

AGTA's 2011 Color Forecast

By Lorraine DePasque, Contributing Editor

As those who observe the Chinese calendar leap into the New Year—2011 is *“The Year of the Rabbit”*—those in the fashion, accessory, and jewelry industries are also jumping with joy. Why all the excitement? Color, of course! If ever there was a year all about color, this is it.

And who better to discuss the bright color story of ‘Twenty-Eleven’ than Leatrice Eiseman, the woman often referred to as “the international color guru.” In an exclusive interview with AGTA, Eiseman, who’s also Executive Director of the Pantone Color Institute, talks of the most important colors this year, also explaining how those top tones will (and should) impact the clothes, jewelry, and other accessories you choose. Here, Eiseman also gives us great tips on some of the best “color pairings” for 2011. How can you combine some of your favorite colored gemstone pieces (some you may already own) with one of fashion’s “new” colors? It’s not difficult—keep reading . . .

Tickled Pink



To begin, saying that Eiseman is upbeat about pink is an understatement. Shortly before the New Year, the Pantone Color Institute named “Honeysuckle” the official *“2011 Color of the Year.”* Indeed, it’s an intense hue, she admits, “dynamic and uplifting, but it’s just what we all need. It’s a reddish-pink—closer to red—and more on the warmer side. Courageous and confident, it’s also a shade that’s somewhat influenced by Latin American cultures.”

Does age or gender matter? “No. One of the things that’s so perfect about Honeysuckle is that anyone can wear this color—from teenagers to someone in their eighties. Men, too. It’s so delightful to finally see that the gender barriers are down and men, especially those in the younger generation, no longer look at pink tones as ‘girly.’” She continues: “Although this dynamic Honeysuckle pink is flattering to all complexions, if you want to try paler shades of pink, they’re in fashion, too, this year.”



Pink Tourmaline & diamond platinum ring from Gumuchian

In gems, intense “Honeysuckle-like” pinks jewelry designers seem to be liking these days include: pink tourmaline, red spinel, rhodolite garnet, and fancy pink sapphire. The more pastel pinks topping the list are: kunzite, morganite, rose quartz, and natural pink diamonds.

Turquoise . . . And Other Blues

As many of you fashionistas surely recall, Pantone chose “Turquoise” as its “2010 Color of the Year.” It begs the question—and one we naturally asked of Eiseman—with Honeysuckle “in,” does that mean Turquoise is “out”?



Turquoise Necklace by Elizabeth Locke

“Absolutely not,” she emphasizes. “Just because we named Honeysuckle this year’s leading color, turquoise is still very, very important. Actually, it’s such a classic color that it’s never really out. But what I suggest for 2011 is that, for up-to-the-minute style, wear your turquoise jewelry with Honeysuckle clothing items. It’s such a modern and fresh combination.”



Purple Sapphire & diamond ring from Alex Sepkus

For 2011, how you mix ‘n match the top colors is key, says Eiseman, suggesting also layering in some fuchsia gemstone pieces with your turquoise ones. “Fuchsia is a combination of red and blue, so it’s really complementary to the blue of turquoise.” So, in the fuchsia spectrum, consider amethyst, sugilite, fancy purple sapphire, and alexandrite.

This year, many of the blues are important, Eiseman tells us, and in gemstone jewelry, it’s best to experiment with one or two you haven’t tried in the past. Labradorite, moonstone, and blue tourmaline are trending in fashion pieces—particularly strong these past two years and showing no signs of slowing down.

“You’ll also see some of the more classic blues, too,” says Eiseman, “like blue sapphire, blue topaz, and my personal blue favorite, aquamarine.” Why her favorite? “Well, it’s my birthstone,” reveals the March-born Eiseman, “so since I was a young girl, I’ve been collecting aquamarine jewelry. It’s going to look great layered with a new piece of jewelry with a Honeysuckle-color gem. No, I haven’t bought it yet, but I’m on a quest for something this year!”



*Aquamarine earrings
by Evelyn Clothier*

Do “Go Green”

This year, green is another essential shade “to show off your Honeysuckle,” says Eiseman, “but not your standard greens,” she cautions. “Go with those leaning more toward yellow and olive—and some almost kind of dirtied-down—dirtied-down in a good way.”



*Peridot & diamond earrings
by Jane Taylor*

Some great 2011 green gems to pop the pinks include: typically yellowy-green peridot, an apple-green chrysoprase, or some shades of Zultanite, green tourmaline, beryl, chrome diopside, chrysoberyl, jade, prasiolite, the rare but bright green demantoid garnet, prehnite, and aventurine. “Remember,” says Eiseman, “green has really become somewhat of a neutral, so you’ll likely to be able to wear it with a lot of different things in your wardrobe.”

From Café Au Lait to Chocolate



*Chocolate diamond ring
by Le Vian*

One of the ultimate neutrals, this year as in others, is brown. “But in 2011, it’s also an extremely important color,” Eiseman tells us, recommending clothing, jewelry, and accessories in everything from pale to dark brown—“from café au lait to chocolate,” she says, adding, “Especially in the high-end, brown has really become an important presence. It’s so classic and beautiful. Look at the sable mink coat or the signature Louis Vuitton patterned leather.”

As you combine your Honeysuckle with this year, the kaleidoscope of gems from which to choose is exciting--everything from rutilated quartz with its yellowish-brown or gold-colored needles, to zircon, smoky quartz, brown agate, tiger's-eye, moss agate, and honey-brown chrysoberyl. Also ask your jeweler to show you some cocoa-colored pearls or the varied hues of natural rough diamonds as well as champagnes and cognacs.

On a final note, Eiseman says, "Have fun with your colored gemstone jewelry this year. Mix and match gemstones by stacking rings and bracelets and layering different necklace lengths. Then, ultimately, whatever you wear, your look will be distinctively your own. That's what choice in color can, and always will, do."



***(Top) Aquamarine, pink sapphire, and peridot ring;
(Bottom) pink tourmaline, tanzanite, and golden beryl ring.***