

HOMES & GARDENS

OF THE NORTHWEST

Aubergine dream

A harvest of purples
warms a West Linn home



NATURE'S CENTERPIECES ♦ COMPOST CONCERNS

PLUM LOCO

A preference for purple
defines a West Linn home

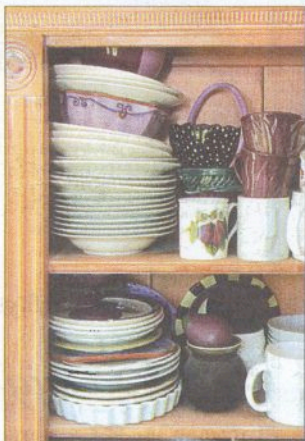
By Diana K. Colvin
Photos by Serge A. McCabe
THE OREGONIAN

In the land of harvest, the grapes have been crushed, the squash plucked for pie. Autumn frost has nipped the tender greens.

In the comfort of Kathleen McInroe's home, eggplant and artichoke summer without season. Plums live forever.

Inside her red-brick Colonial, a rich palette of purple and green weaves through the fabrics, paint, wallpaper, artwork, accessories and dishes. McInroe's friends collect vintage books bound in her favorite colors for her to display. The color purple winds through

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A collection of casual dishes in McInroe's favorite colors nestles in a cabinet in the kitchen.





Kathleen McInroe made the damask tone-on-tone drapes that frame the French doors in her living room. Flanking the mirror are her pastel drawings of plums and pears.



Bowls and a vase of travertine marble are souvenirs of a trip to Italy in 1988.

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most rooms in the West Linn home, bypassing only her teenage daughter's and son's bedrooms. It anoints a table and chair in the entry, permeates the walls in the living and dining rooms, swirls in the family room wallpaper, accents pillows and a throw in the master bedroom, and drenches the downstairs bathroom. In the kitchen, a large glass grape crowns the wall ovens, and a cluster of ceramic eggplants hangs on a cupboard.

"Everything I found with the colors I love was in fruit," she says about the decorative accents. Even her recent artistic endeavors — soft pastel drawings — took the form of plums and pears, which hang in the living room.

Forest and olive green play a

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supporting role in this rich scheme, emerging in a green marble fireplace surround in the living room and green tiles around the family room fireplace, and coloring the walls of her husband's study. Dollops of cream upholstery and woodwork lighten the interiors.

McInroe has carried a torch

for purple that has burned longer than many marriages.

"I've always liked purple," she says. Her father painted her bedroom lavender at her request in the fifth grade, and it stayed that way through her teenage years. She remembers receiving purple luggage as a high school graduation gift from a perceptive aunt.



In the entry, McInroe's color theme boldly greets visitors. She made the small pillow from fabric purchased at The Whole Nine Yards.

In the home that she and husband Mike built 10 years ago, her color scheme appeared "with a lot of detours," she says. She launched her color scheme with help from designer Noëlle Penn of Noëlle Interiors, who created a palette for her to work from.

She began by buying a purple sectional sofa for the family room when they moved in. The living room and dining room are painted a purple that matches the downstairs-bathroom wallpaper. Several wallpaper patterns and upholstery fabrics were discontinued before she could afford them. She and Penn found replacements, but she advises: Don't wait to buy the fabrics and wallpapers you love.

The fun McInroe has had decorating her own home blossomed into a part-time job as an associate at Noëlle Interiors several years ago. She juggles that and running an insurance agency.

The living room is her first choice for relaxation.

"I turn on the music, get the fire going and read," she says. Being surrounded by purple "makes me feel peaceful and calmer." Especially if daughter Jennifer, 19, is playing the piano, "it's perfect."

Her family tolerates the color themes, though her 17-year-old son tells her she's known in the neighborhood as "the purple woman."

"I'm actually pretty lucky that my family doesn't care," McInroe says.

Christopher's only complaint has been the purple-and-green Christmas tree.

"We did a little compromise," she says. Because he is a three-sport athlete at West Linn High School, she has added a tree with a sports theme for him.

And no purple. ♦

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