

# end of the rainbow

RELEASING AN ARRAY OF UPBEAT COLORS IN EVERY ROOM TURNED THIS DESIGNER'S NEW JERSEY HOME INTO A TREASURE BETTER THAN A POT OF GOLD. THE BEST PART? HALF THE FURNITURE PIECES ARE REHABBED RESCUES.

A painterly curtain fabric launched a whole-house palette anchored by blue.

**BLUE NO. 1**  
Cobalt upholstery accented with white ribbon trim turns the sofa into a statement piece.

**COLOR LESSON**  
Use a foundational color throughout the house for a sense of consistency.



**CEILING**  
YELLOW FINCH  
2024-40  
BENJAMIN  
MOORE

## Virginia Toledo may have grown up in Brooklyn

and lived most of her life nearby, but when it came to creating a look for her current home in New Jersey, her inspiration came from farther away. She wanted a happy summer feeling—the kind she associates with sitting on a porch in South Carolina.

An equally strong influence came from farther south—Puerto Rico, where the vibrancy of her heritage links her idea of home with color. “I remember my grandmother weeding in her garden with her red headscarf and her *bata* [machete],” says Virginia, who continues to draw inspiration from the coral houses and brilliant red flamboyant trees she saw as a kid during summers on the island. “As I got older, it struck me how happy people were with the very limited things they had,” she says. “I don’t think they would have felt the same way if they lived in white boxes.”

An exuberant watercolor textile—Midsummer Day by Christian Fischbacher—became the blueprint for the crayon box of hues throughout the 2,800-square-foot home Virginia shares with her husband and daughter.

▲ A high-gloss bright yellow ceiling enlivens the delicate paisley pattern in the foyer.

▲ **COLOR LESSON**  
Go bright in small doses, especially in small spaces. “If that ceiling were any larger, I wouldn’t have been able to pull it off,” Virginia says.

◀ To set a convivial tone, designer Virginia Toledo painted the front door of her 1920s American foursquare charthouse. “I wanted to create a space that didn’t feel pretentious,” she says.



**BLUE NO. 2**  
Paint in a saturated color highlights the impressive ceiling millwork.

▶ The formal look of the salvaged table counters a modern, pastel print wallpaper.

“ I FIND SO MUCH JOY IN OVERSCALED PATTERN AND A MASH-UP OF SUPER-SATURATED HUES TEMPERED WITH NATURAL AND ROUGH-HEWN TEXTURES. ”  
 VIRGINIA TOLEDO



**BLUE NO. 3**  
 An inky blue grounds the kitchen and unites black and white appliances.

▲ To give the 1950s-era kitchen a budget facelift, Virginia painted the cabinets and installed marble-look laminate countertops as well as vinyl plank flooring laid in a herringbone pattern.

CABINETS  
 STIFFKEY BLUE  
 281  
 FARROW & BALL

▼ A coffee and plantain farm her parents own in Puerto Rico inspired the island flavor of Virginia’s breakfast nook. Despite her love of traditional furnishings, Virginia favors the lines of modern lighting. “It helps keep things from feeling too dated,” she says.

“When you’re doing something this varied, you need something that pulls it all together,” says Virginia, who worked closely with Jessica Geller, her business partner at their design firm, Toledo Geller. The solution: varying intensities of blue as a neutral in each room to create calm. A purple tufted-velvet banquette finds its counterpoint in the sunroom’s easygoing chambray wallpaper, and lemon yellow leather cushions on the dining room chairs mellow beneath vibrant blue millwork on the coffered ceiling. “You want your eyes to be like Ping-Pong balls, bouncing from room to room,” Virginia says. “There’s this continuous rhythm.”

A judicious use of pattern keeps the atmosphere cheerful, not manic, as does a collection of rehabilitated traditional furnishings—most with clean, simple lines. Virginia adores flea markets and consignment shops for their eco-friendliness and economy. “I don’t like anything that’s too new,” she says. “For me, it really is about the thrill of the chase. I love that everything has a story and that we’re creating family heirlooms and new chapters.” Clearly, her favorite stories have colorful, happy endings.



▲ Virginia’s favorite spot is the sunroom. The Sunday mornings she spends there reading may be quiet, but the bold color of the banquette is downright effusive. “It’s framed by the doorway; I knew I had to go big.”

▲ **COLOR LESSON**  
 “I start every project with a furniture plan,” she says, “so I know where I need to make statements and where the colors can whisper.”

shop the look

# RAINBOW TIES

Energized by this home's happy palette and inviting furnishings? Incorporate your own color and style expressions.



**CERAMIC FLOWER POT**  
Hex Landscape, \$13-\$20 depending on size; [pearlriver.com](http://pearlriver.com)



**PENDANT**  
Mid-Century Maribelle, \$279; [shadesoflight.com](http://shadesoflight.com)



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Brushstroke Floral in three sizes, \$78-\$98; [caitlinwilson.com](http://caitlinwilson.com)



**FLOOR CUSHION COVER**  
Lindley Border Square in Pink, \$60; [wayfair.com](http://wayfair.com)



**ROUND SIDE TABLE**  
Opalhouse Jewel, \$90; [target.com](http://target.com)



**RATTAN BAR CART**  
\$299; [urbanoutfitters.com](http://urbanoutfitters.com)



**THROW PILLOW**  
Teardrop Paisley Motif, \$35 for 16"x16" with insert; [zazzle.com](http://zazzle.com)

**COMFORTER SET**  
Embroidered Chambray from BH&G Collection®, \$54 for full/queen; [walmart.com/BHG](http://walmart.com/BHG)



**PALETTE POINTS** Virginia's version of a rainbow involves both pastel and intense shades of green, yellow, blue, and purple, along with lots of white for balance. In fact, many of the patterns she chose for her home employ a bright-plus-white combination. ■

**BEDROOM**  
Virginia sought serenity with a creamy palette in her bedroom, *top left* and *bottom right*, but included spots of the yellow introduced downstairs. The dresser is a secondhand piece. "The panel detail is so cool," Virginia says. "I gave it new knobs and new paint, and it's perfect."

**FAMILY**  
Virginia—with husband Jhovanny Hernandez, daughter Sienna, and pups Wolfgang and Tate, *top right*—plans to share her eclectic mix of flea market and consignment shop finds. "The joy is that there are so many things that my daughter says she wants to take with her when she has her own house," she says.

**LAUNDRY ROOM**  
Determined to turn a utilitarian subterranean space into a place of joy, Virginia covered the laundry room walls, *bottom left*, with a romantic floral pattern that feels fresh yet appropriate for the 1920s home.



**COLOR LESSON**  
A bedroom makes a good palette cleanser. "You can relax your eyes here," Virginia says.

**BLUE NO. 4**  
In keeping with the restful mood, the bedcover is a pale shade of the main accent color.

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