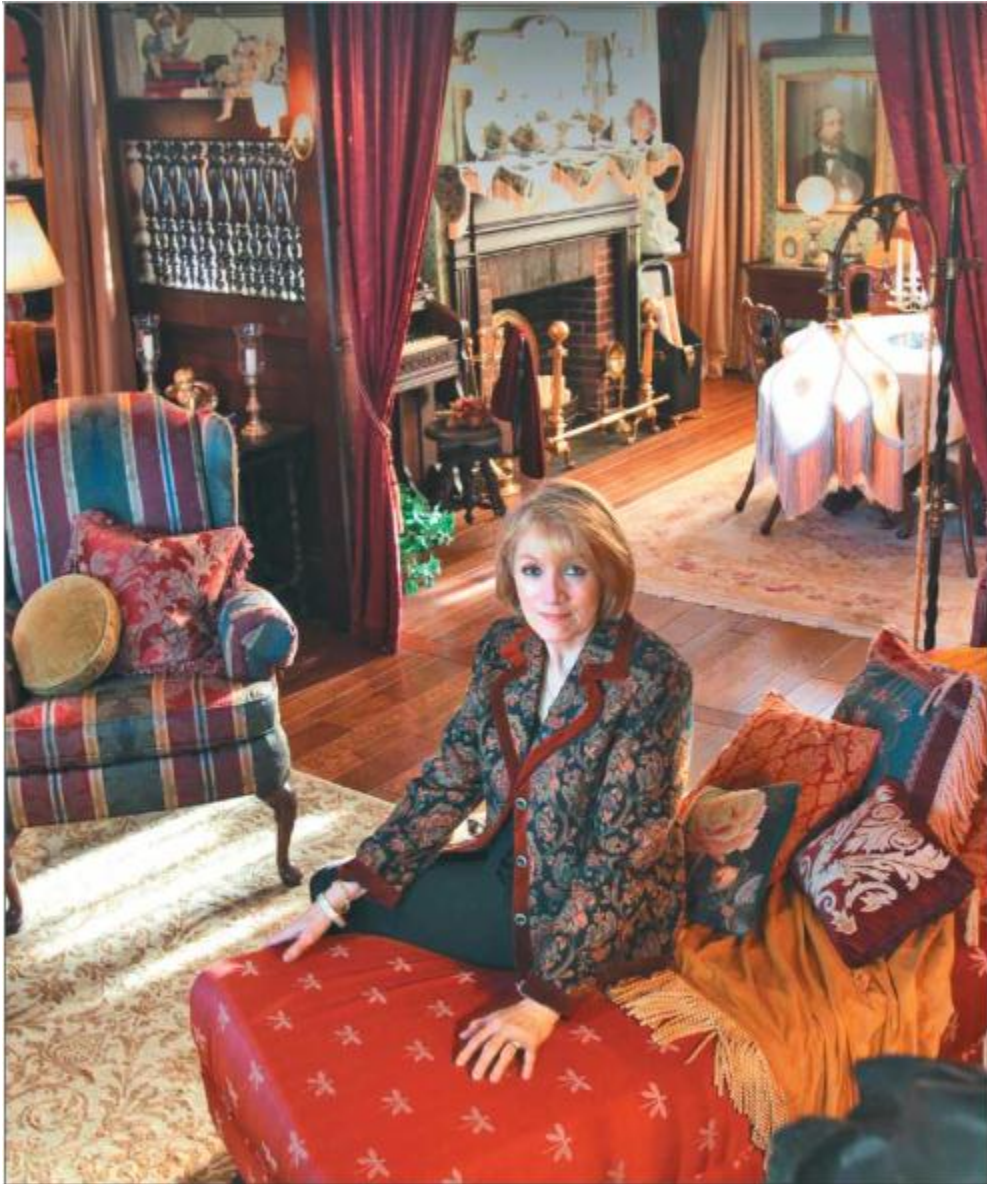
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**Red can set** a room's mood or be an accent: it can be regal such as a majestic burgundy, add a cheerful flair to a child's room, or a rich red can be cozy and warm paired with white. Above, Newport interior designer Jan Creamer Girouard's home mixes rich dark red draperies, red upholstered furniture and other red accents in a room framed with cranberry red wallpaper.





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**Jan Creamer Girouard**, an interior designer based in Newport, sits in her parlor, with its cranberry wallpaper and dark red draperies.



**In her parlor**, Girouard, of All About Decorating, makes use of red accents and deep red furniture.

**Additional tips from the designers when using red:**

- Add red flowers to a room.
- Paint a piece of furniture, such as a wooden chair or table.
- Use a collection of red picture frames with black-and-white photos.
- Arrange red items in a bookcase, such as pottery or books with red leather bindings.
- Try painting an accent wall.

# Accent on Red

Tasteful touches of the cheerful, inviting hue bring a room to life. Three local designers tell how.

By LISA VERNON SPARKS  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

**S**eems this time of the year everyone is thinking red.

Red hearts, red roses, red lingerie are the usual ideas. And for a décor mood setter, you might add to a sofa or a bed a couple of bright red accent pillows that are, if you're lucky, heart-shaped.

