

# HOME

## This ain't no little boy blue

BY KENDRA NICHOLS

In this darkest time of the year, it's tempting to want to hibernate. The holidays are over, New Year's debris is swept away and Christmas trees are starting to dry up and wilt. So use this opportunity to make your home a warm, cozy place to indulge in some indoor reflection, with moody colors, rich fabrics and a bit of luxury.

We asked local designers for their advice on incorporating our favorite winter shades — deep, dark indigo, navy and midnight blue — without getting too dreary. They spoke of dramatic blue-black lacquered walls, sensual velvets and elegant linen drapes. But they warned against going overboard: Go dark with paint or decor, not both, or your winter haven could start looking more like a cave.

"One of my favorite colors is midnight blue," Arlington designer Michael Roberson says of that blue-black shade one can find in tuxedos. She likes paint colors Baritone and Espionage, by C2, or Newport, which is more of a navy.

The trick with dark paints, says Silver Spring designer Iantha Carley, is to use a shinier finish to reflect light. You can have your walls lacquered — a fairly intensive project best suited for a professional, both designers said — or use a non-glossy paint and add a water-based polyurethane finish. "It can be very dramatic," says Carley, who recommends Hague Blue and Black Blue by Farrow & Ball.

If paint is too much of a project, test the waters with deep blue fabrics, furniture and accessories. Grab a cup of tea and a blanket, and check out some of our favorites.



ERIC PIASECKI PHOTOGRAPHY

**A lacquer finish will give dark walls a shine that reflects light, keeping a room from looking too cave-like. D.C. artist Maggie O'Neill used glaze and a faux bois technique to darken Benjamin Moore's Blue Lagoon paint on the bookshelves of this Georgetown rowhouse, designed by Hillary Thomas and Jeff Lincoln.**



BURKE DECOR

▶ The bathroom might not be the most obvious place for deep hues, but "I would never hesitate to put a dark color in a small room, because it does add a lot of drama," designer Iantha Carley says. "A lot of times, a dark color will make a small room look larger, because it's harder to see where the walls meet." For the same boldness without the risk or hassle, try deep blue towels, which designer Michael Roberson says would look especially sharp when contrasted with white tile. Fresco Towels' African Batik towels are made of soft, plush Turkish cotton (\$23-\$69, [www.burkedecor.com](http://www.burkedecor.com)).



FARROW & BALL

▶ Designer Iantha Carley likes Farrow & Ball's Hague Blue and Black Blue. Add a polyurethane finish to reflect more light.

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