However, adding a festive red to your home décor need not only be around Valentines' Day, according to some local interior designers. Not too certain about working with red? It can be off-putting for some, says Suzanne Robbins from the Design Center at Alder's Hardware. Red can be shocking.

If you think about red as it occurs during the seasons, then red will always have its place. In the spring, red is fresh and new; in the summer red is patriotic when paired with white and blue, says Jan Girouard who owns All About Decorating. When autumn creeps up, red becomes a deeper crimson, fiery with oranges blended in. And at winter's edge, red is regal,

such as a majestic cranberry or burgundy against a snowy backdrop. Red is not just for accents. Red can be the main thread inside a room's color scheme, with a carpet or a furniture layout. Red can be the bold statement on the walls that subtly reveals a passionate personality lurking within. Or it can be the pick-me up through the trim and the window treatments. Kate Jackson, of Kate Jackson Interior Designs, says she likes red in a child's room. It brightens the atmosphere with a cheerful flair, whimsy and innocence.

With that in mind, the Providence Journal spoke to three local designers to find out if they are seeing red, what they think the color represents and how everyone can use it in a room.

Go ahead, unleash that fire!

## THREADS OF COLOR

Jan Girouard, All About Decorating, Newport.

When using red, Jan Girouard says she likes to look for inspiration from existing pieces in the rooms to get ideas.

"Many times, I see a piece that can be the inspiration of where I start, such as a sofa that has a pattern or print. They kind of help me build

upon it," she said. "It could be the painting. Anything can start the process. You have to go with what's comfortable."

When dealing with red, people may think it's too outside the box, Girouard said. "They may love red, but how is this going to work?"

A good way is to contrast red with other jewel tones, she said, such as turquoise, gold or sapphire.

Mixing patterns of red seen in stripes, paisleys or other prints is also another good approach to bringing red into a color scheme, she said. Girouard is a fan of Victorian style décor and uses a lot of deep shades of cranberry with ornate drapery, designs and trim to bring red tones together.

"Visually they all blend together," she said.

You can accentuate red in a room. Wall colors are the shell of any room, Girouard said.

"White wall used to be the standard. Red is a rich color," she said. "It's very cozy and warm. It's very inviting."

Girouard believes using red in decor is not unlike when people wear red.

"When people wear red, people have a new, positive attitude and so when a room has red it has its own interior attitude," she said.

Red is intense color that



can be uplifting. "In the summertime red is a power color. It is patriotic — think red, white and blue," she said.

Lighting is the key when you have red. Layers of lighting will bring the color alive. Additionally, if you love contemporary, Girouard recommends using red, white and black and throw in a pop of teal.

Red can mean many things and conjure up many images, she said. Red can add warmth to a room. Red livens things up. It can work through the seasons.

"I think there are different levels of how you can connect with a color," Girouard said. "It could be warmer, like a cocoon. The red can be interpreted in different ways. It all depends on what you are decorating with, what the fabric or the wall cover will be."

#### **POPS OF COLOR**

Kate Jackson, Kate Jackson Interior Design, Pawtucket.

Kate Jackson likes to use red as pops of color to introduce into a room. Red for her as a designer evokes a feeling of fun and warmth, sort of a dare to do what you want, she said.

"Let's face it, the color red grabs attention," Jackson said.

Red may not be the first choice of color for a room because it can evoke strong emotions, a bold character to use in a personal space.

But if you want to shake things up, Jackson believes that when using red people should be thoughtful and premeditated. One should think about the space as a whole and think about places where you want to use it.

"I like to see pops of red to add sophistication or whimsy to a room: a red wall in an all-white kitchen, a red bureau in a baby boy's nursery, or splashing of red bindings in books."

Some other uses with red Jackson recommends are to mix it in with groups or patterns. It's an easy way to ease red into a setting, particularly in a neutral room.

"I like the use of red in threes: a bright red porcelain lamp, red trim around black-and-white linen zebra pillows, or a small red rug placed atop a larger sisal [rug]," she said.

#### **C'MON GET HAPPY**

Suzanne Robbins, Adler's Hardware Design Center, Providence.

Suzanne Robbins gets excited when she thinks about all the possibilities of decorating with red.

"Red is a happy color," she

said. "It's a fun color. I like it primarily as an accent color."

Most often people will use red in a dining room — a bright red, or cranberry, Robbins said.

"It psychologically increases your appetite. That's why a lot of restaurants are done in burgundy," she said.

Robbins recommends using red in a contemporary scheme with black and grays. But for a more traditional look, go with burgundy, cranberry or more traditional reds. A red sofa or chair can be paired with zebra pillows.

"If you're doing black and white, you can do a gray wall," Robbins said.

Or you can pair red with chocolate brown, a gold trim with yellow, she said. A bright red, as seen in the Canadian flag, paired with a crisp white can brighten a small and dimly lit room.

As far as a trend though, her customers tend to use red sparingly, only tossing in a red accent here or there.

"I think it's an intimidating color. It's bold. It's competitive. It makes a statement," Robbins said. "New Englanders tend to be conservative."

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